

ALTA LIT - 1986
CUM LIT - 1986
7/98

4353
SSTA - SB 210
SB 209 - SSTA 210

103



RECORDS CERTIFICATION



I, the undersigned, an employee of the State of Alaska, do hereby certify that the microfilm images on this microform are accurate reproductions of the original records of the State of Alaska as accumulated during the regular course of business, and that it is the established policy and practice of this State to microfilm its records and to dispose of the original records after microfilm reproductions have been made.

James A. Smith
Signature of Camera Operator

11/24/89
Date

S B

209

Original sponsor: Ziegler

1 IN THE SENATE

BY THE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

2 CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 209 (State Affairs)

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 FOURTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5 A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act creating the Alaska State Fire Commission;
7 and providing for an effective date."

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

9 * Section 1. AS 44.19 is amended by adding new sections to read:

10 ARTICLE 15. ALASKA STATE FIRE COMMISSION.

11 Sec. 44.19.194. FIRE COMMISSION. The Alaska State Fire Commis-
12 sion is established in the Office of the Governor.

13 Sec. 44.19.195. MEMBERSHIP. (a) The governor shall appoint the
14 members of the commission without regard to political affiliation to
15 serve for terms of four years. Members shall have an understanding of
16 basic fire protection principles. A member may serve no more than two
17 consecutive full terms. Membership shall include a

- 18 (1) member of the Alaska Fire Chief's Association;
- 19 (2) member of the Alaska State Firefighters Association;
- 20 (3) member of the Alaska Municipal League;
- 21 (4) representative of the field of education;
- 22 (5) representative of the Alaska Federation of Natives;
- 23 (6) representative of the insurance industry;
- 24 (7) representative of the construction industry;
- 25 (8) representative of the petrochemical industry; and
- 26 (9) representative of the transportation industry.

27 (b) The attorney general and the commissioners of public safety,
28 labor, community and regional affairs, and natural resources or their
29 designated representatives are ex officio members of the committee.

1 (c) A vacancy on the commission shall be filled from the appro-
2 priate source. The appointee shall serve for the unexpired portion of
3 the term.

4 (d) Members serve without compensation but are entitled to
5 travel and per diem authorized for members of boards and commissions
6 under AS 39.20.180.

7 Sec. 44.19.196. PROCEDURES; STAFF. (a) The commission shall
8 meet each quarter. A quorum consists of five members and must include
9 either the chair or the vice-chair of the commission. Powers of the
10 commission may be exercised by an affirmative vote of a majority of
11 the commission. The commission shall determine the location of a
12 meeting in advance and shall publish notice of the meeting statewide
13 at least 30 days before the meeting date.

14 (b) Roberts Rules of Order shall govern commission meetings.

15 (c) The membership shall elect a chair and a vice-chair to serve
16 for terms of four years. An elected officer may serve for no more
17 than two successive full terms. The chair may appoint standing and
18 special committees and subcommittees.

19 (d) The chair, the governor, or three members of the commission
20 may call a special meeting.

21 (e) The commission shall hire an executive director and other
22 staff as necessary.

23 Sec. 44.19.197. POWERS AND DUTIES. (a) The commission shall

24 (1) develop and adopt a state master plan for fire preven-
25 tion and control and a state fire education and training plan;

26 (2) assist state and local fire prevention and control
27 agencies in improving fire prevention and control in the state;

28 (3) establish policy and operational guidelines for state
29 agencies with fire protection responsibilities and make

1 recommendations to private industry, local governments, and federal
2 agencies having fire protection programs;

3 (4) develop and maintain a liaison with all fire protection
4 agencies in the state, both public and private;

5 (5) recommend legislative and executive actions to enhance
6 effective and efficient fire prevention and suppression;

7 (6) adopt regulations under the Administrative Procedure
8 Act (AS 44.62) to enhance effective and efficient fire prevention and
9 suppression;

10 (7) develop and implement a standardized data collection
11 system for all fire protection agencies in the state;

12 (8) serve as a resource and technical information source
13 for local governments, state and federal agencies, the legislature and
14 persons in the state;

15 (9) submit an annual report to the governor, legislature,
16 and the fire service community on the activities, recommendations, and
17 accomplishments of the commission during the preceding fiscal year;

18 (10) take other actions necessary or proper to carry out its
19 duties.

20 (b) The commission may

21 (1) conduct research, hold public hearings, and study
22 related issues in order to make recommendations for the improvement of
23 fire prevention and control in the state;

24 (2) accept unrestricted gifts, bequests, devises, grants,
25 matching funds and other consideration for use in promoting the com-
26 mission's work.

27 * Sec. 2. AS 44.66.010(a) is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

28 (13) Alaska State Fire Commission -- June 30, 1989.

29 * Sec. 3. Notwithstanding AS 44.19.195 enacted by sec. 1 of this Act,

1 the following initial members of the commission shall serve the following
2 terms:

3 (1) representatives of the construction industry and the field
4 of education, three years;

5 (2) member of the Alaska State Firefighters Association and the
6 representative of the insurance industry, two years;

7 (3) representatives of the transportation industry and the
8 Alaska Federation of Natives, one year.

9 * Sec. 4. This Act takes effect immediately in accordance with AS 01.-
10 10.070(c).

Alaska Fire Chiefs' Association



April 1, 1985

209

Senator Mitchell Abood, Chairman
Senate State Affairs Committee
Alaska State Legislature
Pouch V (MS 3100)
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Abood:

Thank you for scheduling the second hearing on SB 209 and SB 210 so quickly. Unfortunately, I will be unable to attend, but I have the utmost confidence in Mr. William Hagevig and Mr. E. Robert Haag to speak on my behalf.

It was unfortunate that time was critical during the March 28 hearing as I believe that if we had had an opportunity to respond to your questions we would have been able to answer them to a degree that would have caused a due pass recommendation from your committee.

Again, thank you for your prompt action.

Sincerely,

Chief Alan Judson, President
Fire Chief Association

RECEIVED
APR 1 1985



GLACIER VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

P.O. Box 2338, Juneau, Alaska 99803 789-7554

March 28, 1985

209

The Honorable Mitchell Abood
State Senator
Alaska State Legislature
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Abood:

Please accept this letter as a recommendation to pass and make into law, Senate Bill 209 and Senate Bill 210.

This action seems very necessary for a safer Alaska. Our state is very young, however, our state seems very aggressive. This aggressiveness can, and should be continued. Senate Bill 209 and Senate Bill 210 show, and prove our aggressiveness towards stopping loss of life and property due to fire.

Please refer to the final report of the Governor's Task Force on Fire Prevention and Control. These statistics are mind boggling and passage of the Bills are a positive step in stopping loss of life and property by fire.

Respectfully submitted,

Glacier Volunteer Fire Department Association
P.O. Box 2338
Juneau, Alaska 99803

RECEIVED
APR 1 1985



GLACIER VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

P.O. Box 2338, Juneau, Alaska 99803 789-7554

- BUTCH HAWORTH Butch Haworth 3730 EL CAMINO
- Charles J. Gasparek Charles J. Gasparek 8695 Short Court Juneau
- GORDON KOSTENKO Gordon Kostenko 4105 TAKU BLVD JUNEAU
- MARTIN J. LISTBERGER Martin J. Listberger 5875 Glacier Hwy. Ste 55 Juneau
- Rick Walfenberger ~~Rick Walfenberger~~ 4425 Park Ave Juneau
- PETER F. YOUNG Peter F. Young Box 954 Juneau
- Allen K. Sparks Allen Sparks 3264-32 Loop Road; Juneau
- MIKE TAGABAN Mike Tagaban 8519 Rainbow Row Juneau
- CURTIS JONES Curtis Jones P.O. Box 3136 JUNEAU
- Jeanette Bates 3597 Mendenhall Loop Rd
- JOHN FIORELLA John Fiorella P.O. BOX 2338, JUNEAU
- MAX R. MIELKE Max R. Mielke P.O. Box 2558 JUNEAU
- PAUL A. WEBB Paul A. Webb P.O. Box 3807 McGinnis Dr.
- TOM FALLIS JR Tom Fallis Jr 3650 Tongass Blvd Juneau, AK.
- GAYLEN BREVIK Gaylen Brevik 9435 Turn St. Juneau AK.
- JERRY GODKIN Jerry Godkin 4330 Cone Pl. Juneau, AK.

ALASKA STATE FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 598

Kenai, Alaska 99611

209

March 30, 1985

Senator Mitch Abood
Alaska State Legislature
Pouch V (MS 3100)
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator,

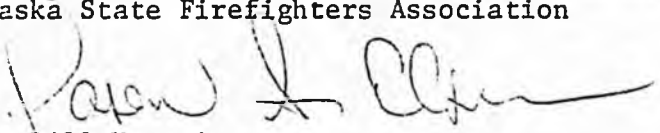
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It was very apparent at the last hearing that there were still some questions that needed to be answered. I will be most fortunate, however, to have two of my associates there to be able to assist you and your committee in any manner possible. Bill Hagevig and Bob Haag are both life members of the Alaska State Firefighters Association and have my utmost confidence.

Again, thank you for your time and best wishes for you with your responsibilities in the remainder of the session.

Sincerely,

Jason A. Elson
President
Alaska State Firefighters Association


cc: Bill Hagevig
Bob Haag

JAE/dal

RECEIVED
APR 1 1985

ALASKA STATE FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 598

Kenai, Alaska 99611

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Alaska State Legislature
Pouch V (MS 3100)
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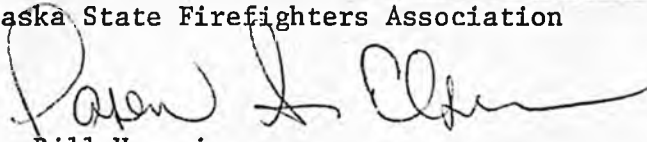
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Sincerely,

Jason A. Elson
President
Alaska State Firefighters Association


cc: Bill Hagevig
Bob Haag

JAE/dal

RECEIVED
APR 1 1985

March 28, 1985

Senator Mitchell Abood, Chairman
Senate State Affairs Committee
Alaska State Legislature
Pouch V (MS 3100)
Juneau, Alaska 99811

RECEIVED
APR 1 1985

Dear Senator Abood:

Today I had the opportunity to testify before the Senate State Affairs Committee on SB 209 and SB 210, otherwise known as the State Fire Commission bills.

I came away from the hearing with the feeling that we had neither gained your support for the Fire Commission concept, nor convinced the committee members of our sincerity. Please be assured that the Fire Service is very sincere about reducing the fire losses in this State.

In spite of the obvious time constraints, I was somewhat disappointed that the Committee did not question any of us significantly. They did, however, ask a number of questions among themselves which led to several comments among Committee Members, most of which were inaccurate, and to which we were unable to respond with accurate information.

My statement that fire losses over the last ten years averaged forty million dollars a year was misleading in that the figure quoted refers only to direct costs. It did not reflect such things as loss of business, inflated cost of reconstruction, increased cost of fire insurance based on the local fire protection profile and, last but definitely not least, the loss of the burned occupancy from the municipal tax roles. At one point in its fire history, nine insurance companies withdrew from writing insurance in the City of Ketchikan. The U. S. Fire Administration maintains that indirect losses may be six to eight times higher than the direct loss. If this contention is accepted, then the annual fire loss for the last ten years in Alaska is closer to \$240 million or higher. If viewed in this way the the annual losses can no longer be described as "negligible".

One committee member had a concern as to whether the money being requested to fund the State Fire Commission wouldn't be better spent buying new fire trucks for his constituency. He may have a valid argument for his area. The Task Force on Fire Prevention and Control looked across the entire State in its deliberations and

found (to its distress) that the fire problem in Alaska is multi-fauceted and that no single solution exists. Neither the Task Force nor the Fire Service is opposed to providing fire trucks where a demonstrated need exists. It is, however, only a small part of the problem.

Finally, it is not the intention of the Task Force recommendations to cost the State more money than is already being spent. The idea is to have the State Fire Commission develop a broad spectrum master plan to systematically implement the recommendations of the Task Force in the most cost effective manner possible. The idea is to reduce the costs of fire protection both in terms of lives and dollar losses. I personally believe it is only fair to point out that in the past five or six years the State has appropriated enough undocumented funds for fire stations, fire trucks and fire equipment to fund a broad spectrum Fire Commission for 10-12 years. I believe that we can do better than that for our people.

If you would like to discuss any of these ideas in more detail, or if I can respond to any additional questions, please call me at 364-2154 in Douglas.

Sincerely,



William A. Hagevig, Member
Task Force on Fire Prevention
and Control

Guy

STATE OF ALASKA

BILL SHEFFIELD, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

DIVISION OF STATE TROOPERS

P.O. BOX 6188 ANNEX
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99502

February 22, 1985

Mr. Allan Judson, Chief
Juneau Fire Department
820 Glacier Avenue
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Al:

In response to your request for the cost estimates for the proposed State Fire Commission as we discussed today, I'm forwarding the following data that were used in the Task Force report. I must stress that these are general estimates, rather than the result of an exhaustive inquiry.

100 Category - Personal Services

Four-person staff:

(1) Exec. Director Range 23
Salary and all Fringes

\$ 75,000 62,550

(2) Professional Staff - two
Planner V or equivalent, Range 21

50,000 51,735

Planner V or equivalent, Range 21

50,000 51,735

Admin. Assistant II, Range 14

30,500 26,355

\$205,500 178,375

200 Category - Travel

An estimate of \$20,000 for staff travel and per diem seems reasonable

\$ 20,000 ✓

300 Contractual

Estimated 800 square feet - estimated at
Telephone

24,000 ✓

4,000 ✓

\$ 28,000 ✓

400 Supplies

Miscellaneous

estimated at

\$ 5,500 5,000

Allan Judson, Chief
Juneau Fire Department
Page 2
February 22, 1985

500 Equipment

Includes word processor, four desks, table,
two filing cabinets, miscellaneous chairs,
etc. estimated at

\$ 10,000

Total

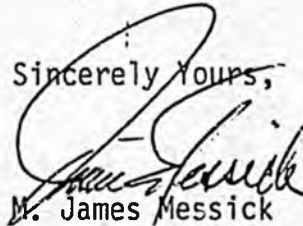
\$268,500-

261,375

(561.4)

I hope these estimates are useful. Please call me if you need additional information.

Sincerely yours,



M. James Messick
Ass't to the Commissioner
Department of Public Safety

cc: Sam Neal
Sandra Barbridge

TESTIMONY OF GUY VAN DOREN

FOR SENATOR ROBERT H. ZIEGLER, SR.

SB 209 and SB 210 - ESTABLISHING A STATE FIRE COMMISSION

I am here this morning not only to testify for Senator Ziegler but also as a person who spent four years as a professional fireman and an additional two years as a volunteer fire fighter.

The bills before you were introduced by Senator Ziegler at the request of the Fire Service and as a result of one of the many findings of Task Force on fire prevention.

The fire losses in Alaska, both in property loss and loss of life are staggering.

Believe it or not, the United States, the richest and most technologically advanced nation in the world leads all the major industrialized countries in per capita deaths and property loss for fire.

The fact that the U.S. reports a death rate of nearly twice that of second ranking Canada creates a grim perspective on Alaska - our fire record exceeds the rest of the United States in losses and thus is one of the worst in the world. Our death rate is the most horrible of all the states, ten times greater than Hawaii and five times greater than California.

In property loss, Alaskans loose more than twice as much as other Americans to fire.

To a person who has had to try and suppress those fires or to pull a child from a burning building, these figures are appalling.

By establishing a state fire commission, the recommendations of the first and second fire task force can be implemented, the fire loss record in Alaska can be reduced, and the safety and well being of the residents of the state can be improved.

As envisioned by the task force, the fire commission would be a body similar to the State Board of Education, the Board of Fisheries, Board of Game or the Liquor Control Board. Each is a policy setting body within their respective fields. None of the boards do actual administration, only policy setting. In similar manner, the State Fire Commission would set policy for state agencies with fire protection responsibilities. The commission could not 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. 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 the legislature, the governor or do nothing.

Similarly, other officials make decisions about aviation fire safety, fire code enforcement, plans, reviews, wild lands fire fighting, etc. As can be seen,

there is no overall policy setting group and 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 not performing that should be performed in order to reduce the toll of fire deaths, fire losses and to provide focus or program 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 action, to individual federal agencies appropriate to the recommendations.

In short, the Fire Commission is seen as providing the broad base of reference or perspective, not now available but 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 service fields. Law enforcement - police standards council; Emergency Medical Service - a state Advisory Council on Emergency Services. Of the three emergency services only the fire service has no board or commission.

Many other states have well functioning Fire Commissions and the U.S. Fire Administration has written extensively about a "model" fire commission. The task force borrowed from the model in drafting commission duties.

There appears 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 is not a viable one, since it would perpetrate the fractured, diverse and uncoordinated Fire Service which undoubtedly contributes to Alaska's fire loss record being the worst in the U.S. and the industrialized world.

(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 support perspective, and involvement as would a State Fire Commission.

(C) CREATE A STATE FIRE COMMISSION.

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

Finally, while realizing the crunch for dollars and the reluctance to fund a new entity, the state and the people of Alaska will actually save money because, as fire departments upgrade and improve, not only are fire losses and deaths reduced, but cities, boroughs, the state, and the residents of the state will

enjoy lower fire insurance rates. For example, a recent evaluation of the Juneau Fire Department and municipal facilities resulted in a reduction in fire insurance rates amounting from 11% to 20%. Such reductions throughout the state, would more than justify the money expended for the commission.

It is felt by the Task Force on Fire Prevention and by Senator Ziegler that this is a very important piece of legislation and a favorable recommendation by the committee is urged.

ALASKA 1984 FIRE LOSS ANALYSIS

FIXED PROPERTY USE	NO. INCIDENTS	%	INJURIES	DEATHS	\$ LOSS	%
Unclassified	1				300	
Public Assembly	87	2.3	6		2,077,838	6.0
Educational	48	1.3	2		5,201,500	15.1
Institutional	21	0.5	1		4,765	
Residential	1,296	35.2	60	32	16,479,411	47.8
Store/Office	111	3.0	5	1	2,572,695	7.5
Industrial	61	1.6			156,465	0.5
Manufacturing	24	0.6			2,000,826	5.8
Storage	122	3.3	7	1	3,253,440	9.4
Special	1,908	51.8	18	1	2,719,823	7.9
TOTAL	3,679		99	35	34,467,063	

ALASKA STATE FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

SENATE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Hearing on Senate Bill No. 209 "An Act relating to creating the Alaska State Fire Commission" and Senate Bill No. 210 "Special Appropriation to the Office of the Governor for the Alaska State Fire Commission".

Mr. Chairman:

My name is E. Robert Haag representing the Alaska State Firefighters Association and the Alaska Fire Chiefs Association in support of Senate Bills No. 209 and 210.

Members of the Fire Service had the opportunity to appear before your Committee last Thursday morning (March 28, 1985) and presented statements in support of these important Bills. Unfortunately due to the scheduling of a teleconference, on also an important item of legislation, there was no time to reply to some of the comments made by members of the Committee.

The Fire Service is appreciative of you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee to hold what we call a special hearing, so rapidly, so the important issues of the subject Bills can be discussed.

We regret that two Fire Officials, who presented statements before your Committee last Thursday morning (March 28, 1985) are unable to be here this morning. Chief Alan Judson, of the Fire Chiefs Association, left for the south 48 yesterday. Jason A. Elson, of the Firefighters Association, had to return to Kenai. They both have forwarded letters, to you Mr. Chairman, in support of a "Do Pass" for the Bills. I will not read their letter, because of time. Copies are in the folder provided to you and your Committee. We respectfully ask that their letters be considered a part of the official record of this hearing.

Mr. William Hagevig, who testified before your Committee last Thursday, is here this morning. Mr. Hagevig has considerable service and knowledge of the Fire Service, especially in Alaska. He is a member of the Alaska Task Force on Fire Presentation and Control. This Task Force was established by the Legislature, in 1984, to complete the study of the original Task Force which was unable to complete its report due to withdrawal of operating funds in 1983.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee all of us in the Fire Service ask that you permit Mr. Hagevig the opportunity to present to you additional information and data on the importance of an Alaska State Fire Commission. If time becomes a factor we urge you to seriously review Mr. Hagevigs statements and to recall him back for further information, if considered necessary, so that you may give a "Do Pass" to the establishment of an Alaska State Fire Commission.

Future generations, in Alaska, will look back on your actions. and those of the entire Legislative and Executive branches of State government in helping to reduce Alaska's fire losses.

Action is needed now.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee the Fire Service and all Alaskans appreciates your time and consideration on this important matter. We look forward to a "Do Pass"

Thank you.

Alaska Fire Chiefs' Association



April 1, 1985

Senator Mitchell Abood, Chairman
Senate State Affairs Committee
Alaska State Legislature
Pouch V (MS 3100)
Juneau, Alaska 99811

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Again, thank you for your prompt action.

Sincerely,

Chief Alan Judson, President
Fire Chief Association

ALASKA STATE FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 598

Kenai, Alaska 99611

March 30, 1985

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Alaska State Legislature
Pouch V (MS 3100)
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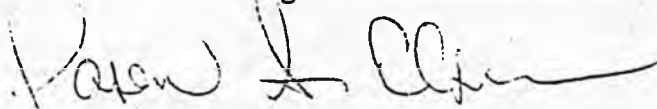
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Again, thank you for your time and best wishes for you with your responsibilities in the remainder of the session.

Sincerely,

Jason A. Elson
President
Alaska State Firefighters Association


cc: Bill Hagevig
Bob Haag

JAE/dal

(Needs to be worked up on
official legislative form.)

Informal - Fiscal Note

#1

SB-210 - "Special Appropriation to the
Office of the Governor for the
Alaska State Fire Commission"

EXPENDITURES:

FY-86

OPERATING:

100 Personal Services	198.4
200 Travel	20.0
300 Contractual	23.0
400 Supplies	5.0
500 Equipment	10.0
TOTAL OPERATING	<u>261.4</u>

FUNDING:

General Fund 261.4

POSITIONS:

Full-Time 4

(Needs to be worked up on official legislative form)

Informal - Fiscal Note

2

REQUEST FOR NEW POSITION

SB-210 - "Alaska State Fire Commission"

1 - POSITION TITLE -- Executive Director
Range 23

2. TYPE OF POSITION --- PFT
STAFF-MONTHS --- 12.0
LOCATION --- Juneau

(1)

(2)

(3)

PERSONAL SERVICES

5. Salary	\$ 4,170/mo	50,040	
6. Benefits		12,510	
7-8 (Nothing)			
9. TOTAL PERSONAL SERVICES			62,550
10-14 (Nothing)			
15. TOTAL COST			62,550

FUNDING SOURCE

16-17 (Nothing)			
18	General Fund	1004	62,550

(Needs to be worked up on official form)

Informal - Fiscal Note

3

REQUEST FOR NEW POSITION

SB-210 "Alaska State Fire Commission"

1. Position Title -- Planner V
Range 21

2- TYPE OF POSITION -- PFT

STAFF MONTHS -- 12.0

LOCATION -- Juneau

(1)

(2)

(3)

PERSONAL SERVICES

5 Salary \$3,449/mo 43,788

4 Benefits 10,947

7-8 (Nothing)

9 TOTAL PERSONAL SERVICES 54,735

10-14 (Nothing)

15 TOTAL COST 54,735

FUNDING SOURCE

16-17 (Nothing)

18 General Fund 100%

54,735

(Note -- 2 positions)

(109,470)

Needs to be worked up on Official form

4

Informal - Fiscal Note

REQUEST FOR NEW POSITION

SB-210 "Alaska State Fire Commission"

1 - POSITION TITLE -- Secretary
Range 16

2. TYPE OF POSITION --- PFT
STAFF MONTHS 12.0
LOCATION -- JUNEAU.

(1)

(2)

(3)

PERSONAL SERVICES

5	Salary \$1757/Mo	21,804	
6	Benefits -	5,271	
7-8	(Nothing)		
9	TOTAL PERSONAL SERVICES		24,355
10-14	(Nothing)		
15	TOTAL COST		24,355

FUNDING SOURCE

16-17	(Nothing)		
18	General Fund	100%	24,355

The scope of work for which the Commission is responsible involves planning and coordination of virtually all the numerous state agencies with fire protection program responsibilities and to establish the last possible relationship with all local governments, federal agencies with fire related responsibilities (including the military) and private industry in order that the Commission can represent and act as the planning, coordination and policy setting mechanism for the entire fire service community in the state. The commission will also interact with other state fire commissions similarly situated.

To perform this task, and address Alaska having the highest fire loss rate, not only in the U.S. but in the entire industrialized western world, requires that staff members possess the highest possible qualifications.

Since the Commission's task is unprecedented in Alaska, the planning functions undertaken will be original efforts with no precedence by which to be guided. The broad range of Commission responsibilities as presented in the Task Force report requires independent efforts by self-motivated personnel with only minimal oversight of a policy nature.

The large number of persons from all aspects of the fire service who participated in the Task Force's efforts means the highest degree of scrutiny of the results of Commission activities, since the Commission is in effect, a creature of the fire service statewide, and the fire service knows what must be accomplished.

A primary function of the Commission is to recommend and assist in development of policy, since it is a policy setting mechanism, for not only state agencies but for state government generally, through the Governor's Office, and will recommend policy for local governments, federal agencies and private industry, such as pipeline companies, the insurance industry to name a few. The policy area also includes developing legislative proposals for introduction thru the Chief Executive, since some policy implementation may require legislatively enacted authority.

Another major function will be to serve as the single focal point for all federal assistance relative to fire protection and thus require an understanding of, and participate in various federal assistance programs.

Executive Director

Alaska State Fire Commission

Examples of job duties

Implements policies and program priorities decided by the State Fire Commission. Supervises development of the state's Master Plan for Fire Protection. Recruits, trains, supervises, reviews performance and evaluates professional and clerical staff. Responsible for, and may assist in preparation of the Annual Reports of the Commission. Testifies before legislative committees holding hearings as matters relating to the Commission.

Recommends policy and operational guidelines to the Commission and the Governor relative to all state agencies with fire protection responsibilities. Acts as the liaison between the Fire Commission and federal, state, local government and private industry with fire safety programs.

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

Acts as a focal point for all federal assistance and program liaison between the State of Alaska, and federal agencies pertaining to and prepares and administers annual budgets.

Planner V (two positions)

Alaska State Fire Commission

Examples of job duties

1. Responsible for major fire protection program planning of an original nature, that involves complex, interagency relationships of federal, military, state and local governments and private industry. Which have programs related to fire protection and advises the Director and the Commission concerning policy issues and guidelines.
2. Researches and drafts proposals that require executive and/or legislative actions.
3. Obtains, studies, and analyzes data, statistics, and other information concerning fire causes and develops recommendations leading toward increased fire safety.
4. Assists in the implementation of program policies and priorities as decided by the Commission, and for the state's Master Plan for fire protection.

ALASKA
TEN YEAR FIRE LOSS

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>DEATHS</u>	Estimated <u>DIRECT DOLLAR LOSS</u>
1984	35	\$34,467,063
1983	27	\$72,805,844
1982	16	\$42,593,184
1981	28	\$45,052,889
1980	35	\$26,052,139
1979	27	\$31,797,901
1978	28	\$16,684,335
1977	30	\$59,349,946
1976	3	\$34,980,968
1975	31	\$27,985,377
TOTAL	291	\$391,769,646

There has been a great deal of discussion for a lot of years concerning the need for a State Fire Commission in Alaska. I think there is no need to discuss Alaska's fire problem in great detail now. I think it is pretty well documented and is probably the worst per capita fire loss in any major portion of any western nation in the world. The fact is that for better than 25 years the Fire Service and other interested people in the State, particularly in the Legislature, have tried, on a piecemeal basis, to have some beneficial effect on that problem; to reduce it, to give people in Alaska the feeling that they can settle here and build their homes and start their businesses and have some reasonable expectation of not losing everything to a fire in the middle of the night at some point in the future. Thus far, very little has been accomplished in that direction.

For a great many years, any time any legislation was passed either at the whim of an individual legislator or at the request of some special interest group such as the Fire Service itself, the statute that was adopted once it was signed into Alaska law, was dumped in the State Fire Marshal's Office for that office to enforce or to conduct whatever activities were to be conducted. The reason it was dumped in the State Fire Marshal's Office was that for a great many years there was no other fire-related agency in state government. Therefore, everything was put in the State Fire Marshal's Office.

What has happened from this is that at the present time the Fire Marshal's Office has a great many facets of statutory authority for which they have no mechanism, no staffing, no expertise, no way at all of conducting any particular improvements in those activities or in those enforcement problems other than the things which are immediate priorities which have to be done, such as plan reviews and code enforcement and that type of activity. Other things, even though the statutory authority exists, are simply not done and never have been done. Whether this proves that the statutes were originally not required, or not necessary in the sense that people originally thought they were, or whether it simply is a loss of improvements that the public and the Fire Service has had to get used to and accommodate because it didn't work out the way it was intended, is an arguable point.

There is a conception in state government and in current state administration, virtually in every state in the union that there should not be any more boards and commissions in state administration than are absolutely necessary. They're costly, they very frequently are organized to do something and for one reason or another are not able to do the thing that they were originally established for and so therefore they are a burdensome part of state government and can be very easily a waste of money. But I think you have to be careful in saying that boards and commissions are not desirable and therefore we don't want any of them and we are not going to create any more because there is one single justification for a board or commission. If there is a demonstrated need for that board or commission and the activities which it should conduct and once the demonstrated need is established then the board and the commission is a justifiable enterprise as far as state government is concerned. Of course, the sole purpose of any of these things and the sole justification that you use in determining whether or not they should exist is whether or not there is direct benefit to the public, to the citizens of Alaska. If there is no direct benefit to the citizens of Alaska, then very likely the argument against the commission is justified. However to arbitrarily say that such boards or commissions

should not exist without determining what the justifications are, what the benefits and improvements might be, that can be created by such a commission, I think is a political mistake. Because ultimately, whatever the problem is for which the commission is being created to solve, as time passes, it gets worse if there is no attempt, no organized and coordinated attempt, to solve the problem.

Now in the case of Alaska's fire losses, the statistics that are outlined in the Task Force Report of the Task Force on Fire Prevention and Control, which indicate that the people moving to Alaska have a 2 1/2 times better chance of burning up in a fire than they do in any other state in the union, that if they are in the ages of 19 to 25 it increases, if they're Native it increases, these kinds of things, as I said earlier will establish statistics. But the interesting thing about them is that they demonstrate a significant need to do something about it. So far everybody in Alaska has been very content to dump the fire problem in the hands of the Fire Service and to be very critical of the Fire Service when it has not been able to do anything except put out fires but is virtually helpless in educating people or in conducting activities to prevent the fire from occurring in the first place.

The state, I don't believe, can honestly take the position that there is a question as to whether state administration or state government should be involved in public fire protection at all. In recent years, in several past administrations, a position has been held that it has not been demonstrated that the state has any direct responsibility in public fire protection and that traditionally public fire protection is a local problem. Well, the state of course is losing a school on the average of one every two years, and it has a high priced operation of trying to protect state and private lands from wildlands fires. It has responsibility for crash fire rescue services at airports, which has a direct effect on the possibility of the passengers on such aircraft surviving or not surviving an air crash. It has an indirect responsibility on marine fires particularly in cases where state vessels are involved or are responding on emergencies and encounter these types of situations. A great many of the Fish and Game control vessels and people like that may get involved with both off-shore and on-shore emergencies particularly in the Aleutian Chain and the Kodiak Island areas.

So if you assume that the state has some responsibility for public fire protection, both in terms of those statutory requirements for said activities that are built into such things as the airports, and if you assume that because of the tremendous amount of state property and state facilities scattered all over Alaska which create the fire problem, and which the state has dumped in somebody else's lap to take care of to protect, every little tiny fire department in every little tiny community in Alaska virtually has some state property which it is required to protect. Yet the state participates grudgingly in providing the wherewithal to provide that protection. The Legislature has I think in the past few years, done a reasonably good job in attempting to alleviate the problem. The unfortunate part of their activities is that it has too often been on the basis of being uninformed as to what is effective in solving the problem and what is just compounding it.

In a recent visit to one of the villages for the NW Mayor's Conference, observers there saw that the state-purchased firetrucks in state-purchased firehalls were sitting with the door of the firehall open and the snow drifted up into the building to the degree that the fire apparatus could not have been pulled out, even assuming that it was able to have its motor started. Other documented incidents are quite common and are provided to anybody who wants to look at them. Of similar situations in other communities were fire apparatus which stood by unused when a fire occurred in a community simply because the people did not know how to use it and the state training had not the wherewithal to go and teach them how to use them. So the best intentions of the Legislature in providing that fire apparatus did nothing whatsoever to alleviate the local fire problem.

What is needed at this point in time is for an entity to exist to say to the Legislature or to the state administration on request that yes, this is the best thing that can be done for village X because of its characteristics, its lack of roads, its lack of solid bridges, inclement weather, the lack of facilities for housing vehicles in heated areas, the lack of sufficient men on a yearround basis and sufficient people in general to establish and maintain a fire department and so therefore what is needed are some other things such as public education and smoke detectors in the homes, portable fire extinguishers, portable fire pumps, that kind of activity. Not 70, 80, 90,000 dollar fire apparatus. But villagewide, on the other hand, the advice could be yes, this place has a fairly large population on a yearround basis, there is quite a road system, there is a domestic water system which can be used for hydrants, the bridges that cross the creeks and rivers are substantial and can handle a piece of fire apparatus and yes, there is a local desire to provide public fire protection in the community. So therefore the expenditure of state money for the purchase of a fire apparatus and conversion of a building into a fire station or the building of a fire station is justified and in the long run it will pay off. We won't then hear these war stories about firetrucks sitting in the river mud bogged down above the axles and probably to become monuments to somebody's lack of information, with the best intentions in the world.

So what is this all leading to? What it is leading to is that there is a distinct need in Alaska for the one thing that the Fire Service does not have to accomplish its purpose. By the Fire Service I mean the prevention people, the public education people, the suppression people, the wildlands people, the air crash people, the marine fire people, the whole broad spectrum of fire protection. Police enforcement activity is concentrated in the Department of Public Safety. With the Police Standards Council to assist, there is a focal point for all police activity in the State of Alaska. The same thing applies to the Department of Fish and Game and to the activities of the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, as they relate to the marine highways and the airports. The focal point is right there within that one established department. In looking at public fire protection on the other hand there is some excess of 20 departments or agencies in state government which have something or other to do with public fire protection. There is no coordinated system between them. When the Fire

Service needs answers to fire problems or has fire questions it does not have ready access to the people with the expertise. They do not very frequently even know who to contact in what agency and what the address and phone number are, and that kind of thing. Looking at the agency's point of view, they have no way of knowing from one day to the next who the fire chief is in a community or who the city manager is in a community, or who the mayor is in a community. They work very closely with fire departments for a period of time and then the fire chief changes and the whole thing is out the window and everybody has to start all over again.

All of this and even more brings the problems out to the degree that a great number of people are spending great amounts of money in Alaska to do something about the horrendous fire problem, but without coordinating with other agencies and without any policy or guidelines that enable them to work effectively in that area. A case in point, some years ago the Legislature quite rightfully appropriated a little over 7 million dollars to build five Regional Fire Training Centers for training firefighters. Well, anybody knows that it doesn't do any good to dump firetrucks in a village and expect people to fight fires with them unless they are trained. But what the Legislature did not do was give the state agencies which are participating in the Regional Training Center Program the guidelines and policies which would determine what their activities in relation to these centers was supposed to be. So, therefore, everybody in the various regions of the state that was looking to state government for leadership in the training of emergency services personnel in the regional centers was quite dissatisfied. So, there is no overall effective training system in Alaska for the training of fire service, EMS personnel, and even police. Therefore the state, while it did cause the training facilities to be built, stopped short of ensuring effective programs to go into those facilities.

Some years ago, and not all that long ago, one of the legislators from a rural part of the state, submitted a Bill which he wanted to have passed which would provide breathing apparatus for use by village firefighters; I think nine villages in his region. Well, the idea is that they can go into a burning building and be able to breathe effectively and any toxic gases that are produced by the fire or are in the area from other causes, would not endanger their lives because they would have this breathing apparatus. Because there was nobody readily available for the legislator to make inquiries of, or because he chose not to do so, whatever, he did not realize that three things made his program more dangerous perhaps than the fire itself would be:

- 1) Who was to train the people to use the breathing apparatus? Breathing apparatus has been known to kill firefighters who did not know how to wear it or use it or troubleshoot it when anything happened while they were wearing it.
- 2) When air bottles were being filled, there were two choices. Either the air bottles would have to be flown into Anchorage, Fairbanks, or Juneau to be filled with pure air or the local people would pump in whatever air they could. There were no standards to say that the air that was going into the bottles would be pure breathing air. This again, is a hazard to anyone who is going to wear it.

- 3) Who did the maintenance on that breathing apparatus? It's a tricky, very delicate system so that people who have to be specifically trained should be the only ones to handle it. In most fire departments first echelon maintenance is done on breathing apparatus. It is then shipped to the factory for anything more that needs to be done. So who is going to do this in the village or who is going to determine that it needed maintenance?

When all this was explained to the legislator, he realized that perhaps what he was going to do was not the way to do it and he withdrew the Bill. So in that instance, the problem was caught. But in other instances it has not been.

What is needed is a focal point for public fire protection in Alaska. That's what it is, pure and simple. A State Fire Commission is a focal point for all facets of public fire protection. Now the activities of the State Fire Commission may range from making recommendations to agencies with information for their budgets, or information for their own policies and procedures which they recommend to the various department commissioners. They do not have either the expertise or the staff to develop the information they need and so this is a function of the State Fire Commission. A State Fire Commission can say yes, we have looked at the air crash problem in Alaska and we recommend that in your planning you do this or that, and that's something that the people who are responsible for air crash firefighting in the state-operated airports maybe don't know at this point in time because they don't have the expertise or the staff time.

In other areas, two functions of state administration the State Fire Marshal's Office, Division of Fire Prevention, and the State Fire Service Training Program should be placed directly under the State Fire Commission and policies for both of those programs should be developed by the State Fire Commission and implemented in the functions of those two agencies. The State Fire Training Program has been in effect for over 15 years and has never had a single policy statement from state government indicating what it was it was supposed to do, nor were there any guidelines by which to do it. As a result of this, the State Fire Training Program is not a great deal better off now than it was when it started 15 years ago. This is not to say that the program is not needed or does not have effectiveness and that it does not have a great many things to do. But it functions in a vacuum. There is no policy group that the program can go to for any indication that some sort of training or education is felt to be valuable to the people of Alaska or to the Fire Service or rescue personnel in Alaska, therefore, we would like to implement this program because of these benefits and those advantages. There is nobody to that effect for them to go to. The Fire Marshal's Office, as indicated earlier, has a vast amount of responsibility and not a great many resources. I think a lot of the activities that the Fire Marshal's Office has statutory authority for can be handled by a State Fire Commission, thereby releasing the Fire Marshal to do those things which are of the greatest priority for his staff and his capabilities.

The Fire Service has a great deal of difficulty dealing with people in the commercial fields, the contractors, the wildlands people, the oil company people, the air crash people, all of these. This is because there is no common ground for them to meet. By having a representative group of these various entities on the State Fire Commission, it is a common group where mutual problems can be discussed and policies can be made and problems settled probably a great deal easier and with considerable savings in money beyond the way that such things are done now, if they are done at all.

A State Fire Commission, like all boards and commissions, is subject to the state's sunset laws. If the commission is not functioning the way it should function, if it is not producing the benefits which are anticipated by the Fire Service and in the Task Force Report, then when its sunset review comes in 1989, it can be disbanded. We can say all right, we tried the State Fire Commission and it didn't do the job so therefore we've got to look further.

The case in point, the key item here, is that everything else that there has been any capability to try has been tried. It has been demonstrated over the years that none of the things that have been tried have had any significant value in solving Alaska's fire problem. The State Fire Commission would be the first coordinated effort involving a multitude of disciplines, settling down and saying all right, there is a need for architects to look at fire prevention more seriously in designing structures. There is a need for contractors to do more in providing more fire safe structures in Alaska. There is a need for the school systems to take a closer look at the design of their schools so that they don't burn to the ground once every two years. There is a need for assisting the Health and Social Services people with particular recommendations in their hospital reviews; and they have requested this. The same thing applies for the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, the Department of Labor and their OSHA Standards, and for the Department of Natural Resources and their wildlands problems.

All of this, on a recommendation basis for some agencies and on a policy setting basis for others, is a focal point that I think would more than pay for itself over the years. It is not, however, a thing that you can sit down and say all right if we have a State Fire Commission, we will save this much money, and that many lives and in the second year we'll increase that by 6% or 20% or whatever.

I think it is realistic to say that the State Fire Commission is going to have to be a gamble, it's going to have to be something that the State is going to say all right, if we lose \$200,000 over a year's period in the cost of a State Fire Commission, then that is nothing compared to the amount of money we are going to lose from the fires. If the State Fire Commission can do one or two things each year which help reduce our losses from fire it will more than pay for itself. If however the legislation that creates it is lacking in the teeth that are necessary to make it function effectively, if it does not have the full support of the Legislature and the full support of the administration, it is doomed to failure before it even starts, because it is going to step on some peoples toes. The only way that we are going to solve the

public fire problem in Alaska is to go through a little bit of pain here and there until people understand that the conditions in Alaska, from the standpoint of fire deaths and fire losses, are intolerable at this point. What is also intolerable is the fact that nobody has done anything about it virtually since World War II. That's 40 years ago.

The problem is not going to solve itself. So, I guess my view of it is that a State Fire Commission has an excellent chance if it is set up and supported both by adequate staff and adequate funding which is being requested and recommended at the current time. It must be understood by all concerned that this is not an advisory committee. It has to have a certain degree of authority that adds weight to its recommendations both in those instances where it makes policy for such programs as the Division of Fire Prevention or the State Fire Training program and where it makes specific recommendations to other agencies where its connections are not quite so direct, following adequate research, to solve specific kinds of problems and make broad recommendations for improvements for existing functions in various agencies. It is my belief that it should be empowered to make recommendations to federal government agencies functioning in Alaska as well, simply because they are not without blame in the Alaska fire problem.

As far as the commission itself is concerned, its senior officer should be an elected commission president or chairman with a vice chairman and a commission totalling about nine people as recommended in the existing legislation. There should also be a paid staff to support the commission's activities and to implement those activities and requirements that the commission determines in its quarterly meetings. The executive director should be the focal point for all commission activities and he should be given adequate support staff consisting at least of a research analyst. This position is absolutely necessary to gather facts and figures and to determine approaches to solving problems which very few people have the expertise to do. Also adequate support staff is necessary so that commission reports, recommendations, and policy statements can be produced on an adequate basis and within appropriate timeframes. All of this of course costs money. But so do the fire losses and the 30 to 35 individuals a year who die in fires in this state.

Its dumb to say that you cannot solve this problem by creating a Fire Commission because the state is short of money this year and there are other priorities. The State Fire Commission would have to function at current recommended budget levels for at least ten years to spend as much money as the state has spent in the last five or six years in purchasing fire apparatus and equipment for communities that have made no successful use of it. This is an approach that has a far better chance of functioning and producing the desired results than anything that has been done so far and it should be given a chance.

Juneau Volunteer Fire Department

820 GLACIER AVENUE

JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801

PHONES: 586-3300 — 586-3571

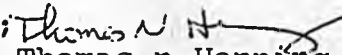
13 March 1985

Senator Mitchell Abood
Chairman
Senate State Affairs Comm.

Mr. Chairman;

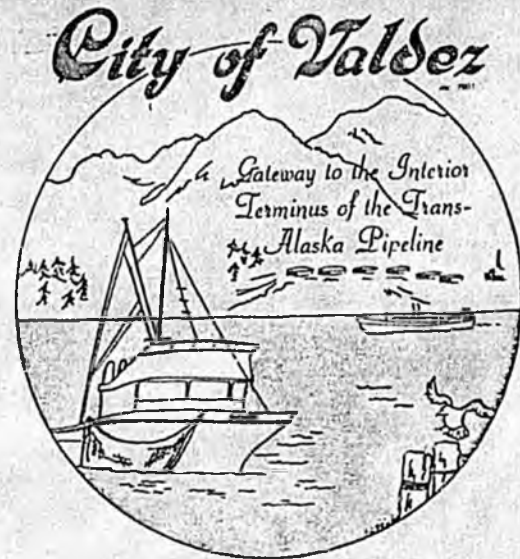
This Letter is to voice my support for Senate Bill 209 and 210. Having been a firefighter in the State of Alaska for the last ten years, I can see a need for a State Fire Commission. During my time in the fire service I have served both as a volunteer and a paid member in both rural and urban Alaska.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

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.

Sincerely; 
Thomas n. Henning
Lieutenant, JVFD

RECEIVED
MAR 18 1985

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
Fire Chief

TWM/lmw

RECEIVED
MAR - 9 1985

Alaska Fire Chiefs' Association

March 20, 1985



Senator Mitchell Abood
Chairman, Senate State Affairs
14th Alaska Legislature
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Abood:

You have before you Senate Bills 209 and 210, two very important pieces of legislation to the Alaska Fire Service.

Senate Bill 209, enabling legislation to establish a fire commission and Senate Bill 210, to fund the commission, will do more to combat the horrendous fire loss in the State of Alaska than the combined capital improvement projects for fire trucks in the past five years.

The 5-year efforts of the Task Force on Fire Prevention and Control identified methods to effectively impact the fire loss in Alaska, to create a more cost effective and cooperative operation of the present state agencies. This will cost the State of Alaska less money to do a more effective job for fire protection and education. The \$261,000 request is less than the cost of two fire trucks or one fire station.

The fire commission will allow you, the legislator, a valuable information resource and will save you valuable time in making decisions effecting the Fire Service. It will give the communities in your district a central agency to assist them with their fire problems. The fire commission can, and will, identify where the declining revenues will do the most good, for the most people, in the State of Alaska. We must continue to reduce the fire problem through intelligent expenditure of funds by better public education, training, proper code enforcement, and intelligent expenditure of capital improvement funds.

A fire commission may not be as effective as we foresee it to be, but without question it will be better than the present system at less cost to the people of Alaska.

Sincerely,

ALASKA FIRE CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION

Alan Judson
President

820 0-1000
JUN 1 1985

RECEIVED
MAR 21 1985

AJ:djo

PORT OF VALDEZ CHAPTER
ALASKA STATE FIREFIGHTERS ASSOC.

BOX 1826 • VALDEZ, ALASKA 99686

March 12, 1985

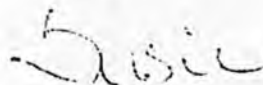
Senate State Affairs Committee
Chairman - Senator Mitchell Abood
Alaska State Legislature
Pouch V (MS 3100)
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Abood,

I am writing on behalf of the 20+ members of my local chapter of the Alaska State Firefighters Association urging you to support passage of Senate Bills 209 and 210.

We in the fire service are very aware of the importance of these Bills and what they can do for us. We once again ask for your support in supporting us.

Sincerely,



Suzanne L. Blackburn, President
Port of Valdez Chapter, ASFA

SLB:sh

RECEIVED
MAR 21 1985


March 20, 1985
Martin J. Listberger, (907) 780-4456
Gastineau Chapter of Firefighters Association
Glacier Volunteer Fire Department
5875 Glacier Hwy. Sp.#55
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Memo to: Chairman Honorable Senator Mitchell Abood
Subject: Alaska State Fire Commission

Please acknowledge my support of the Honorable Governor Bill Sheffield's special task force on fire prevention and control. Upon reading the study written by this special task force; published in December 1984, I am in agreement that the forming of the Alaska State Fire Commission is in the best interest of all Alaskans.

As a member of a volunteer fire fighting organization I feel that this commission would be an asset to the organization and the community we protect. The concept of this commission being the central focal point for all aspects of fire prevention and control will aid us in many ways. The information being managed by the commission will assist in education, planning, research & development, and will provide the people in our state with an excellent source of information on fire prevention and control in Alaska.

Please continue your support by adopting and making into law senate bills SB209 and SB210


Martin J. Listberger

MJL:mjl

RECEIVED
MAR 21 1985

Introduced: 3/4/85
Referred: State Affairs
and Finance

<u>Funding Information</u>	
General Fund	\$261,400
Other Funds	-0-
	<u>\$261,400</u>

1 IN THE SENATE

BY ZIEGLER

2

SENATE BILL NO. 210

3

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

FOURTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5

A BILL

6

For an Act entitled: "An Act making a special appropriation to the Office
of the Governor for the Alaska State Fire Commission;
and providing for an effective date."

7

8

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

10

* Section 1. The sum of \$261,400 is appropriated from the general fund
to the Office of the Governor for the Alaska State Fire Commission.

11

12

* Sec. 2. The unexpended and unobligated portion of the appropriation
made by this Act lapses into the general fund June 30, 1986.

13

14

* Sec. 3. This Act takes effect on the effective date of an Act estab-
lishing the Alaska State Fire Commission.

15

16



RECORDS CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned, an employee of the State of Alaska, do hereby certify that the microfilm images on this microform are accurate reproductions of the original records of the State of Alaska as accumulated during the regular course of business, and that it is the established policy and practice of this State to microfilm its records and to dispose of the original records after microfilm reproductions have been made.

James A. Smith
Signature of Camera Operator

11/24/89
Date

S B

2 10

COMMITTEE REPORT
SENATE

FURTHER: FINANCE

3/4/85

Date 4/21/85

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
- reports it back without recommendation
- recommends referral to _____ Committee


**MEMBERS SIGNING
DO PASS**

**MEMBERS HAVING
OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS**


Edna De Vries - No Rec

V. Fisher - No Rec

V. Kelly - Do Not Pass

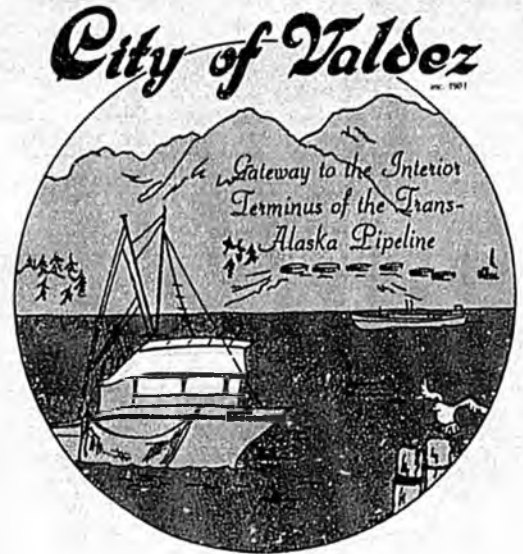


Chairman



Chairman recommendation

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

Juneau Volunteer Fire Department

820 GLACIER AVENUE

JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801

PHONES: 586-3300 — 586-3571

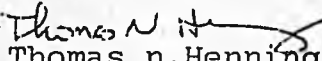
13 March 1985

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.

Sincerely; 
Thomas n. Henning
Lieutenant, JVFD

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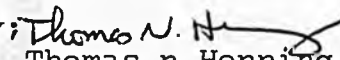
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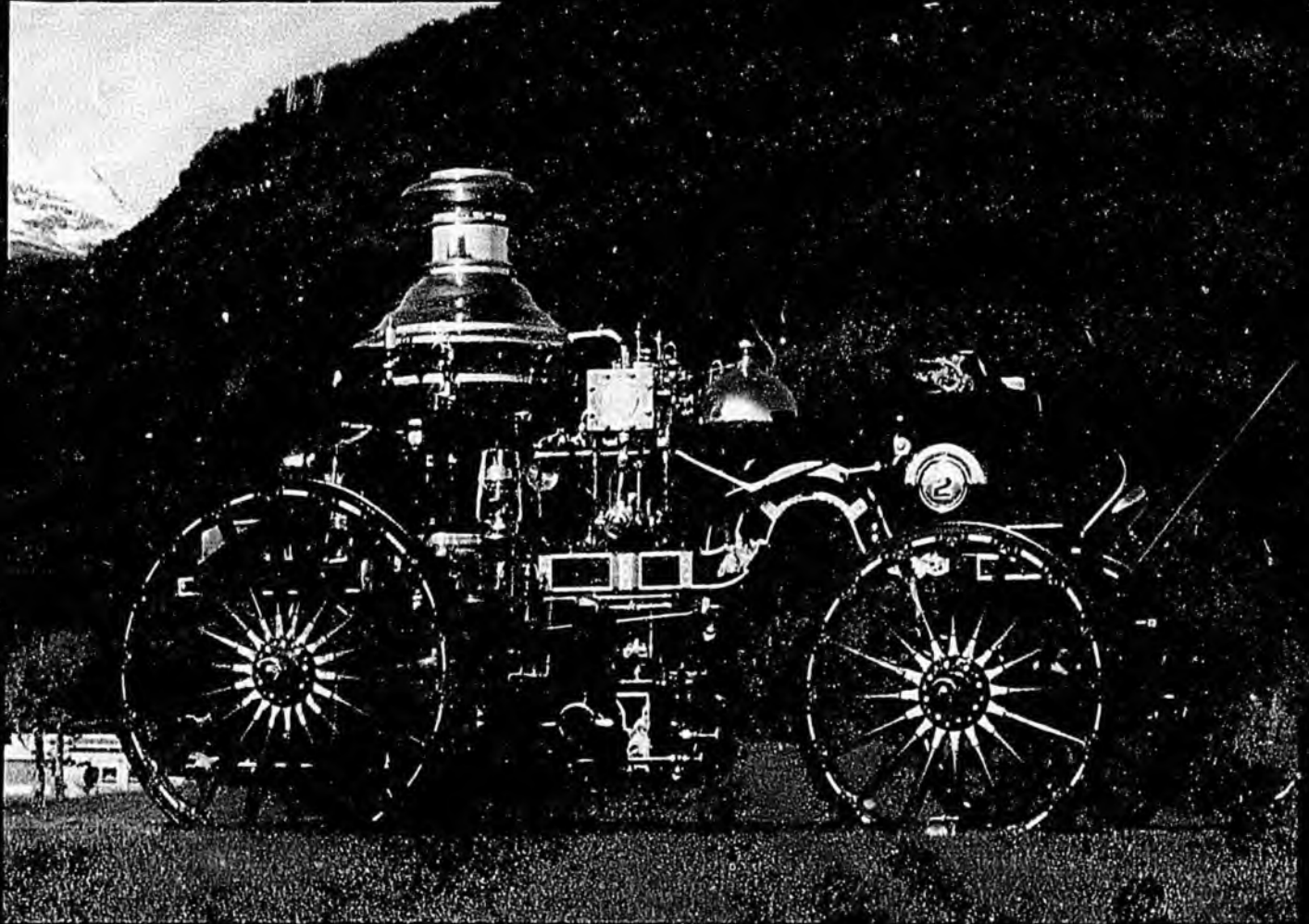
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Thomas n. Henning
Lieutenant, JVFD

RECEIVED
MAR 18 1985

FIRE

Alaska's Public Safety Crisis



Cover Photo — Courtesy of Tom Take

The cover photo shows the now restored 1907 Ahrens 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 pump — 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
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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 as 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.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A - SB 687

I.

THE FIRE PROBLEM
IN ALASKA

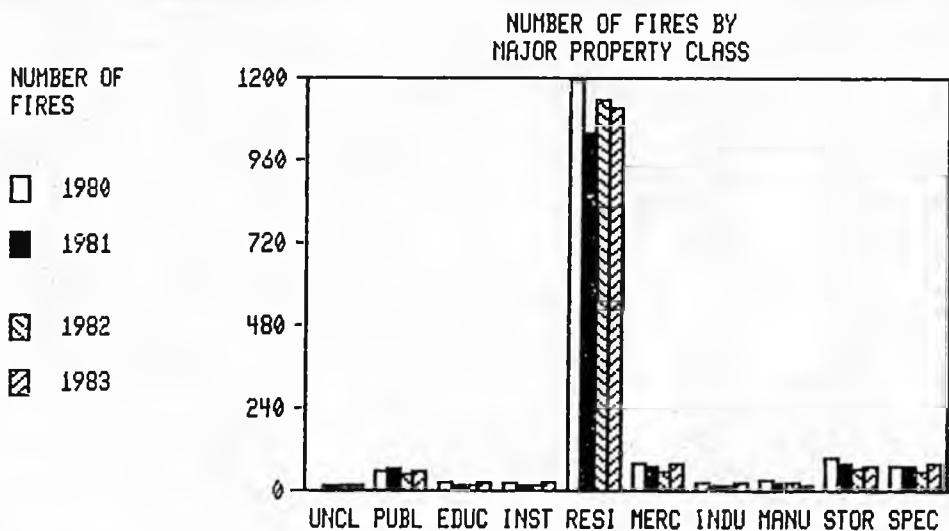
THE FIRE PROBLEM IN ALASKA

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.

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



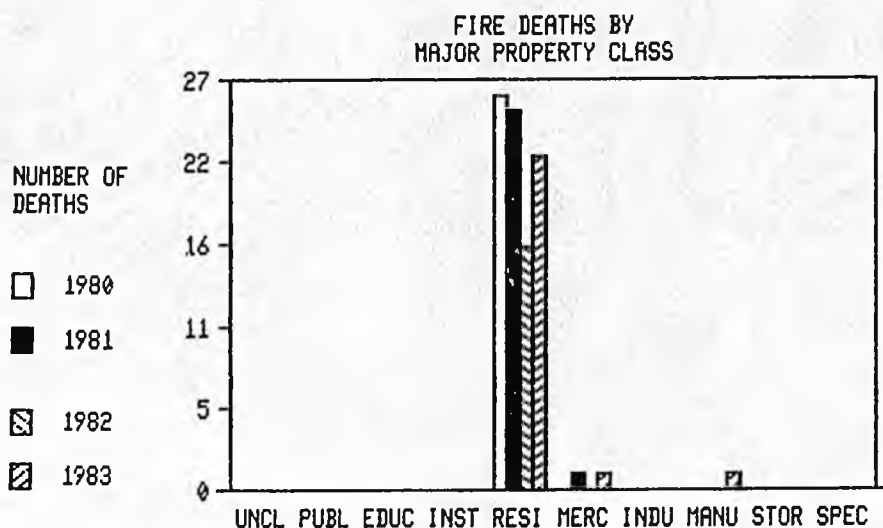
The largest number of fires by property classification occurred in residential structures. No other property class comes even close.

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:

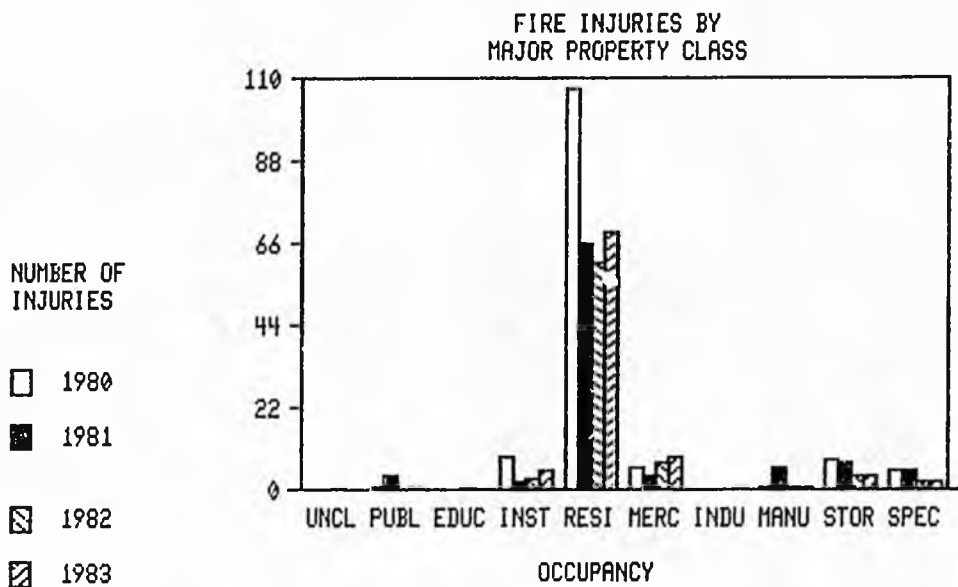
UNCL - Unclassified	MERC - Mercantile (Stores/Offices)
PUBL - Public Assembly	INDU - Industrial
EDUC - Educational	MANU - Manufacturing
INST - Institutional	STOR - Storage
RESI - Residential	SPEC - Special

CHART 2



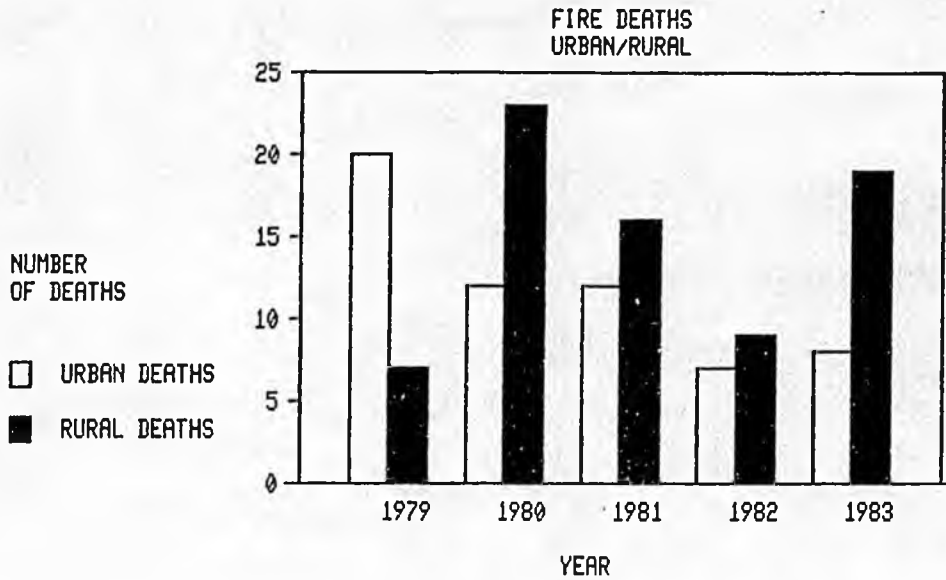
The type of structural property in which the overwhelming number of lives are lost is residential in nature. No other type structure comes even close.

CHART 3



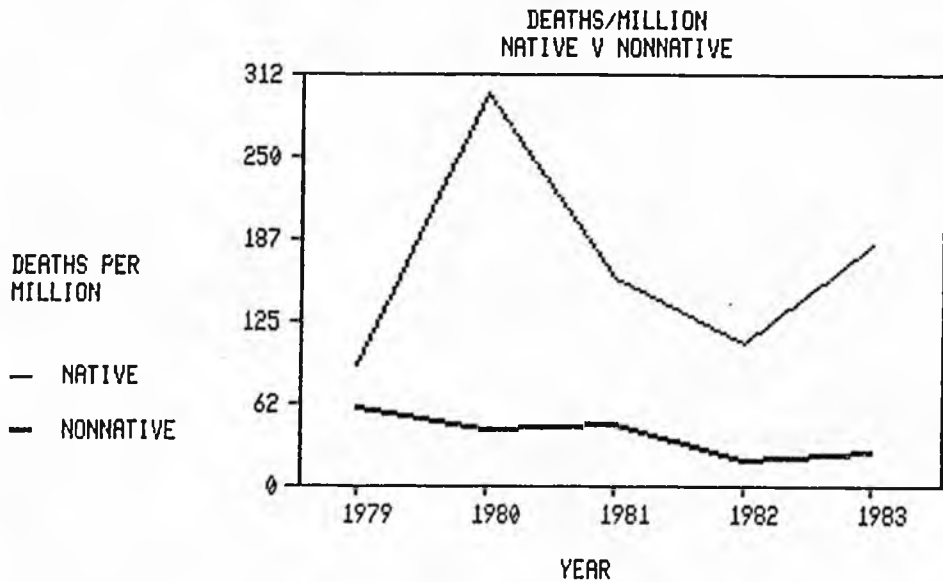
The type of property in which the overwhelming number of fire related injuries occur is residential. Although all other types of structures record very minor numbers, no other type of structure comes even close to the number of fire related injuries that occur in residential structures.

CHART 4



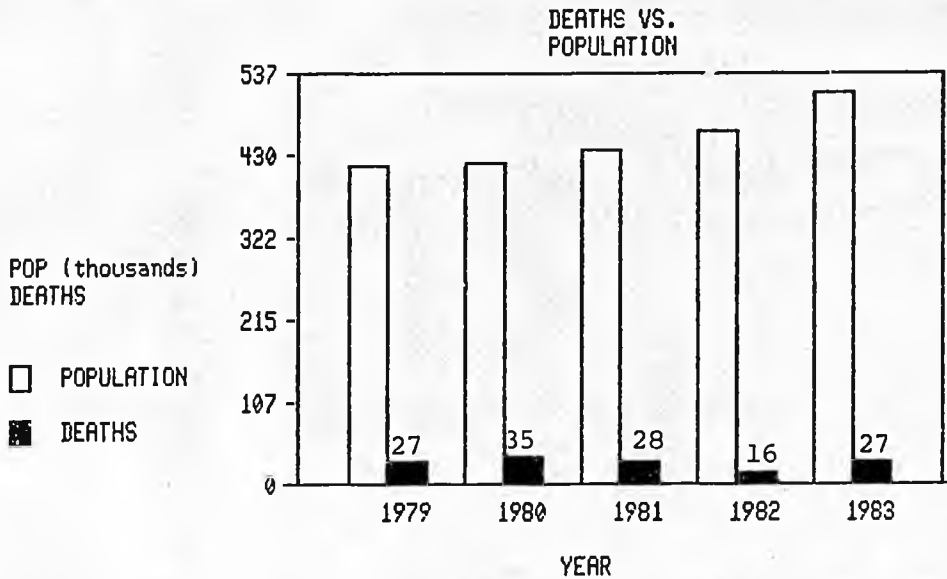
Analyzing Alaska's fire deaths in urban and rural locations shows that in four of the last five years, significantly more deaths have occurred in rural than in urban areas, despite the fact that far fewer people reside in rural areas.

CHART 5



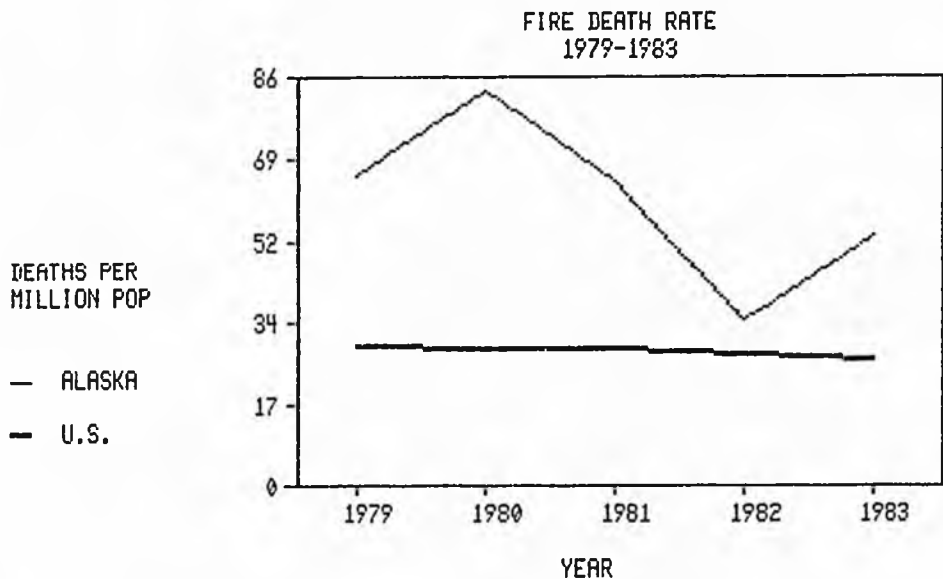
Although the Native deaths per million population fluctuate dramatically, their death rate has always exceeded that of non-natives during the last five years. The non-native death rate shows a slight trend downward over the past five years, and is closely comparable to the average U.S. fatality rate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

CHART 6



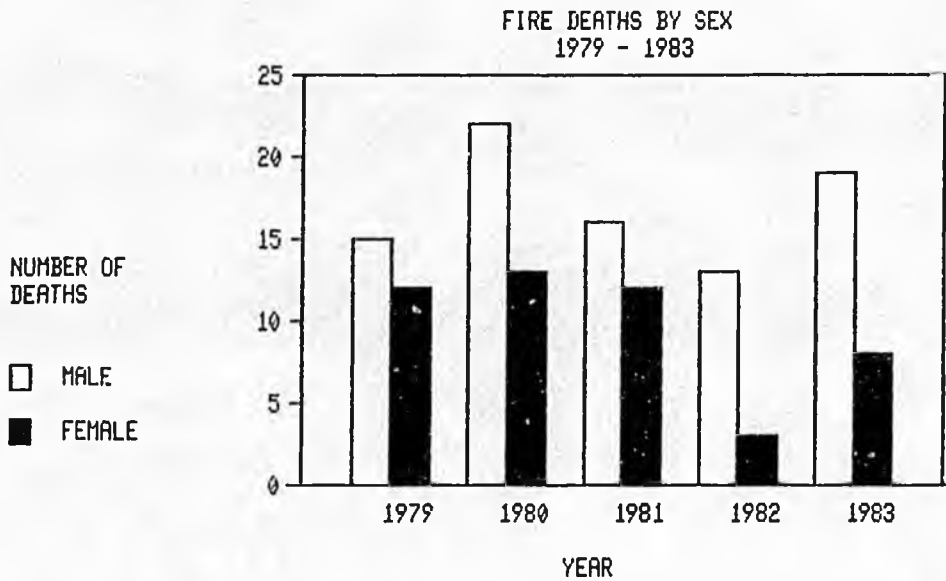
Fire deaths per se, in Alaska present no clear-cut trends, but since population is increasing, the number of fire deaths viewed as a percentage of total population appears to be decreasing.

CHART 7



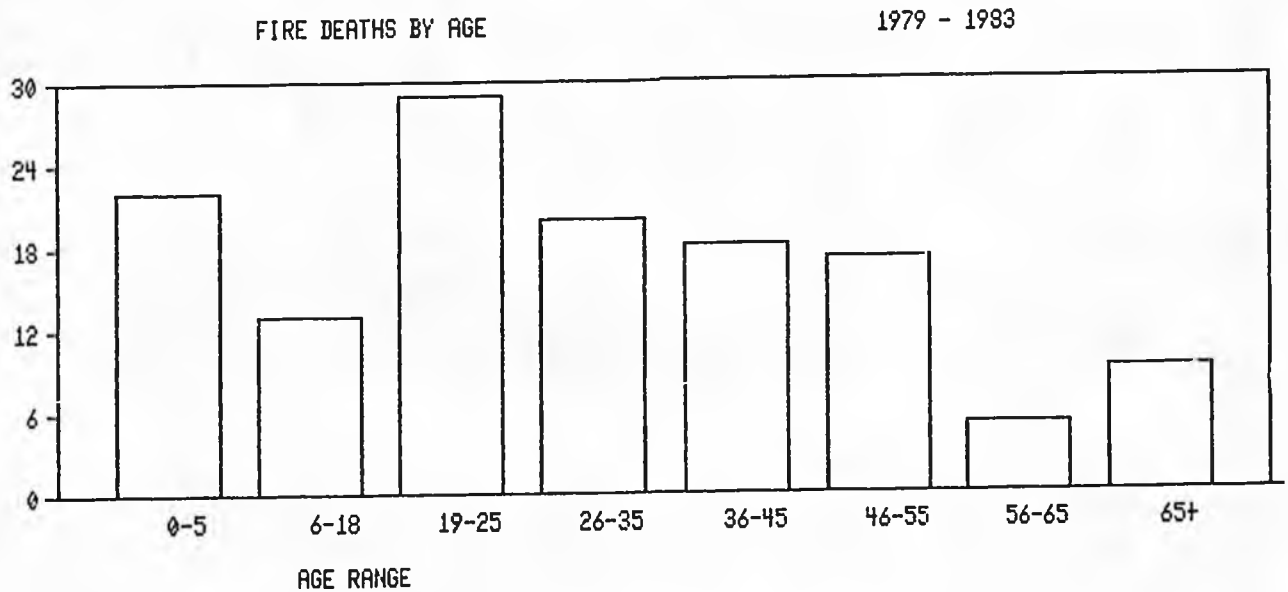
The rate of deaths due to fire in Alaska has consistently exceeded the rate of the rest of the country. The large variations in Alaska's rate is due to a relatively small data base, while the large data base of the U.S. tends to even out the fluctuations. Note that the death rate of the U.S. is decreasing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

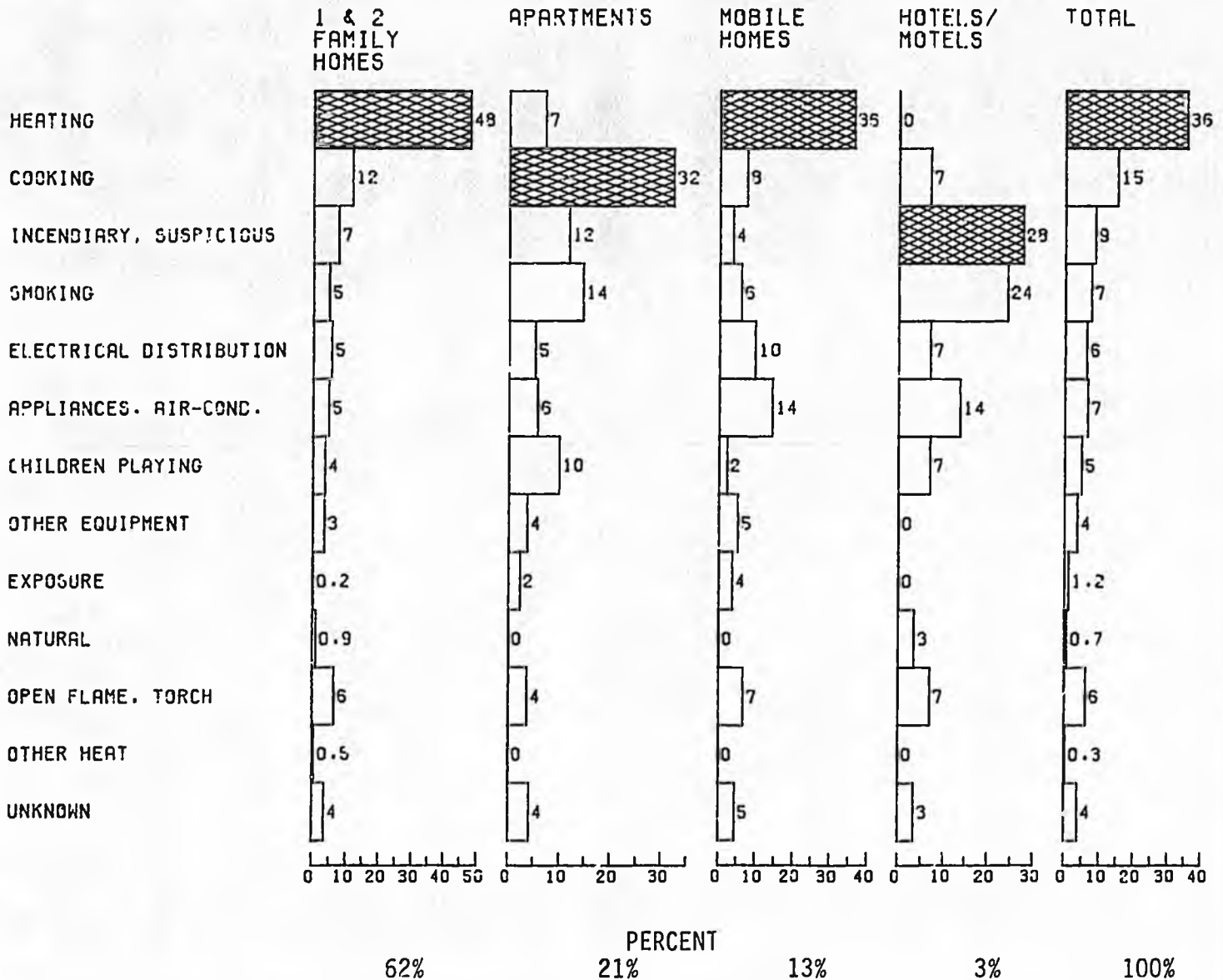


The five year compilation of fire deaths as a function of age cohorts clearly shows that the 19-25 years age group is the greatest at risk. The second highest -- the 0-5 year age cohort -- is more easily understood since babies and small children have greater difficulty fleeing a burning home.

CAUSES OF RESIDENTIAL FIRES

CHART 10²

TOTAL NFIRS FOR STATE OF ALASKA
BASED ON 83 DEPARTMENTS

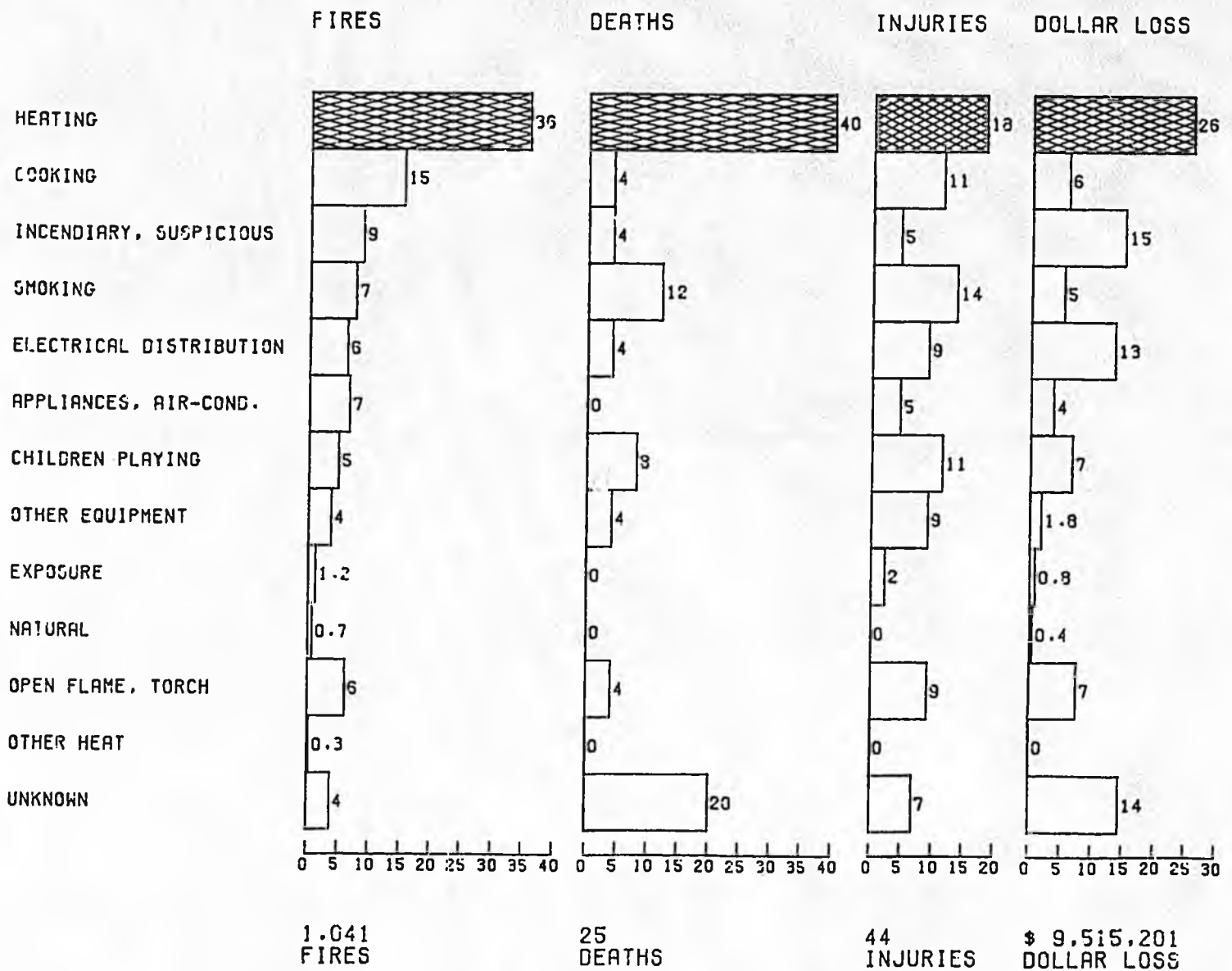


The data above shows causes of fire for selected types of residential structures. Heating caused almost half the fires in single family and duplex homes which accounted for 62% of the fires, and slightly less than that in mobile homes, which comprised only 13% of the fires, while cooking was the primary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

CAUSES OF RESIDENTIAL FIRES

CHART 11 ³

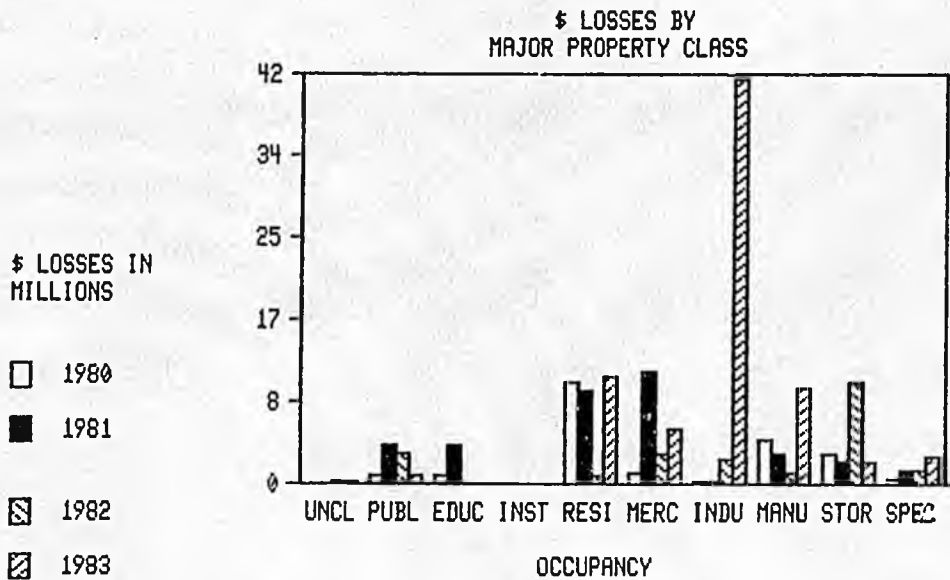
TOTAL NFIRS FOR STATE OF ALASKA
BASED ON 83 DEPARTMENTS



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.

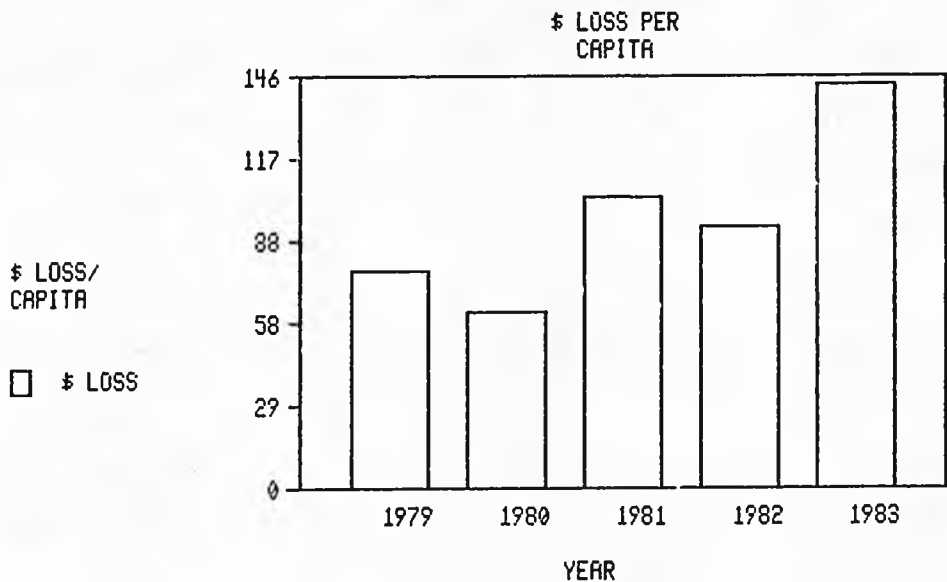
³
ibid.

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.

⁴Data 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.

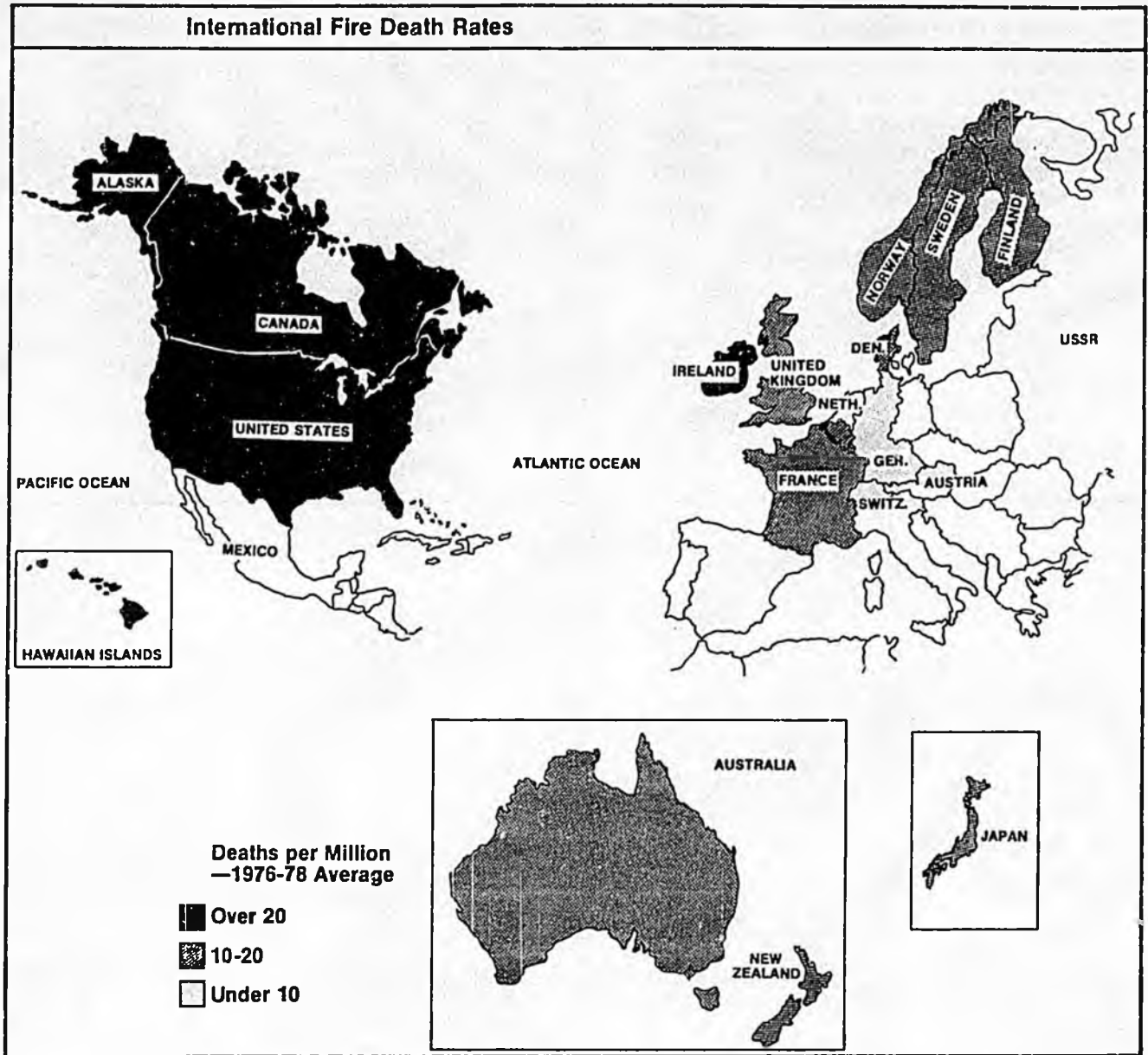
From this broad overview of the fire problem in Alaska lie the specific elements of information that can be presented as part of a fire prevention program designed to have the greatest potential for reduction of fire losses.

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.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS

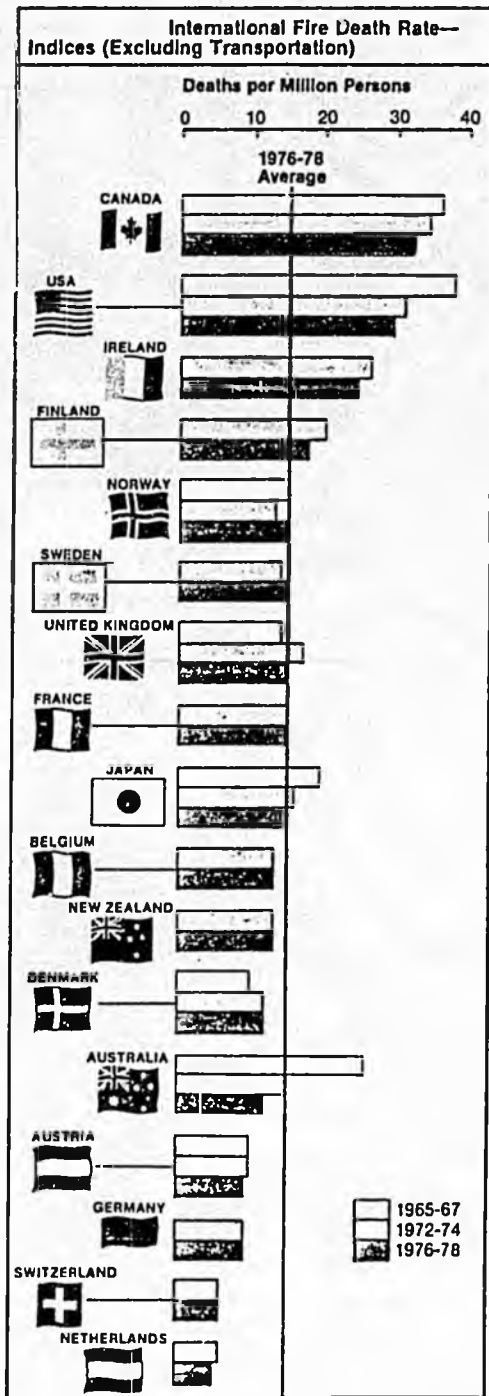
CHART 15 ⁶



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.

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 Otison, Federal Emergency Management Agency, November 20, 1984.

CHART 17

B. Wildlands Fire Data⁹

1981 - 1984

YEAR	ACRES PROTECTED (million)	# OF FIRES	CAUSE		ACRES BURNED	URBAN AREA FIRES		% of Total
			Lightning	Manmade		Mat-Su/Anch	Kenai	
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.

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 Marshal'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:

- o 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.
- o 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.
- o 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.
- o 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.

- o 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.
- o 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.
- o 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.
- o 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.
- o 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.

- o 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.
- o 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:

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