10. From All-Volunteer to Combination Staffing

Instructor: John Buckman

The volunteer fire service has a long and proud history of providing emergency services to communities throughout the United States. However, changing demographics, increasing emergency response demands, declining daytime volunteer availability, growing training requirements, and changing community expectations are challenging the ability of some all-volunteer fire departments to maintain reliable emergency response capabilities.

For many communities, the question is no longer whether volunteers are valuable. The question is whether the existing staffing model can consistently provide the level of emergency service the community needs and expects.

Transitioning from an all-volunteer department to a combination department is one of the most significant organizational decisions a fire chief and governing board may face. It affects finances, operations, culture, leadership, personnel management, and the department's relationship with its community.

This four-hour course examines how to determine when combination staffing is necessary, how to evaluate available options, and how to manage the transition without destroying the volunteer organization that built the department.

This is a course designed and developed by the International Association of Fire Chiefs.

Students will be provided with a digital copy of a workbook that is a roadmap for decision making about the need to transition.

About the Instructor:

John M. Buckman III served 55 years in the fire service from firefighter, Chief, state academy training director, author, photographer, International Association President and instructor. He has authored six books. He has produced 5 photography books. He is a highly sought after speaker for local, regional and national events. He has been at the Bryant Stiles Officers School each year since the beginning.