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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Oregon Fire Service Office Administrators Board of Directors met to conduct a full review and redraft of its long-standing strategic plan based on current issues and environment. The process included reaffirmation of the mission, vision, and values, and the review and revision of the strengths weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Finally each objective was reviewed and revised as needed to ensure each reflected achievable and relevant activities. New objectives to address current issues and important activities were added. This document is a result of that effort.

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## **ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND**

The Oregon Fire Service Office Administrators is a networking and educational organization for administrative personnel serving Oregon fire service agencies - from fire chiefs and administrative assistants to entry level clerks.

OFSOA evolved from informal networking to the formation of a state-wide organization in July 1991. Needs of fire service administrative personnel were identified; and, in the fall of 1992, a mission statement, objectives, and bylaws were developed based upon those needs. Charter Officers were installed in January 1993

Although emphasis has primarily been to meet the needs of administrative personnel, anyone affiliated with a fire service organization is eligible for membership and encouraged to attend OFSOA sponsored training activities.

## **MISSION**

The mission statement of an organization is intended to describe, in succinct terms, the purpose for the organization's existence. It articulates the principal reason for the organization's presence within its community.

The OFSOA, through a consensus process, developed the mission statement below.

### **OFSOA Mission Statement**

**To support Oregon's fire service and its office personnel through education and networking**

## **VISION**

In addition to knowing who they are and understanding their beliefs, all successful organizations need to define where they strive to be in the future.

Vision statements provide targets of excellence that the organization will strive towards and provide a basis for their goals and objectives. The following vision statements were developed for OFSOA.

### **OFSOA Vision Statements**

#### **We will be:**

- The premier organization that office personnel want to join.
- Recognized by the fire service as the leading administrative resource and a valuable partner.
- An organization that empowers members to succeed in their jobs.
- The leading education and training resource for all fire service office personnel.
- An organization that continually inspires our members' personal and professional growth.
- An organization whose members are informed about office administration issues

## **VALUES**

Establishing values embraced by all members of an organization is extremely important. They recognize those features and considerations that make up the personality of the organization. Those assembled for the OFSOA strategic planning process felt it absolutely necessary to declare the following statement of values for the organization.

### **OFSOA Values**

#### **Relationships**

We value developing and maintaining relationships that are supportive and encouraging.

#### **Image**

We value the professional image of our organization as an integral part of the fire service.

#### **Communications**

We value timely communication that supports the needs of our members.

#### **Training**

We value progressive education and training that is pertinent to the professional and personal growth of our members.

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Goals and objectives are necessary to provide the individual members with clear direction. As goals and objectives are management tools, they should be updated on an ongoing basis to identify what has been accomplished and to note changes within the organization.

The strategic planning team set priorities for the accomplishment of specific objectives. Those that carried higher priorities are scheduled for completion first and lower priority objectives scheduled later. Overall these goals and objectives provide very specific timelines for the next several years and more general timelines beyond that.

**Goal 1** – Provide timely and effective communication to association membership

**Goal 2** – Deliver quality education and training that encourages and supports professional and personal development

**Goal 3** – Create a highly effective and efficient organization

**Goal 4** – Provide comprehensive, up-to-date, and reliable information and assistance to the fire service

**Goal 5** – Develop effective partnerships with other fire service organizations

**Goal 1 – Provide timely and effective communication to association membership**

**Objective 1-A**            **Enhance communication utilizing electronic capabilities to improve the speed at which members receive information**

**Timelines**            2008 - 2009

**Responsibility**        Secretary/Communications

**Critical Tasks:**

- Email the newsletters in PDF format to all members and fire agencies
- Train additional personnel on how to do email broadcasts
- Train and assign additional members to publish information on the website
- Post newsletters on Daily Dispatch

**Objective 1-B**            **Develop new procedures and pathways to provide timely communication of important information to membership**

**Timelines**            2009 - 2009

**Responsibility**        Past President / Protocol

**Critical Tasks:**

- Develop a protocol that defines the type of communications pathway to use for each type of communication and the audience to receive the information
  - Email
  - Website
  - Other
- Re-evaluate the size and scope of the printed newsletter
- Survey members on their opinion of printed material issued by OFSOA

**Goal 2 – Deliver quality education and training that encourages and supports professional and personal development**

**Objective 2-A**            **Review and refine the existing accreditation levels to ensure it meets current needs.**

**Timelines**            2009 - 2010

**Responsibility**        Vice President / Education

**Critical Tasks:**

- Have the accreditation committee review the current levels and update if needed to ensure requirements are up-to-date
- Research possibility of adding job shadowing/task books as an option for accruing hours

**Objective 2-B**            **Expand the accreditation program to include a fourth level**

**Timelines**            2010 - 2012

**Responsibility**        Vice President / Education

**Critical Tasks:**

- Develop criteria with focus on leadership skills
- Develop criteria to include instructor/presenter skills
- Include training that builds on the previous three levels

**Objective 2-C**            **Increase the utilization of membership at workshops and conferences**

**Timelines**            2009 - 2012

**Responsibility**        Vice President / Education

**Critical Tasks:**

- Identify incentives to members who present at workshops/conferences
- Include presentation hours as credit towards accreditation level four
- Develop a “talent” list for future training
- Provide instructor development courses to provide potential instructors the opportunity to learn skills and build self-confidence

**Goal 3 – Create a highly effective and efficient organization**

**Objective 3-A            Develop a new member orientation program**

**Timelines**                    2008 - 2009

**Responsibility**            Treasurer / Membership

**Critical Tasks:**

- Review and update the “Welcome Packet”
- Educate new members in leadership opportunities within OFSOA
- Establish a protocol to highlight new members in the newsletter
- Establish a procedure to ensure region reps are notified of new members

**Objective 3-B            Evaluate the benefits to increased member participation of holding more regional meetings and training**

**Timelines**                    2010 - 2013

**Responsibility**            Past President / Region Representatives

**Critical Tasks:**

- Hold smaller regional events such as:
  - region specific training sponsored by districts
  - region specific networking situations
- Compare the number of members attending the regional event with those attending past state-wide events

**Objective 3-C            Increase board and committee participation by addressing attendance challenges produced by the geographic distance between members**

**Timelines**                    2008 - 2009

**Responsibility**            President

**Critical Tasks:**

- Research and implement appropriate teleconferencing and video conference
  - Research equipment requirements and services
  - Evaluate cost of services
- Develop a schedule to rotate board meetings around the state

**Objective 3-D**                    **Clearly define responsibility and authority for each Board position and for committees to create a better understanding of each position and reduce the time commitment involved**

**Timelines**                    2008 - 2010

**Responsibility**            President

**Critical Tasks:**

- Review and update job descriptions and scope of duties for each position and committee to balance workload and make it reasonable
- Explore technology opportunities, such as web based registration, to increase flow of information
- Develop a welcome packet for newly elected or appointed board and chair members
- Provide job orientation training to new board members
  - Identify the objectives of the training
  - Identify the tools and information needed to deliver training
  - Identify trainers
  - Schedule training sessions following officer elections
  - Include training on techniques and skills that will be time-savers
- Establish a clear charter and provide specific direction to each committee
- Ensure an effective transition by having outgoing officers provide status reports to incoming officers on specific activities and projects in which they were involved

**Objective 3-E                    Increase membership participation on committees and sub-committees**

**Timelines**                    2009 - 2011

**Responsibility**              President

**Critical Tasks:**

- Break down committee responsibilities into components to allow matching with members skills
- Place “help wanted” ads for committee members in the newsletter and on the web site
- Provide the membership renewal interest survey results to committee chairs and board members
- Announce openings on committees and board during conferences and workshops. Include contact person and details about the position or committee
- Educate members on each committee duties and responsibilities
- Match up interest and skills with committee needs
  - Identify a person to review members skills and make initial contact
- Encourage committee chairs to delegate tasks to committee members

**Objective 3-F                    Identify new members and board members at OFSOA events**

**Timelines**                    2008 - 2009

**Responsibility**              Treasurer / Membership / Region Representatives

**Critical Tasks:**

- Develop a way to differentiate new members and to ensure they are introduced at events
- Establish consistent identification for board members
- Include method and procedure in event binders

**Objective 3-G            Set committee chair term limits**

**Timelines**            2010 - 2013

**Responsibility**        Past President / Protocol

**Critical Tasks:**

- Determine appropriate time terms
- Build rotation schedule for committee chairs
- Add guidelines for rotation to general committee chair chapter of policy manual

**Objective 3-H            Develop statistics and benchmarks to follow attendance trends at conference and workshops**

**Timelines**            2009 - 2010

**Responsibility**        Vice President / Education

**Critical Tasks:**

- Survey non-attending members to identify reasons why they are not attending
- Rate all conference and workshop topics by member rating
- Establish acceptable attendance at sponsored events
- Determine what percentage of attendance at conference is acceptable

**Objective 3-I            Improve the OFSOA's financial controls**

**Timelines**            2008 - 2010

**Responsibility**        Past President / Protocol

**Critical Tasks:**

- Establish a policy on financial controls
- Establish a procedure to:
  - Conduct monthly bank statement reviews
  - Review bank reconciliation reports
- Establish a flow for the bank statements and reconciliation reports
- Establish a procedure so that account records are back-up to a second off-site computer
- Review financial control policy and practices annually

**Goal 4 – Provide comprehensive, up-to-date, and reliable information and assistance to the fire service**

**Objective 4-A            Provide information for inclusion in other fire service publications**

**Timelines**                    2008 - 2009

**Responsibility**            President

**Critical Tasks:**

- Submit articles/information to OFDDA, OVFA, SDAO, and Gated Wye
- Advertise workshops and conferences in other fire service publications

**Objective 4-B            Promote the value of OFSOA so that districts/departments will work hard to fund their office personnel’s participation**

**Timelines**                    2008 - 2013

**Responsibility**            President

**Critical Tasks:**

- Develop a comprehensive marketing plan
- Encourage posting of the OFSOA newsletter in fire stations
- Keep OFSOA information and accomplishments in front of the fire chiefs
- Include the website address on all correspondence
- Continue attending the other association meetings and fire service joint meetings
- Solicit testimonials from fire chiefs that support us to include in our newsletter and to send to districts/departments who don’t have their personnel involved
- Include in every newsletter an article or ad on joining OFSOA and the number of current members
- Help members give reports to their chiefs/boards on the conferences and workshops they’ve attended
- Market ourselves as a valuable resource to departments who have chiefs as one-person offices

<b>Goal 5 – Develop effective partnerships with other fire service organizations</b>
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**Objective 5-A**            **Make other fire and emergency services organizations aware of resources that OFSOA can provide**

**Timelines**            2008 - 2010

**Responsibility**        Secretary / Communications

**Critical Tasks:**

- Offer administrative support at Oregon Fire Service events
- Offer OFSOA information and training opportunities to other fire and emergency services organizations such as ODF, Dispatch, USFS, BLM, Police
- Communicate OFSOA capabilities with other state fire service associations

**Objective 5-B**            **Increase the interaction with office administrator associations in other states to learn ways to improve our own organization**

**Timelines**            2009 - 2013

**Responsibility**        President / Past President

**Critical Tasks:**

- Identify and make contact with office administrator associations in other states
- Participate in their conferences and workshops
- Encourage their participation in OFSOA conferences and workshops
- Include links to other office administrator associations on the OFSOA website and encourage them to link theirs to the OFSOA site

## **APPENDIX**

This section contains the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis created during the process of conducting the major update of this strategic plan. A comparison with the previous iteration of this assessment clearly indicates the organization has made significant improvements in its service to its membership.

### **STRENGTHS**

It is important for any organization to identify their strengths in order to assure they are capable of providing the services requested by its members and to ensure that strengths are consistent with the issues facing the organization. Through a consensus process, the strengths of OFSOA were identified.

#### **Strengths of OFSOA**

- OFSOA has a membership with diverse skills, abilities, and experiences
- OFSOA develops and utilizes leadership skills
- As an organization OFSOA has access to valuable resources
- OFSOA is focused on our mission, vision, and values
- Strong camaraderie and communication among members
- OFSOA provides networking between small and large agencies
- OFSOA is financially stable
- The Oregon fire service recognizes OFSOA as a valuable and credible organization
- OFSOA has a valid accreditation program
- OFSOA has a stable membership made up of a number of people who have many years with the association
- OFSOA has provided quality speakers and presenters on timely topics at conferences and workshops
- Excellent website
- OFSOA has a good organizational structure
- OFSOA is able to provide affordable training and financial assistance through the scholarship program
- Regional reps provide effective contact with non-members

**WEAKNESSES**

Performance or lack of performance within an organization depends greatly on the identification of weaknesses and how they are confronted. These areas of needed enhancements are those day-to-day issues and concerns that may slow or inhibit progress.

**Weaknesses of OFSOA**

- The geographic distance within membership makes participation a challenge
- Busy schedules hinder commitment to OFSOA
- Timely communication to membership is poor
- Low membership participation on committees and board positions
- Inconsistent training for committee members and board members
- Not marketing the value of membership
- Same small group tends to do all the work
- We don't follow through with bringing new people into activities
- Not identifying new members and board members at events
- Little transition effort when new board and committee members are seated by outgoing members
- People are holding board and committee positions too long

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

Many things exist as unrealized opportunities for the organization. The focus of opportunities is not solely on existing service, but on expanding and developing new possibilities both inside and beyond the traditional service area. Many opportunities exist for OFSOA.

### **Opportunities for OFSOA**

- Expand the accreditation program (leadership development, instructor skills, internship)
- Utilize electronic capabilities and technology as a major source of communications
- Continue participation in other fire service publications
- Continue to provide affordable education and training
- Utilize membership at workshops and conferences
- Be more of a resource to other fire organizations
- Increase interaction with office administrator associations in other states
- Be more of a resource to other fire agencies including districts, departments, ODF, USFS, BLM, police and dispatch)
- Develop a mentoring program for board positions
- Develop a mentoring program for new members

## **THREATS**

There are conditions in the internal and external environment that are not under the organization's control. However, by being aware of them the organization can develop plans and programs to either mitigate or respond when a threat becomes reality. By recognizing possible threats, an organization can greatly reduce the potential for loss.

### **Threats to OFSOA**

- Fewer opportunities to train and network
  - Logistics (office coverage, distance)
  - Time commitment
  - Budget cuts
  - Lack of recognition by others (chiefs, other associations)
- Membership not attending conferences and workshops
- Insufficient financial controls
- Drop in membership and participation