



## POSITION PAPER 1

**Subject:** Professional Qualification for the Fire Service in the State of Washington  
**Date:** May 4, 1989  
**Amended:**

### Purpose Statement

Within the State of Washington there presently exists a multitude of individualized and divergent standards of acceptable performance for firefighters and fire officers.

The Association recognizes that the intent of all fire organizations has been to staff their departments with personnel with the highest level of professional skills, knowledge, and abilities, in order to optimize each service delivery system.

The Association recognizes that a wide variation exists in minimum acceptable standards of competence within the State of Washington.

The Association recognizes that the prevailing performance standards may meet or exceed those endorsed and promulgated by committees of their peers or the National Fire Protection Association.

The Association recognizes that minimum standards of performance for firefighters and fire officers transcend the designations of career or volunteer.

The Association recognizes that firefighters and fire officers in the State of Washington are not properly recognized professionals due to the lack of an objective certification program that ensures that minimum requirements of professional competence are met and maintained.

The Association recognizes that the development and implementation of professional standards are but the first steps in state certification; there must also be meaningful and controlled testing to ascertain competence.

### Recommendation

The Washington State Association of Fire Chiefs seeks to implement a state funded and administered fire service certification program by the year 1995, that:



1. encompasses all levels of fire service activities, including specialty services, and
2. ensures that minimum requirements of professional competence are established and offered to all fire service organizations , and
3. meets or exceeds the National Professional Qualifications System (NFPA).

The Washington State Association of Fire Chiefs will solicit the support of the State Fire Protection Board on a state-wide certification program that provides for proper recognition of the professionalism of firefighters and fire officers in the State of Washington.