

**2019 LEGISLATIVE REPORT
TRAINING CENTER GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE REPORT
ROBERT H. WOOD JR. CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND FIRE SERVICE TRAINING CENTER
PITTSFORD, VERMONT
JANUARY 2018**



Pursuant to Number 118, Section 12. 29 V.S.A. § 842 (a) there is a safety subcommittee created under the Training Center Governance Committee. The safety subcommittee shall meet annually on or before February 1, review the safety records of the Training Facility and on or before July 1, submit to the Training Center Governance Committee its recommendations on how safety at the Training Facility can be improved upon.

The Training Center Governance Committee shall review the report and shall consider the recommendations of the safety committee. The Training Center Governance Committee shall report annually, on or before January 15. The report shall address any safety issues discovered at the Training Facility and what steps, if any, have been taken to remedy those issues, and whether the Governance Committee has instituted any of the changes.

Richard Gauthier, Executive Director
Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council
Chair, Training Center Governance Committee

Date

Michael Desrochers, Executive Director
Division of Fire Safety
Vice Chair, Training Center Governance Committee

Date

Introduction

The Training Center Governance Committee was created in 2015 under the authority of Act 26. The purpose of the committee is to govern the access to, use and future needs of, and capital investments in the Training Facility so agencies continue to enjoy access to the facility. The Governance Committee provides a single voice to the legislature on these key areas of responsibility and provides a viable communication link for the legislature and those who use the facility. The Governance Committee also provides an avenue for users to resolve conflicts on the site and brings a consistent management system to the facility. A primary goal of the Governance Committee is to pave a path forward working with the Vermont Legislature to enhance the infrastructure of the aging 1907 training center facility so we can better prepare our first responders and emergency service personnel. Since 2015, the Governance Committee has been able to constructively use its authority to enhance the facility's use by working collaboratively together as a single entity with the same visions and goals for long term sustainability.

The *Vermont Fire Academy* delivers training using national safety standards/models published by the National Fire Protection Association, coupled with standard operating procedures to address specific safety concerns. Title 20, Chapter 179 of Vermont Statutes requires that a Fire Training Council govern Fire Academy training. *Vermont Police Academy* delivers training through following rules outlined in the Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council Administrative Procedures (currently being revised), Vermont Statute, State and Federal court decisions (which evolve and change regularly), nationally recommended best practices from a host of different law enforcement entities such as the International Association of Police Chiefs (IACP), The International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training (IADLEST), and expert committee recommendations.

Delivering training to those who run toward danger to help others can present challenges to the instructors. Fire fighters and law enforcement officers have an inherent risk of injury on the job and at training. The risk of injury is clearly associated with physical attributes.

SCOPE AND OVERVIEW

- General overview of training
- How many injuries were reported in 2017
- What type of injuries were reported
- What is being done to reduce injuries

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Training Center Governance Committee convened with members of the Safety Sub-Committee relevant to this legislative report. Law enforcement and firefighter training occur on campus in Pittsford and off campus throughout the state. The Fire Academy relies on two national safety standards and Standard Operating Procedures to guide instructors on a consistent application of course delivery. The Vermont Police Academy uses rules, statutes, best practices and court rendered decisions.

Fire Academy:

- The Fire Academy uses the National Fire Protection Association(NFPA) Standard 1403 – *Standard on Live Fire Training Evolutions* to ensure the safety of Instructors and Students.
- The Fire Academy has created a rehabilitation program using NFPA 1583 - *Standard on Health-Related Fitness Programs for Fire Department Members* to ensure all personnel are physically capable of starting and continuing strenuous activity.
- The Fire Academy uses approved Standard Operating Procedures and a Fire Instructor Handbook to ensure training is delivered as a safe as possible in a consistent manner.

Vermont Police Academy

- Training is delivered through following rules outlined in the Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council Administrative Procedures (currently being revised),
- Vermont Statute
- State and Federal court decisions which evolve and change regularly
- Nationally recommended best practices from a host of different law enforcement entities such as the International Association of Police Chiefs (IACP), The International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training (IADLEST), and expert committee recommendations.

In calendar year 2017, the Vermont Fire Academy trained approximately 1500 students in various curriculums, while the Vermont Police Academy trained (76) new law enforcement officers in the Level – III basic training and approximately fifty (50) law enforcement officers in Level – II training programs, coupled with dozens of veteran officers trained. In 2017, there were six fire fighter injuries and sixteen law enforcement injuries. Two of the six fire fighter injuries were instructors and four were students. Fifty percent of the fire fighter injuries occurred during use of the ventilation prop while the other three were sporadic. All sixteen law enforcement injuries were students. Of the sixteen injuries four did not require any medical attention and 50% of the injuries occurred during use of force training.

The police and fire academy have taken steps to better organize injury reporting. First, the Police Academy and Fire Academy created a single injury reporting form, and secondly, the form will be evaluated by the safety subcommittee who will report back to the Training Center Governance Committee with recommendations on how to mitigate/reduce injuries.

There are challenges in reporting injuries as some students do not report injuries in a timely manner, despite being queried for injuries multiple times throughout a scheduled training event. This can make it challenging to collect information from witnesses and staff and inspect equipment used to determine if it may have played a role. Students are frequently instructed to promptly report injuries when they occur. Many students are municipal employees and we have no way of knowing if they file a First Report of Injury. Additionally, we cannot always validate pre-existing medical conditions, even with our best intentions. We continue to focus on preventing injuries, improving reporting, and educating trainees.

The Fire Academy and Police Academy have well established protocols on reporting injuries and when considering how many students are trained in a year in the respective professions, the training center continues to have an excellent safety record. Both agencies continue to work together to provide forms and policies related to safety that mirror each other.

FIRE ACADEMY AND POLICE ACADEMY INJURIES

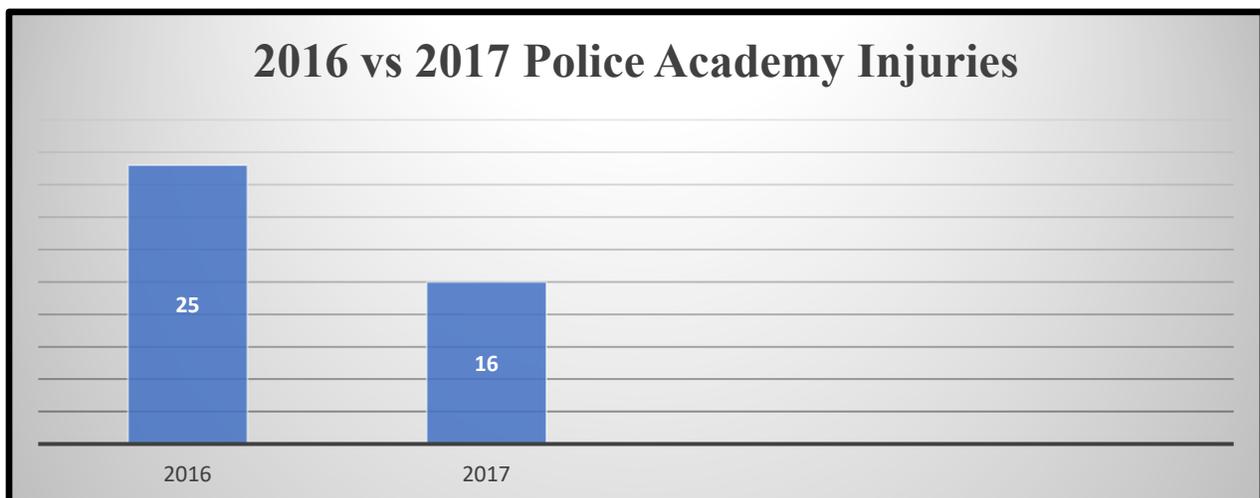
Vermont Police Academy Injury Reporting:

The Vermont Police Academy has developed a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), which is incorporated into the Policies & Procedures Manual. The SOP provides staff with a consistent approach to handling a student's First Report of Injury. Students reporting injuries or training related illness from a Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council (VCJTC) sponsored training, on or off campus, are required to submit a First Report of Injury Form as soon as reasonably practicable following the event. The report is forwarded through the chain-of-command.

The instructor(s) administering the training in which the injury or illness was reported is required to submit an **Instructor Injury Report Form**, documenting the event from their perspective. The new form was created jointly by the Vermont Police Academy and Vermont Fire Academy. The new form is reviewed by the Safety Sub-Committee on a routine basis, as needed, and presented to the Training Center Governance Committee with recommendations on how to reduce or mitigate the injury/illness.

Furthermore, the employing agency of the injured student is notified of the injury and the circumstances surrounding the incident. If the student works for a municipality, the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) is notified. All First Reports of Injury and Instructor Injury Report Forms are stored confidentially.

There were sixteen (16) documented injuries in 2017, as compared to twenty-five (25) in 2016. Eight (8) of the injuries were purportedly related to Use-of-Force & Tactics training. Six (6) injuries were related to physical training activities and two (2) were unclear. Medical treatment was sought for twelve (12) of the sixteen (16) injuries.



FIRE SERVICE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT INJURIES

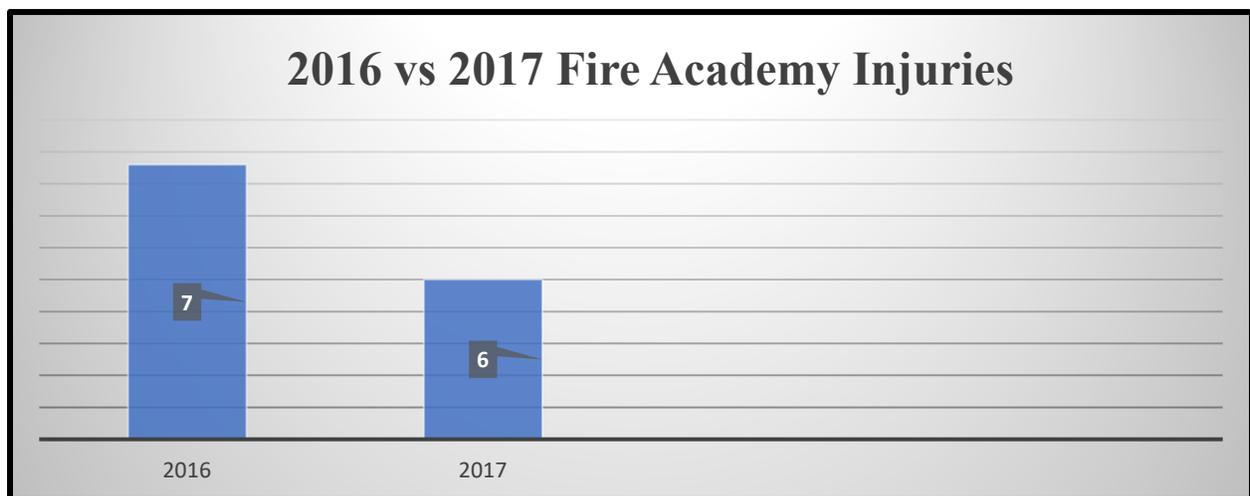
Vermont Fire Academy Injury Reporting:

The Fire Academy uses the National Fire Protection Association(NFPA) Standard 1403 – *Standard on Live Fire Training Evolutions* to ensure the safety of Instructors and Students. Further the fire academy has created a rehabilitation program using NFPA 1583 - *Standard on Health-Related Fitness Programs for Fire Department Members*.

The instructor(s) administering the training in which the injury or illness was reported is required to submit an Instructor Injury Report Form, documenting the event from their perspective. The new form was created jointly by the Vermont Police Academy and Vermont Fire Academy. The new form is reviewed by the Safety Sub-Committee on a routine basis as needed and presented to the Training Center Governance Committee with recommendations on how to reduce or mitigate the injury/illness.

Furthermore, the employing agency of the injured student is notified of the injury and the circumstances surrounding the incident. If the student works for a municipality, the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) is notified. All First Reports of Injury and Instructor Injury Report Forms are stored confidentially.

Students shall handle any first report of injury with their local agencies while the Vermont Fire Academy Site Coordinator shall file any staff reports with the Vermont Department of Human Resources.



FIRE SERVICE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT INJURIES

INJURY Type	OCCUPATION	LOCATION	COURSE NAME	HOSPITAL	FIRST REPORT of INJURY - Notes
Head Injury	Fire Fighter	VFA-Pittsford	Ventilation	No	No - finished training
Pulled Muscle	Fire Fighter	Chester	Ventilation	N0	Unknown
Head Injury	Fire Fighter	Lyndonville	Haz Mat OPS	No - First Aid	Unknown
Knee Injury	Fire Fighter	Randolph	Live Fire Burn	Emergency Room	Unknown
Bruise to Side	Fire Instructor	VFA-Pittsford	Ventilation Prop	Hospital next Day	Yes- but staff not aware of injury
Chest Pain-Medical	Fire fighter	VFA- Pittsford	Fire Fighter 2	Emergency Room	Unknown
Bruised Finger	Police	Academy-Pittsford	Use of Force	No	Unknown
Running-PT-Pain	Police	Academy-Pittsford	Physical Training	Yes	Unknown
Sprinting- PT-Groin Pain	Police	Academy-Pittsford	Physical Training	Yes	Unknown
Rib Pain	Police	Academy-Pittsford	Use of force	Yes	Unknown
Knee Pain	Police	Academy-Pittsford	Use of Force	No	Unknown
Hip flexor Pain	Police	Academy-Pittsford	PT- Kickball	Yes	Unknown
Ankle Pain	Police	Academy-Pittsford	PT-?	Yes	Unknown
Hamstring Injury	Police	Academy-Pittsford	PT	Yes	Unknown
Eye Abrasion	Police	Academy-Pittsford	OC Training	Yes	Unknown
Exhaustion	Police	Academy-Pittsford	PT-Running	Transported to ER	Unknown
Wrist and Toe Pain	Police	Academy-Pittsford	Use of Force	No	Unknown
Left Shoulder Pain	Police	Academy-Pittsford	Use of Force	No	Unknown
Arm Pain	Police	Academy-Pittsford	Use of Force	Yes	Unknown
Concussion	Police	Academy-Pittsford	Use of Force	Yes	Unknown
Ankle Pain	Police	Academy-Pittsford	Unclear	Yes	Unknown
Abdominal Pain	Police	Academy-Pittsford	PT- Sprinting	Yes	Unknown

FIRE AND POLICE INJURY OVERVIEW/SUMMARY

The goal of both Academy's is not to have any injuries and to minimize those injuries which may occur. Certainly, the demand for physical activity whether running, climbing, lifting equipment, using equipment, engaging in one on one restraint drills, using heavy equipment, training with animals or doing routine drills exposes the students and instructors are exposed to hazardous conditions. The fire academy recognizes 50% of the injuries in 2016, were in part, related to the Ventilation prop. The head injury occurred when an instructor was assembling the prop and a piece of wood slipped out of his hand and hit another instructor who was not wearing head protection. Now head protection is required when assembling the prop. A fire instructor was dismantling the Ventilation prop when he slipped and bruised his side. We now provide Vibram slip resistant tread on boots.

Of the sixteen (16) injuries at the police academy in 2017, 50% occurred during Use-of-Force & Tactics Training (8 injuries), 37% occurred during Physical Fitness Training (6 injuries), and 12% were unknown (2 injuries).

We conduct after action reviews of injuries (whenever possible) and identify potential cause. In all instances of injuries in 2016, they were unique and not connected to any one particular exercise, drill or technique; they appeared random. Depending on frequency or severity, we initiate modifications to mitigate future injuries whenever possible.

Considering the volume and intensity of training for fire fighters and law enforcement officers in a myriad of disciplines, demanding psychomotor skills from students (use-of-force, patrol procedures, firearms, K-9 training, etc.), injuries are minimal. Students are frequently briefed on injury mitigation and reporting, provided adequate warm-ups (when appropriate) and given protective gear when injuries are foreseeable. Furthermore, instructors are trained in injury prevention and first aid / CPR. First aid kits are readily available to students and instructors and personnel with higher levels of medical training are identified beforehand in case an injury occurs.

In-Closing: The Safety Sub-Committee and members of the Governance Committee have created a single injury reporting form to bring a consistent approach to evaluating injuries. The Safety Sub-Committee will receive copies of all reported injuries for identifying ways to make improvements. A copy of the injury report form will be provided to the hiring agency or representative advising them of the injury. In 2018, the Safety Sub-Committee will be more active in matters concerning the training environment at the academy. The Governance Committee is committed to reducing injuries on and off campus.

