



FIRE & INVESTIGATOR

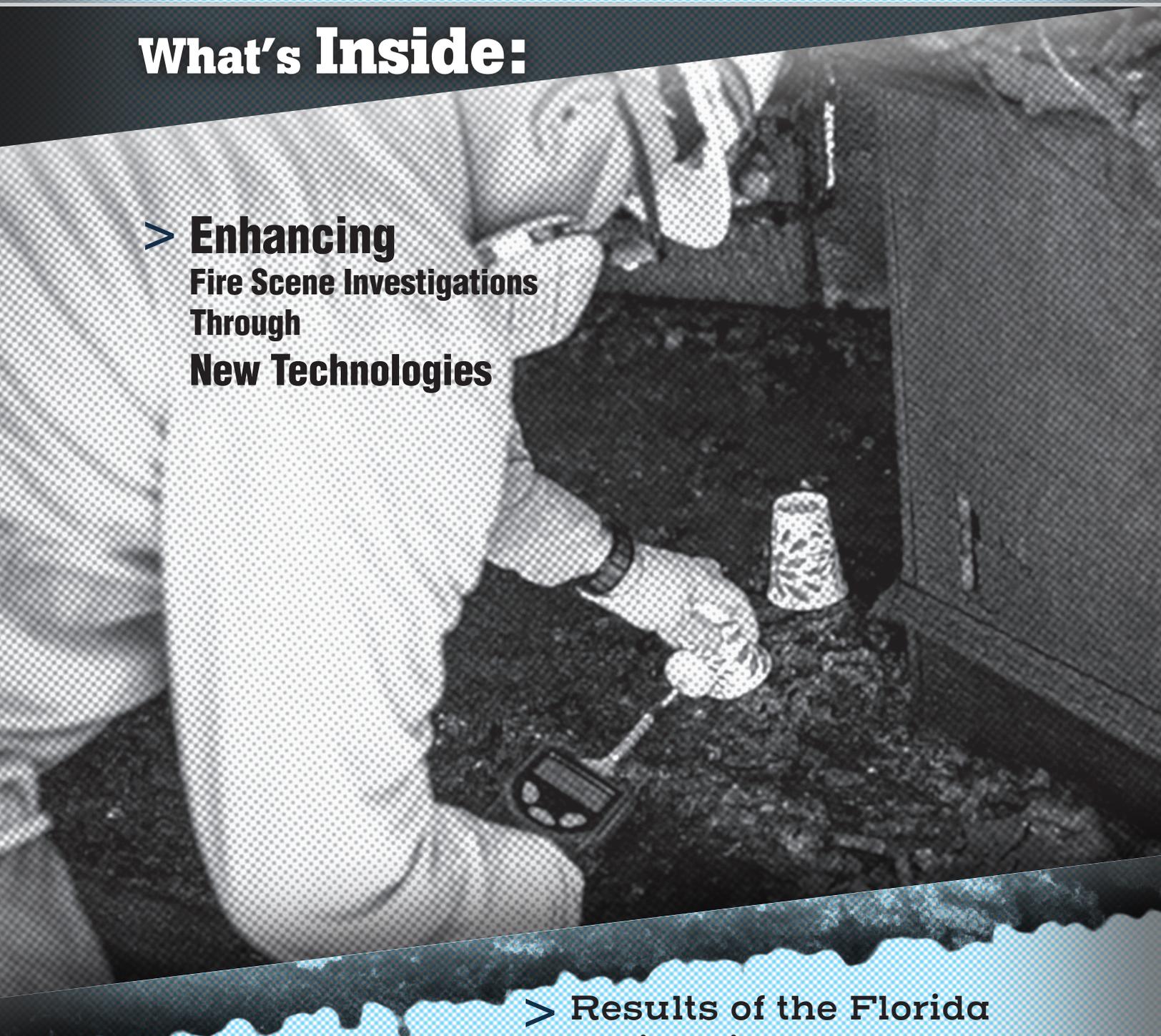
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Through
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2021 IAAI CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS AMENDMENT PROPOSALS

(Proposed language in Red, language to be deleted in strikeout)

The IAAI Board of Directors congratulates the Constitution and By-Laws Committee for changing their Policies and Procedures to allow for public comments to be posted prior to the opening of the ballot. This positive change in the procedure for posting of proposed changes to our Constitution and allowing for an open public comment period is welcomed.

The Board of Directors met on January 9th, 2021 during a regularly scheduled Board meeting, during which a review of the two proposed amendments was an agenda item. After a discussion and debate on the merits of the proposed amendments, **the Board voted to oppose both proposed constitutional changes.** The Board believes these two proposed amendments would inhibit the ability of the Board and the office of the President to effectively conduct the business of the IAAI, as the elected representatives of the membership. The purpose of the Constitution is to provide the Association with a framework by which to operate, not manage the operations. The only committees mandated by the constitution are found in Article V "Committees". Other than these eleven Standing Committees, all other committees or task groups are appointed by the President. Any committee or task group not reappointed by the new President, ceases to exist. The purpose of a Task Group is to research a specific issue at the direction of the Board. The makeup of the Task Group should be based on the issue to be addressed and not restricted because a member serves on other committees or Task Groups. The President and the Board should have the freedom to appoint the people to a Task Group that are best suited to address the issue at hand. Placing restrictions on who can be appointed and for how long a Task Group can be in place would inhibit the ability of the leadership to effectively conduct the work of the association. **It is therefore the position of the Board of Directors that these proposed Constitutional changes are not passed.**

To review all proposals received, please visit our website homepage at www.firearson.com under News

Proposed # 2020-01

(to revise and amend Article IV - Governance)

ARTICLE IV - GOVERNANCE

Section 1. Board of Directors. The Board of Directors of the Association shall be composed of the President, the Immediate Past President, the President-Elect, and nine members of the Association.

Section 2. Duties and Powers. The Board of Directors shall have the power to initiate and carry out the business of the Association to the existence of the Association. The board shall meet annually during such meeting. The board shall have the authority to control, and supervise the operations of the Association. The board shall appoint an Executive Director and Legal Counsel, with the approval of the Board. All officers of the Association shall be appointed by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall have the authority to appoint or remove any officer or member of the Association in any way possible.

Section 3. The Executive Director and Vice Presidents and the Board of Directors

Section 4. President. The President shall be elected by the Board of Directors to supervise and coordinate the operations of the Association with the Executive Team.

- A. The President shall have the authority to appoint and of the Board of Directors.
- B. He/she shall appoint the Executive Director to conduct the activities of the Association with the consent of the Executive Director. **He/she shall require reports from the Executive Director as otherwise desired and from the officers of the Association.**
- C. At each Annual General Meeting, the President shall announce to the Board of Directors that he/she shall appoint or remove any officer or member of the Association in any way possible.

Results of the Florida Serial Fire Event Study

By, Thomas Riley Hall, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT
Hidden within the routine responses of fire departments are possible multiple fires set by individuals in a small area. An examination of clusters was accomplished by reviewing the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) reports from the Florida State Fire Marshal's Division and the Augmented Criminal Information Support System (ACISS) reports provided by the Florida Division of Investigative and Forensic Services from 1996 to 2018. The results of the Florida Serial Fire Event Study found that the spatial density of a cluster and to a lesser extent the distance between fires were significant predictors of a serial incendiary event. The entire study may be found at https://insuworks.nova.edu/fse_etd/225/

THE PROBLEM OF ARSON. Approximately 8% of fires in the United States may be arson, and intentionally set fires are the fourth leading cause of structure fires in the United States [1]. Sometimes overlooked are other fires in the vicinity which may be part of a larger event. Fires that occur within a small geographic area are known as fire clusters. The clusters may be developing or continuing at a rate not readily apparent because they are hidden in the much more frequent day-to-day routine events requiring the response of fire departments. However, these clusters represent the signature actions of serial fire setters. These offenders comprise one of the least understood criminal categories yet are responsible for property damage and other crimes far beyond that of other types of offenders and require far more investigative effort [2] [3] [4]. Clusters of fires represent the most prevalent and unique signatures of a serial arsonist. Once these disparate fires are recognized and presented to the investigator, showing that they are grouped in a meaningful manner, they represent clarification events. In this light, the little fires preceding the recognition of an arson cluster become important. Arsons occur at a rate that is likely underreported in the available statistics [5]. Portions of these arsons are found in the clusters of fires, which are also occurring and are reported, but with insufficient data to separate accidental from intentional fires. Using 20 years of statewide fire reports, an examination of archival data from these mandatory reports was used to attempt to unpack fire event records to see if there were any common occurrences recorded outside of the fire itself.

FIRES IN FLORIDA

The premise of the study is that serial arsonists do not erupt and suddenly appear in a neighborhood. Rather, there may be a discernable and logical progression before clusters become apparent. One of the goals of the Florida Serial Fire Event Study was to examine fire clusters in a spatial context.

Within Florida, in 2015 there were 49,107 reported fires [6]. Approximately 8.27% of these fires are known to be arson, with an additional 15.1% undetermined.

Table 1
Comparison of fires in the United States and Florida, 2015

	National	Florida
All Fires	1,345,500	49,107
Arson	23,000 (EST) [1.71%]	4,061 [8.27%]
Undetermined	NA	7,414 [15.1%]

Table 2
Comparison of fires in the United States as reported by Fire Agencies Enforcement Agencies, 2015

	National	Florida
All Fires	1,345,500	49,107

Enhancing Fire Scene Investigations Through New Technologies

By John David DeHaan, Ph.D.



Abstract: The application and limitations of field-portable Gas Chromatography/Mass Spectrometry (GC/MS) to fire investigations was the focus of this project. Today's fieldportable GC/MS systems were found to provide lab-quality data for volatile hydrocarbons but the interpretation of that data proved challenging for field operators. On-line access to lab experts is essential. Scene investigators felt that data generated at the fire scene is useful, especially for public agencies who often must wait months before receiving lab results. Scene sampling using SPME has proven problematic due to the over-saturation of the sensitive SPME fibers and their rapid loss of adsorbed compounds. Sampling at ambient temperatures limits the range of identifiable products. Evidence sampling is enhanced with the use of PIDs (photoionization detectors).

This project, from its outset, focused on the use of gas chromatography/mass spectrometry to increase the accuracy to allow the investigation to be based on reliable lab results.

It's time to vote. Voting starts on February 23. Election to be held at IAAI National Convention, 2021.

ELECTION 2021

Candidate for IAAI Second Vice President

Chris VanVleet
IAAI



Candidate for IAAI Second Vice President

FISC Bulletin Board

"Tell Me Something I Don't Know" about NFPA 921, 2021 Edition

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1. Introduction

Given the importance of the NFPA 921 Guide to Fire and Explosion Investigations to IAAI members, we trust that our readers are acquainting themselves with the new edition. Rather than listing the changes from the 2017 to the 2021 edition, even in a summary fashion, we thought it beneficial to highlight a few of the 2021 edition revisions that in our opinion are noteworthy. We will consider our effort successful if in reading this article, you learn something you did not know but find informative about NFPA 921's latest edition.

The 2021 edition of NFPA 921 has been in effect since April 25, 2020. Since then, a Tentative Interim Amendment (TIA) has been issued to make important corrections in the 2021 edition.* NFPA 921, 2021 ed., together with details of the TIA, are available on the NFPA 921 Document Information Page.³

If you want to track all of the changes between the two editions, you can study the revision history by reviewing the First Draft Report and Second Draft Report leading up to the 2021 edition. These reports are available on the NFPA 921 Document Information Page. "Current and Prior Editions" tab.⁴ Note that first and second drafts are presented to the public as part of the document revision process, and hold no weight as authoritative text. Excerpts from these drafts are presented here to give the reader a perspective on the process and rationale for the changes. Trainings such as those available on the IAAI website⁵ or at the IAAI International Training Conference in Atlantic City April 18-23, 2021⁶ are also great ways to learn about the 2021 edition.

Not all revisions are of equal import. Sometimes, even a small revision involving a word or phrase can be consequential, especially in overarching chapters such as Chapter 1 Administration, Chapter 3 Definitions, Chapter 4 Investigation, Chapter 5 Evidence, Chapter 6 Fire Origin and Cause, Chapter 7 Fire Spread, Chapter 8 Fire Investigation, Chapter 9 Fire Scene Documentation, Chapter 10 Fire Scene Investigation, Chapter 11 Fire Scene Investigation, Chapter 12 Fire Scene Investigation, Chapter 13 Fire Scene Investigation, Chapter 14 Fire Scene Investigation.

2. "Concepts are Presented at an Elementary Level" — Removed

Chapter 1 Administration defines the scope, purpose, and application of NFPA 921. Since the 2008 edition of NFPA 921, the "Application" section has contained a caution that many of the scientific or engineering concepts are presented at an introductory⁷ or elementary⁸ level, thus noting that it may be necessary to utilize other resources in an investigation. Even though it was true, stating that concepts were presented at an elementary level afforded a potential opportunity to undermine the opinions of someone relying exclusively on NFPA 921. Where an investigator failed to consult materials beyond NFPA 921, this caution provided fodder for criticism or cross-examination.

The 2021 edition removed this caution. Here is legislative text showing how the 2021 edition was revised from the 2017 edition:

1.3.5 This document is not intended as a comprehensive scientific or engineering text. Although many scientific and engineering concepts are presented within the text, the user is cautioned that these concepts are presented at an elementary level and additional technical resources, training, and education may often need to be utilized in an investigation.

Thus, the committee removed the caveat that NFPA 921 presents concepts at an elementary level, while retaining the recommendation that additional resources "may often need to be utilized in an investigation." This is the committee's substantiation for this change:

Overall the document has grown to discuss technical details of the elementary level concepts. The committee believes that the elementary level concepts are presented at an elementary level and additional technical resources, training, and education may often need to be utilized in an investigation.

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HOW WOULD YOU PROPOSE TO IMPROVE RELATIONSHIPS AND COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN THE INTERNATIONAL AND CHAPTERS? I believe that the relationships with our Chapters have improved, but that we need to continue our efforts in that area. We need good relationships with their respective Chapters. We need to continue with our Chapters Presidents conference calls and listen to and bring the Chapter President's concerns to the Board for consideration.

WHAT ARE YOUR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE FUNDING OF CFITRAINER.NET? The Board has had lengthy discussions on this topic. The general consensus is that we should use a two prong approach. One would be to actively seek donations or contributions from members/users and private industry. Part two would be some form of user fee. This portion is complex in that we have many different types of users, from individuals to Universities. I believe we could structure a minimal yearly fee for individuals, if we had to, and work out financial agreements with Colleges, Universities and Agencies that use our training platform.

OTHER THAN TRAINING FIRE INVESTIGATORS, WHAT TWO OR THREE OTHER ELEMENTS DO YOU CONSIDER AS CRITICAL TO THE MISSION OF THE IAAI? In conjunction with training fire investigators, the IAAI needs to promote and advance the profession of fire and explosion investigations. Therefore, we need to stay up to date on the latest research, science and legal issues related to our profession. The IAAI needs to promote, encourage and when possible, participate in research and testing. Due to our lack of physical testing capabilities, we need to partner and/or participate as much as possible.

This dovetails into a second part of what we can do as an organization. The IAAI should strive to be the conduit of all the most current and relevant information as possible to our membership. As a global organization of over 10,000 members, if we provide as much information as possible to our members, this can be the method for promoting our profession worldwide. The information we provide should be current and as accurate as possible, all the while keeping in mind that not everyone will agree with the information presented. Our members should have as much information as possible and then they will need to form their own opinion as to the value. We currently have an ideal method of conveying this information.