Article I – Name and Purpose

Section 1. NAME. This organization shall be known as the South Carolina Fire Marshals Association and is hereinafter referred to as the "Association." The name of the Association shall not be used publicly or by any member other than by the use of his/her membership card for identification purposes, without express permission of the Executive Board. This shall not restrict the officers or appointees or agents of the Association in the use of the name to carry out the purposes of the Association.

Section 2. PURPOSE. The purpose of this Association shall be:

1. To unite for public benefit those public officials and private persons engaged in fire inspection and prevention of fire.
2. To provide for exchange of technical information and developments.
3. To cooperate with other inspection agencies and associations to further fire prevention, fire inspections and life safety protection.
4. To encourage high professional standards of conduct among fire inspectors and to continually strive to eliminate all factors which interfere with administration of fire prevention, inspections and life safety aspirations.
5. Said organization is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, and scientific purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the International Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

No part of the net earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in the purpose clause hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the organization shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the organization shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of this document, the organization shall not carry on any other purposes or activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by an organization exempt from federal income tax under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or (b) by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under section 170 (c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

Article II – Membership

Section 1. ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP. Any representative of a governmental entity and any representative of private industry who is actively engaged in some phase of fire inspection for fire prevention and life safety. ~~at the time he/she makes application shall be eligible for active membership on application, provided such person possesses the other qualifications for membership is at the discretion of the Membership Committee and provided such person is not~~

~~less than eighteen years of age at the time he/she makes application.~~ A person shall be eligible for active membership at the time of application, at the discretion of the Membership Committee, provided such person possesses the other required qualifications and is not less than eighteen years of age. Application of persons denied membership for reason of lack of eligibility shall be placed before the Executive Board (hereinafter referred to as the "Board") for final determination at the next regularly called meeting of the Board.

Section 2. ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP. Persons and firms not qualified for active membership may become associate members, after determination of their qualifications by the Membership Committee. Associate members shall have the privileges of an active member, except, voting and holding office. The Association may, by majority vote of active members present, exclude associate members from any particular business meeting.

Section 3. LIFE MEMBERSHIP. The Association, by majority vote of members present at the annual meeting, may confer life membership upon any person who has been a member of the Association for a minimum of ten years who has rendered distinctive service to the Association or to its purposes. A life member shall have all the rights and privileges of an active member without payment of dues. Nominations for life membership shall be made to the ~~board~~ at least sixty days prior to voting thereon; no more than two nominations for such membership may be approved in any year. Any Past President that completes his or her term of office with the approval of the Board shall be honored with lifetime membership. Any Director with 8 years of service on the Executive Board shall be also honored with a lifetime membership with the approval of the Board.

Section 4. RETIRED MEMBER. A person who has been an active member of the Association, upon retirement from his or her agency, may become a retired member of the Association by making a letter of application to the Board. The Board shall make the final determination for eligibility as a retired member. A retired member shall pay no annual dues and may not hold elected office.

Section 5. MEMBERSHIP. Applications for membership shall be made to the Chairman of the Membership Committee upon the recommendation of some member of the Association, and admission shall be by vote of such Committee as provided in Section 1 of this Article.

Section 6. PERSONAL QUALIFICATIONS. Prior to voting upon each application, the Membership Committee shall give due consideration to the following, among other qualifications it deems applicable, to wit: (1) the personal character of the applicant; (2) the character and reputation of the applicant's employer and associates, and (3) the general nature and character of the principle business of the employer and associates. No persons shall be eligible for any class of membership if he/she has been a member of a subversive organization whose objectives and operations are inconsistent with the purposes of the Association.

Section 7. ELIMINATION. The Board, either upon its own initiative or the recommendation of the Membership Committee, may order termination of any membership in the event (1) such member falsified his/her application or makes any misrepresentation therein, (2) such member is in arrears in the payment of dues or any obligation to the Association, (3) the Board, in its

discretion, determines that such member has conducted himself/herself in such a manner as is prejudicial to the good name or best interest of the Association, and (4) the Board, in its discretion determines that such member has exhibited traits of character or conduct inconsistent with the qualifications for membership in the Association. A majority approval of the entire membership of the Board shall be sufficient to cause termination of membership for any reason specified in this section.

Section 8. REINSTATEMENTS. Any former member may be reinstated in the Association at the discretion of any and by the consent of a majority of the Board, provided, however, that if such former member shall have been in arrears in the payment of dues or other financial obligation to the Association all such arrears at the time of his/her separation, he/she shall be required to pay the Association all such arrears as a condition to his/her reinstatement, unless the Board, by a majority vote and for good cause, shall waive the payment thereof.

Article III – Elections, Terms and Offices

Section 1. OFFICERS. The officers of this Association shall be a President, a First Vice President, a Second Vice President and the Immediate Past President.

Section 2. EXECUTIVE BOARD. The officers and two Directors of the organization, duly elected, shall constitute the Executive Board. The Executive Board will employ an Executive Administrator who will serve at the pleasure of the Board. The Board will establish the duration of employment, compensation and conditions of employment for the Executive Administrator and review these at the annual conference. The Executive Board shall be charged with the responsibility of interpreting these By-Laws. The Board's opinion shall be final.

Section 3. TERMS OF THE OFFICE. The officers shall hold office, from the time of their election and qualifications, until the election and qualifications of their successors. The President, First Vice President and each Director shall be affirmed on odd years, if there is no opposition. The Second Vice President shall be elected on odd years.

~~If a member of the Association wants to run for a position on the Board, it can be done at any Spring Conference on the odd year by making it known to the Board and Executive Administrator.~~

Any member wishing to run for a position on the Executive Board at the Annual Spring Conference in an odd-numbered year must notify the Executive Board and Executive Administrator in accordance with Section 5 of this article.

If for some reason a member of the Board decides to not move up to the next position, he/she should make that known in time for a member to make their intentions known to run for office. The current members of the Board would move up until the vacancy was filled and then the openings would be voted on.

Ex. – The First Vice President decides not to move up to President. That would make the Second Vice President move up to President and then the Association would be electing a First and Second Vice President on that odd year.

The Executive Board may remove from office any Board member who is absent without excuse from two consecutive scheduled meetings. The Board will make the final determination of excused absences.

Section 4. VACANCIES. In the event of a vacancy occurring on the Executive Board between annual meetings, the vacancy or vacancies shall be filled by the President, and the newly appointed member or members of the Board shall hold office only until the next annual meeting. ~~The vacancy will be elevation and the President shall have authority to appoint the lower vacancy until the next regular election.~~ When the order of succession applies, the next member in line will move up to fill the vacancy. The President may then appoint an eligible member to fill the position left vacant until the next regular election.

Section 5. QUALIFICATIONS FOR ELECTED OFFICERS. Only Active Members and Life Members are eligible to hold elected office in the Association. Any member seeking election as an officer of the Association must be an **Active Member** of the Association for a minimum of ~~one year~~ two years before their nomination and election.

Any member seeking the position of Second Vice President of the Association, Director of Training, and Director of Benefits shall make his or her intentions known, in writing to the Executive Board and the Executive Administrator 30 days prior to the first day of the Annual Spring Conference. ~~The President, First Vice President and current Second Vice President along with the Directors would automatically move up to the next position unless there was opposition.~~

Should there be no letters of intent for that office, then nothing in this section shall preclude any member or group of members from placing a nomination from the floor. If the nominee meets the membership qualifications, he or she may be voted on for that position to the Executive Board. ~~Only Active Members and Life Members are qualified to hold an elected office.~~

Officers designated for succession shall advance according to the Association's established order of succession. Any Director that is unopposed shall remain in that position.

Section 6. NOMINATING COMMITTEE. On the first day of the annual meeting, the President shall announce the membership of the "nominating committee" appointed by the Board, which shall nominate officers and the appropriate number of members of the Board to hold office for ensuing term of office. At the first election held under these rules, the Nominating Committee shall have been appointed by the President. This committee shall consist of three (3) members, none of whom shall be holders of any elected office.

Section 7. COMMITTEES. The Executive Board shall supervise the following committees.

- ~~Finance Committee~~
- Awards Committee

- By-Laws Committee
- Conference and Seminar Committee
- ~~Legislative Committee~~
- Membership Committee
- ~~Planning and Goals Committee~~
- Professional Development and Training Committee
- Any other special committee as deemed necessary by the Executive Board

Committees assist in the governance of the Association and support succession planning by providing members with opportunities to gain experience in Association functions. Committee terms extend beyond Executive Board terms to preserve institutional knowledge and maintain continuity of operations. Each committee provides recommendations to the Executive Board member serving as its chairperson to support informed decisions and advance the Association's goals.

Each committee established by the Executive Board shall consist of three members plus the Chairperson. Active Members and Life Members of the Association are eligible to serve. Committee members shall serve four-year terms. Members may be reappointed without limitation.

The chairperson appoints the members of each committee during the Annual Spring Conference at the end of each 4-year term.

Any committee member who intends to step down shall notify the committee chair, Executive Board, and Executive Administrator in writing and include the effective date of the resignation so the resulting vacancy can be filled.

If a vacancy occurs between committee appointments, the Chairperson shall appoint an eligible member to serve the remainder of the unexpired term. Service on a temporary committee shall end when the Executive Board dissolves that committee or when the member's term expires, whichever occurs first.

Article IV – Government

Section 1. EXECUTIVE BOARD. The Government of the Association shall be vested in the Executive Board. Three members of the Board shall constitute a quorum.

Section 2. DUTIES AND POWERS. The Board shall have full power to initiate and transact all kinds of business necessary to the existence of the organization and the observance of its purposes. The Board shall determine the date and location of the annual meeting and shall outline the program of activities during such meeting. They shall have general powers to direct, control and supervise the affairs of the Association.

Section 3. PRESIDENT. The President shall be the chief executive officer of the Association, and it shall be his/her responsibility to supervise and coordinate the activities of the Association and to preside at meetings of the Association and the Executive Board. The President shall

appoint committees, chairpersons, and shall require reports at each annual meeting as otherwise directed by the Board. ~~The President shall also act as the committee chairperson of the Planning and Goals Committee and the Legislative Committee~~. The President shall serve on the South Carolina Joint Council of Fire Service Associations. Additionally, the President shall appoint two (2) alternates for the Joint Council from the active membership. The President along with the First Vice President shall execute and sign all contracts, both signatures shall be present, or the contract shall be void.

Section 4. FIRST VICE PRESIDENT. In the absence of the President, the First Vice President shall be the chief executive officer and shall act as such. The First Vice President shall ~~also~~ act as Chairperson of the ~~Finance Committee and the~~ Conference and Seminar Committee. The First Vice President along with the President shall execute and sign all contracts, both signatures shall be present, or the contract shall be void.

Section 5. SECOND VICE PRESIDENT. In the absence of the President and First Vice President, the Second Vice President shall perform the duties of the President. The Second Vice President shall also act as the chairperson of the By-Laws Committee.

Section 6. EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATOR. The Executive Administrator shall keep a complete record of all proceedings, a roster of all names and addresses of members and shall collect membership dues, receive other funds associated with operation of the Association and keep accurate records thereof. The Executive Administrator shall make a full written report of all funds received and disbursed at each Board meeting and the annual conference. The Executive Administrator shall disburse no funds unless authorized by the Board. The Executive Administrator and the President shall have authorization to sign all checks disbursing funds for the Association. The Executive Administrator and the President shall be reimbursed for all duly authorized expenses incurred in the performance of duties. The Executive Administrator shall be bonded in an amount determined by the Board. The Association shall pay the premiums for the bond. The Executive Administrator shall receive and acknowledge all communications addressed to him/her or that may be submitted to him/her by the officers of the Association and perform all duties as assigned by the President.

Section 7. PAST PRESIDENT. The immediate Past President shall normally serve as a non-voting member of the Board. The Past President will serve as a voting member to break tie votes of the board when an even number of officers are present for a Board meeting. The Past President shall also act as the chairperson of the Awards Committee. The Past President shall serve on the South Carolina Joint Council of Fire Service Associations.

Section 8. DIRECTORS. The two members elected as directors shall serve as follows:

Director of Training. The Director of Training shall serve as chairperson of the Professional Development and Training Committee. The Director of Training shall be responsible for annual polling of members to determine areas of interest for future training and professional development. The Director of training shall assist the First Vice President with arranging the training classes offered at conferences.

Director of Benefits. The Director of Benefits shall serve as chairperson of the membership committee and shall be responsible for the Association Store.

ARTICLE V – MEETINGS

Section 1. ANNUAL. The annual meeting shall be held during the spring training conference. If decided by the Executive Board, subject to approval by members present, the annual meeting may be changed and notice thereof shall be mailed to each member at his/her last known address not less than thirty (30) days in advance. Elections shall occur and other business may be presented at the annual meeting. When any questions come before the meeting not specifically provided herein, the presiding officer shall govern in his/her decision by the rules laid down in "Robert's Rules of Order", as revised.

Section 2. SPECIAL. Special meetings may be called by order of the Executive Board at such place and time as fixed by the Board, giving due notice thereof to all members at least fifteen days in advance.

Section 3. EXECUTIVE BOARD. The Executive Board shall meet any time or place upon call of the President or any three (3) members of the Board.

Article VI – Fiscal Standards and Policies

Section 1. FISCAL YEAR. The Fiscal Year shall be from January 1 through December 31.

Section 2. DESCRIPTION. No part of the net earnings of the Association shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in the purposes clause hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the organization shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the organization shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of this document, the organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by an organization exempt from federal income tax under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or (b) by an organization, contributions to which deductible under section 170 (c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or Corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

Monies received by, for, in the name of the South Carolina Fire Marshals Association become the property of the Association. Such funds are to be used to cover operating expenses of the Association.

Expenditures of the Association shall be approved by the Executive Board. The President of the Association may make expenditures up to $500 without board approval and shall provide approved receipts to Executive Administrator.

Section 3. FEES AND DUES. Dues for active memberships shall be forty ($40) dollars annually and dues for associate memberships shall be seventy-five ($75) dollars annually. Dues are payable by January 1st for the next calendar year. Dues for new members are payable upon approval of their application.

Failure to pay membership dues within ninety (90) days of the due date shall forfeit membership in the Association. Reinstatements are conditioned on approval by the Board and payment of all arrears. There shall be no other fees or assessments except as provided by amendment to these articles.

Section 4. AUDIT. A certified audit shall be performed, by a qualified person, of the accounts of the Executive Administrator and Association prior to the annual meeting or with the change of personnel in the Office of Executive Administrator. The certified audit shall be reviewed by the ~~Finance Committee~~ Executive Board during the annual meeting and their findings presented during the business meeting.

Any money received shall be receipted and documented by the Executive Administrator.

Article VII – Dissolution

Upon dissolution of the South Carolina Fire Marshals Association, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501 (c) (3) of the International Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the principal office of the association is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

Article VIII – Parliamentary Authority and Amendments

Section 1. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY. The latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the association in all cases to which they are applicable and consistent with any provision of these Bylaws.

The 2nd Vice President shall serve as parliamentarian.

Section 2. BYLAWS. This Constitution and By-Laws may be amended by submittal to the By-Laws Committee, through the Board, no later than March 1st. If approved by the By-Laws Committee, the proposal shall be placed on the agenda for a vote at the annual meeting. At least a vote of two-thirds of the members present shall be required to pass.

The Executive Board shall have the authority to amend the Constitution and Bylaws as necessary to preserve the integrity of the Association and its non-profit status. The Bylaws Chairperson shall educate the membership at the next annual meeting.

Article IX – IFMA Chapter

The South Carolina Fire Marshals Association has established itself as Chapter 14 of the International Fire Marshal Association (IFMA) a membership section of the National Fire Protection Association.

When the South Carolina Fire Marshals Association conducts business related to the IFMA, it shall comply with the IFMA constitution and By-Laws in relation to chapters. International Fire Marshals Association or the National Fire Protection Association shall not be held liable for any financial obligations or financial responsibilities being incurred or assumed by the South Carolina Fire Marshals Association.

Article X – Awards and Recognition

The Association may establish awards to recognize outstanding contributions to fire prevention, life safety, community risk reduction, and service to the Association. Awards shall be presented during the Association's Annual Spring Meeting.

The Awards Committee shall administer the awards program, review nominations, and recommend recipients to the Executive Board for approval. Anyone involved in the selection process who is a nominee or has a conflict of interest shall abstain from reviewing and voting on that award.

Any Association member may submit a nomination. Nominations shall be submitted in writing to the Executive Administrator at least 60 days before the start of the annual spring meeting and shall include:

1. The nominee's name, position, agency or organization, and contact information.
2. The award for which the individual is nominated.
3. The nominating member's name and contact information.
4. A written statement explaining how the nominee meets the award criteria, including specific accomplishments and their impact.
5. Supporting documentation relevant to the nomination, such as letters of support, program results, training records, reports, or other evidence of the nominee's contributions.

The Executive Administrator shall forward nominations to the Awards Committee. The Committee shall verify eligibility and review submissions for completeness. If additional information is needed, the Committee shall notify the nominating member and provide a deadline for submitting it. The Awards Committee shall evaluate complete nominations against the established award criteria and recommend recipients to the Executive Board for approval.

Awards shall be presented only when a nominee meets the established criteria.

William "Hank" Golden Lifetime Achievement Award
Named in honor of the Association's first President, William "Hank" Golden, this award recognizes an individual member of the association whose career reflects exceptional dedication to fire prevention, life safety, and the advancement of the fire marshal profession in South Carolina. Recipients shall have demonstrated sustained leadership, mentorship, and service that have made a lasting impact on the profession and the communities they serve.

Fire Marshal of the Year Award
The Fire Marshal of the Year Award recognizes an Active Member or Life Member serving as a fire marshal, deputy fire marshal, assistant fire marshal, or association member who demonstrates outstanding leadership, professionalism, and dedication to fire prevention and life safety. Selection shall consider accomplishments in code enforcement, hazard reduction, public education, professional development, collaboration, and service to the community or the Association. Nominations shall include specific examples of accomplishments during the preceding year and their impact.

Emerging Professional Award
The Emerging Professional Award recognizes an Active Member with five or fewer years of experience in fire prevention, inspection, investigation, or public fire and life safety education. The recipient shall demonstrate professional growth, initiative, commitment to continued education, and meaningful contributions to the community or the Association. Nominations shall include specific examples of the nominee's accomplishments and potential for continued leadership in the profession.

Community Risk Reduction Achievement Award
The Community Risk Reduction Achievement Award recognizes an Active Member or Life Member who has made a meaningful difference in community safety through prevention, education, partnerships, or other efforts to reduce risks. The recipient shall have identified a community need, taken steps to address it, and demonstrated measurable improvements. Nominations shall include specific examples and supporting documentation showing how the member's work helped make the community safer.

President's Award
The President's Award recognizes an individual, group, or organization whose exceptional service or contribution has advanced the mission of the Association. Contributions may include support for Association activities, training, partnerships, or a special project that benefits the membership or promotes fire and life safety. The President shall select the recipient, subject to approval by the Executive Board. Association membership is not required.