

# FIREHOUSE®

## Weekly Drill

### DRILL #111: MISSION STATEMENT

#### Introduction

Proverb 29:18 states: Where there is no vision, the people perish...

The Mission Statement is derived from a fire department's vision. The vision for a fire department should indicate who they are as a department and where they want to go as a department. Having a clear understanding of your department's vision will allow you to move forward with planning and goal setting. However, as stated above, if you do not have a vision for your department, there is a good chance that it too will perish.

The starting point for any organization is for its members to share in the vision that has been adopted by the department. We find this vision in the department's mission statement. The mission statement will give a quick overview of the organization as to who they are and what they do.

Additionally, mission statements also can define the priorities and values of the organization. Having the mission statement posted, where it can be seen by the membership, is a good idea. It then becomes a constant reminder of the services your organization provides.

If your department has not revisited its mission statement in a while, perhaps now would be a good time. Over the years, the role of the fire service has dramatically changed. In case you haven't noticed, we do more

than just respond to fires. Many of the more progressive fire departments are rewriting their mission states to focus more on their services to their communities. Other departments have even advanced to where their mission statements go way beyond the services provided and include some philosophy on how they plan on delivering their services.

Other agencies pride themselves on the fact that they are continuing to improve the services they provide to the community in their mission statements. In any event, the mission statement should be more than a bunch of nice words for people to read.

If your organization truly is interested in having a meaningful mission statement, then you must focus on having input from all your members. Build on the collaborative ideas put forth and form a committee that will generate a mission statement with real meaning. The final product needs to be supported from the top of the organization all the way to the bottom of the organization.

Whatever the final results are, they will have to be understood and followed by the membership all the time. Remember, without this vision (mission statement) the people (organization) will perish!

*—Prepared by Russell Merrick*

