

Vision 20/20 Meet and Greet at ICC Annual Business Meeting

Learn more about Vision 20/20 Strategy 5

REFINE AND IMPROVE THE APPLICATION OF CODES AND STANDARDS THAT ENHANCE PUBLIC AND FIREFIGHTER SAFETY AND PRESERVE COMMUNITY ASSETS

Friday October 23rd 5 PM to 6:30 PM Convention Center Room 307 - This meeting will precede the meeting requested by the Fire Code Council

Thursday November 5th 8 PM to 9:30 PM Convention Center Room 308 – This meeting will immediately follow the conclusion of the IBC-Fire Safety code development hearings

Vision 20/20 Overview

The Institution of Fire Engineers US Branch was awarded a Fire Prevention and Safety Grant by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to develop a comprehensive national strategy for fire prevention. This is a project with the goal of helping to bring together fire prevention efforts and focus everyone's efforts collectively to effectively address the fire problem in the United States.

Despite significant progress in the last 30 years, the United States still has one of the worst fire loss records of the industrialized world. Fire loss includes the social, environmental and economic impacts, not just fire deaths and injuries. For example, in 2006 the US had 1.6 million fires attended by fire departments, and no one disputes the actual number is higher due to unreported fires. The number of deaths is in the thousands, the number of injuries in the tens of thousands, and the economic losses in the billions.

An ad-hoc group formed around the concept that it was time to move forward with efforts to further reduce fire losses in the United States. Other industrialized nations have a better safety record than does the US and those members who ultimately ended up forming the steering committee for Vision 20/20 felt we could and should collectively do better, acknowledging that significant progress in fire losses has already been made.

A successful DHS Fire Prevention and Safety grant application allowed us to form a steering committee for what ultimately became Vision 20/20. Earnest preparation for a national strategic planning process began in August of 2007. A web-forum was developed and conducted to place the background fire loss information before as wide an audience as possible so that some reference material would be available for a physical planning forum envisioned like no other in recent history. More than 500 people ended up participating in the webforum at 13 different satellite locations around the nation sponsored by various fire prevention associations. Hundreds of others participated individually. Given the scope of the nation's fire problem as we envisioned it they were charged with developing strategies to reduce fire losses. The results of the web forum were then refined and taken to the physical forum held in Washington DC on March 31 and April 1 of 2008.

A report (<http://strategicfire.org/08report.pdf>) representing the refined forum results from the meeting where more than 170 fire and other agencies with a stake in the nation's fire problem met to outline the next steps that would lead toward a more fire safe nation. It represents the first steps in filling perceived gaps in the nation's fire prevention efforts. Ultimately the strategies and actions steps listed here must be moved forward collaboratively, and in conjunction with existing efforts.

Five main strategy areas were identified by participants, with numerous action items listed for each that can help move prevention efforts forward. These strategies and many of the action items have been mentioned in previous reports. They represent the general consensus on issues that need more emphasis in our current environment.

These strategies initiated from a web forum conducted with participants at large and with small groups in 13 satellite locations throughout the nation. There are slight modifications due mostly to formatting. Data collection and analysis, and its importance to fire prevention efforts, was captured as a priority that spreads throughout the five major strategic areas identified for follow up action. Rather than report it as a separate strategy it is given emphasis as relevant to the success of each of the five strategies presented in this report.

Facilitators for each strategy workgroup have been identified. Funding to support continued activity that will keep each strategy working in conjunction with the others and existing programs is being sought.

Each workgroup will be responsible for incorporating the volunteer assistance that was offered at the Forum while they complete the more detailed action plans associated with each strategy. Each workgroup is tasked with maintaining a collaborative environment where partners are welcome, and consensus is attempted for major decisions.

To some extent, each strategy relies on accurate data and analysis of the data, so that the case can be made for increased emphasis on prevention programs. That particular aspect will be part of each working group's deliberations about action steps. It is evident that some modification of the action steps will occur based on the planning efforts of the work groups that form around each strategy. The major strategies with action items as they currently stand follow.

Strategy 5: REFINE AND IMPROVE THE APPLICATION OF CODES AND STANDARDS THAT ENHANCE PUBLIC AND FIREFIGHTER SAFETY AND PRESERVE COMMUNITY ASSETS

Action Items:

- Develop a collaborative environment
- Support increased research to enhance the understanding of fire and to identify and justify changes to codes and standards
- Pursue incentives for adoption and enforcement of model codes and standards
- Increase required training in building and fire codes at all levels and ranks within the fire service
- Promote fire codes within sustainable structures and "green buildings"

- Establish accountability for the adoption and enforcement of fire and building codes Facilitating Individual/Organization: [Sean DeCrane](#), International Association of Fire Fighters

Update August 26, 2009

Strategy 5 is continuing to build interest on fire fighter activism in the codes. Members of Strategy 5 have reviewed proposed changes in the International Code Council's process and will create a response to present at the ICC Annual Business Meeting held during the ICC Code Action Hearings being held October 24th through November 11th in Baltimore, MD.

Members of Strategy 5 are continuing to work on hosting a group strategy session this Fall. Strategy 5 will also host two Meet and Greets at the ICC Code Hearings in Baltimore.

Strategy 5 is attempting to expand the number of fire fighters who are involved in the code process and welcome anyone who would like to send their e-mail addresses for periodic updates.