

Business Agreement

between

Georgia Association of Fire Chiefs

and

Georgia State Firefighters Association

Preface:

This agreement, by and between the Georgia Association of Fire Chiefs (GAFC) and the Georgia State Firefighter's Association (GSFA), (hereinafter referred to as "the parties") is in support of a newly executed Fire Service Unification agreement. The parties have had cooperative relationships over many years and wish to formalize certain business arrangements for the future. While GAFC and GSFA have separate and distinct constituencies within the Georgia Fire Service (hereinafter referred to as "the Service"), an overriding common goal of both associations has been to address the needs of members within the Service as well as improving the safety and security of all Georgians and all the public safety employees and volunteers who serve them.

Because both organizations have a same similar vision, i.e., to assure unity of purpose within the Service and serve the general public, the recently ratified unification agreement and this formal business relationship between the parties are considered central to a productive and lasting relationship.

For purposes of clarity regarding the roles of the parties, the following is offered:

GAFC - the focus of GAFC professional efforts is to act as coordinator of strategic plan development and plan implementation for the entire Service. The association will continue to sustain a primary focus on efforts that affect the Fire Service Officers of Georgia, career and volunteer.

GSFA -The focus GSFA is instrumental in efforts that have a direct bearing on the welfare of the state's firefighting personnel, career and volunteer. The association emphasizes the education, safety and security of Fire Service personnel throughout the state of Georgia. Cooperation with the state's public safety organizations remains a hallmark of the GSFA program priorities.

Joint Legislative Committee – GAFC and the GSFA, in cooperation with allied organizations have responsibility for legislative reforms on behalf of all members. In addition, initiatives to improve and otherwise strengthen the Fire Service in Georgia as a whole are priority goals of GAFC and the GSFA jointly. Communication between the two associations within this area shall be timely, consistent, and complete. The legislative committee works under the authority of the Joint GSFA / GAFC boards and shall provide status reports to the executive boards on a consistent basis. Weekly reports shall be provided to all board members during the legislative session. Presidents of both

associations shall name the legislative representatives on behalf of their associations by no later than September 1st of each year.

Due to the fact that both organizations hold a common vision, i.e., provide public safety protection to the general public, assure unity of purpose within the Service and hold as a top priority, the education and professional advancement of members, the parties have ratified a unification agreement attesting to these principles.

This formal business relationship between the parties is considered a support document for the unification agreement and is to be as viewed as central to a productive and lasting working relationship.

Purpose:

The purpose of this agreement is to establish principles whereby the parties follow agreed upon rules for business ventures with each other. Trust and transparency in business dealings are to be the cornerstones of the relationship and the hope is that as the years pass, officers will, by their actions, achieve the best possible working relationships. The beneficiaries of cooperation and solid relationships between the associations will be the members of both organizations and the entire Fire Service.

Definitions:

Partnership: For this agreement, partnership is not used in a legal sense. It is used to connote willingness by the parties to communicate both verbally and in writing information or plans agreed upon to achieve one or more common business objectives. The key to effective partnerships is deemed to be twofold: 1.) careful deliberations and 2.) quality communications.

Joint Projects: A joint project is defined as an effort by the parties to accomplish specific research work, developmental work, or representation campaigns that necessitate the use of project guidelines. For this agreement, a project is to be initiated through a project charter format as referenced in the Georgia Fire Service Strategic Plan. Project managers are to follow project implementation guidelines that have been agreed to by the parties for the conduct of a given project.

Partnership Grants: These are grant requests utilizing both the GAFC and GSFA influence to improve the chances of achieving a given grant. In such a “partnership,” one of the parties is to be considered as the lead organization and is to take full responsibility for the management and administration of said grant. Copies of internal paperwork regarding grant compliance by the lead organization are to be conveyed to the supporting partner in order to assure that the supporting organization is not placed in a position whereby its business reputation is jeopardized, or in any way, compromised by the lead organization. Prior to the application for a grant where the lead organization will be asking for endorsed support of the other association, a project plan will be presented to

the supporting partner for solicitation of support. These types of grants will be reviewed and endorsement provided on a grant by grant basis. At no time will the supporting endorsement of either association be used without prior approval of the supporting association.

Economic Services: This is a category of activity that often has the objective of producing non-dues revenue. Products or services are sometimes promoted or advertised by an association or group to raise funds to supplement annual budgets. Due to the complex nature of sponsorships, endorsements and certain advertising arrangements between non-profit associations and commercial enterprises, sponsorships or endorsements require due diligence work on the part of the sponsoring organization and lead to formal business agreements between an association or group and a commercial enterprise.

Business Principles:

Involvement in the internal business affairs of each of the parties is not the focus of this business agreement. Internal business affairs include: annual budgeting, employee compensation, operational overhead, travel, and other expenditures regarding the governance and administrative operations of each organization. It is clearly understood that both parties have separate internal business affairs and there should no infringement form one to the other in internal affairs. This document in no way shall be considered a merger of the two separate organizations.

Collaboration on budget development and sharing of information regarding contracted services prior to jointly sponsored events is required. The verifying of expenditures based on pre-approved budgeting and after-event financial reconciliation are essential in joint ventures (conferences, special events, campaigns, economic service cooperation, partnership grants, etc.) and are required. This shall work under the framework of the attached (Attachment A) joint conference funding and operational agreement.

The importance of timely communications between the parties as events are planned and implemented is a critical feature of GSFA-GAFC joint business activities. The executive directors and leadership of both organizations hold the key to accurate and timely communication and are to be asked to support high standards in day-to-day communication.

An annual evaluation of the business relationship between the parties is to be conducted in the first year of the agreement and every other year after the first year. The evaluations are to be conducted by September 15th of each year.

