

Strategic Plan

Produced by the
False Alarm Reduction Association (FARA)

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FARA Strategic Plan 2008-2009

The False Alarm Reduction Association's (FARA) Strategic Plan for the 2008-2009 membership year includes implementation of a wide variety of projects, as well as several new issues on which our committees will conduct research and ultimately provide written materials for dissemination.

Associate Member Committee

This committee will identify ways for FARA to better assist and provide more value to each type of FARA associate member; i.e., software vendors, third party administration companies, individual alarm companies, alarm industry associations, alarm equipment manufacturers and alarm users.

The committee will identify ways to expand the support provided to FARA by associate members, including expanding the number of associate members (especially alarm users, fire alarm associations and fire alarm dealers), maximizing participation in sponsorship programs and expanding the involvement of associates in FARA activities.

As a result of recommendations made at the training symposium, the Associate Committee will develop PowerPoint presentations for a standard Understanding Burglar Alarms class and a standard Understanding Fire Alarms class that will be given at each training symposium. The presentations will include information on FARA positions on issues such as Enhanced Call Verification, installation of CP-01 compliant equipment, prohibition against 1+ Duress signals, etc. Additionally, the committee will develop an interview sheet to be used for all speakers and instructions at FARA training symposiums, that includes information on FARA's philosophy, outlines what we want from them, and provides FARA positions on issues.

Awards Committee

This committee will be comprised of past recipients of the Norma. C. Beaubien Public Safety Member of the Year and W. Rex Bell Associate Member of the Year Awards. Their primary purpose is to gather nominations from the general membership and select the winners for these prestigious awards; FARA's highest honor. The committee will identify ways to expand the number of nominations submitted for ALL FARA awards.

Communications Committee

The Communications Committee is responsible for developing and creating new publications and updating existing ones, publishing a bi-monthly newsletter, maintenance and upgrade of the FARA web site, and all other communications related activities of the association.

False Alarm Bulletins

The committee will develop additional informational one-page bulletins, which will be placed on FARA's web site and can be used as educational materials, hand outs at training sessions, bill stuffers, etc. While numerous bulletins have already been developed, the committee will continue to develop new ideas, as well as take suggestions from the membership, for additional bulletins on an on-going basis. The committee will also update the following bulletins in its triennial review process: Burglar Alarm Systems and Apartments, New Home Move-Ins, Consumer Security System Operation Reminders, Audio/Video Verification, and Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP).

NFPA 731-Standards for the Installation of Electronic Premises Security Systems-2005 Edition

NFPA published standards for commercial security alarm systems, which was endorsed by FARA. The standard covers the application, location, installation, testing, and maintenance of commercial systems only, including their components. The standard, as written, can be confusing

both in content and in interpretation. This committee will review the standard and create a guide explaining the provisions.

Community Outreach Guide

FARA's Training and Certification Committee will develop a presentation to show members how to implement outreach initiatives to the communities in which we live and work. This committee is charged with monitoring the progress of the T&C's project and creating a guide about how to perform that outreach, what components should be included, and providing suggestions on specific content materials to include.

Web-Based Alarm User Awareness Courses

We are all being asked to do more with less. Development of initiatives that provide value to our citizens without increasing associated costs and resources is one way to accomplish that mandate. The Training and Certification Committee is working on a web-based alarm user awareness school. This committee is charged with the development of a manual on how to use the web-based program in your jurisdiction after the course is completed.

Standard for Reporting Zones

As public safety false alarm reduction professionals, we have all struggled with the manner in which alarm signal activations are called into our 9-1-1 Centers (PSAP-Public Safety Answering Point), particularly as they relate to zone information. Reporting to a PSAP that Zone 1 activated provides no useful information and adds to the level of frustration our call takers and dispatchers experience. As such, the committee will develop a standard for how zone information should be provided to the PSAP.

New Manuals/Guides/Bulletins Suggested at Charleston Training Symposium

1. Medical Alarms/Pull Chains
2. How to Write a Standard Operating Procedure manual
3. Officer and Dispatcher Training manual – correct procedures to follow

Model Alarm Ordinances

FARA will perform a complete overhaul of how our model burglar, fire, mobile security devices and smoke emitting device alarm ordinances are created and disseminated. All model ordinance provisions will be posted on our web site. FARA members will then be able to customize their own ordinance using pre-loaded verbiage for the various provisions they want in their own ordinance. A small subcommittee of the Communications Committee has been created to develop the back-end web program that will allow the customization. Once the back-end work has been completed, this committee will work to amend the existing model burglar alarm, smoke emitting device and mobile security devices language as appropriate and to get those provisions posted to the web site. Based on a recommendation received at the annual training symposium, new language regarding responsibilities and requirements for self-installed alarm systems will be added to the model. The FARA Fire Committee will provide amendments to the model fire alarm ordinance, which will be posted by this committee in the same format as listed above. Once the model burglar alarm language has been revised, the committee will revise the Model Burglar Alarm Ordinance Executive Summary.

Triennial Review of FARA Manuals and Publications

The Communications Committee reviews all FARA manuals and publications once every three years to determine whether they should remain part of the FARA library, and if so, to recommend updates and amendments based on the false alarm issues present at the time of review. For the 2008-2009 membership year, the committee will complete review of the Mobile Security Devices Position Paper and Model Ordinance, and finish updating the Spanish translation of our already revised false alarm prevention brochures.

The Committee will also *begin* review of the following Phase 1a manuals and guides:

- Job Descriptions for Alarm Unit Staff

- Proactive Alarm Industry Customer Service – A Law Enforcement Perspective
- Universal Alarm User Permit/Registration Form
- How to Create Regional Meetings
- Grant Writing
- How to Create an Alarm User Awareness School
- How to Develop and Implement a False Alarm Reduction Program

Web Site

The Communications Committee will continue to identify needs for maintenance and updates to our web site, www.faraonline.org and will convey those needs to the Executive Director for implementation.

Newsletter

The committee will reach out to members and non-members for articles for FARA's bi-monthly email newsletter. A continued goal of the committee is to increase participation and to have "reporters" from throughout North America submit newsworthy articles for publication. The committee will designate an Editor to work with the Executive Director to write, edit and distribute the InfoLink.

Conference Committee

The committee will develop an agenda, create and establish educational seminars and workshops, select instructors, approve a registration packet, and determine activities involved with holding our 13th annual training symposium in Denver, Colorado in 2009. The committee will submit a budget for the Symposium to the Board for approval. The committee will develop a symposium package that will maximize FARA members' ability to attend and will reach out to prospective members regarding the excellent opportunities the training symposium, as well as FARA, has to offer.

Fire Committee

The FARA Board and General Membership are committed to addressing false fire alarm management issues. Fire departments across the country are dealing with huge numbers of false fire alarms and the cost to municipalities to respond to those false alarms is staggering. The Fire Committee will identify ways to expand the number of agencies that join FARA, which manage fire alarms. It will also identify changes to FARA programs and publications necessary to address the needs of these agencies.

Model Fire Alarm Ordinance

The Fire Committee will review the model fire alarm ordinance and provide recommendations for revisions to the Board for final approval. Once approved, the committee will work with the Communications Committee to ensure the amendments are posted on-line and are included in the initiative to get all model ordinances on-line with the ability to customize them to best suit the needs of the individual jurisdiction.

Fire Alarm Publications

The committee will review member needs for publications to support agencies that regulate false fire alarms and will create whatever manuals, guides, bulletins, etc. they deem necessary to further that goal.

Membership Committee

The Membership Committee is responsible for developing programs that will increase FARA's membership. Needs of current and potential members will be researched and included in the FARA work plan to ensure that membership has value for all of our members, regular and

associate alike. The committee will also develop a program to recruit more agencies that are seeking false fire alarm reduction.

In addition to growing the membership, the committee is also responsible for maintaining existing members. Procedures will be put in place to ensure that contact is made with existing members, who do not renew their memberships, to determine where FARA fell short of meeting their needs and to suggest corrective action to the Board.

New Membership and Mentoring Program

The Membership Committee will continue to review and develop the current "New Membership and Mentoring Program". The program will be monitored by the Membership Committee and the progress reported to the FARA board on an annual basis.

New Members: All new members will receive an information package and a member's password for access to the Members Only section on FARA's web-site. Follow up telephone calls will be made by the Chair of the Committee to review the information package and to ensure the new member is aware of what is available to them, answer any questions, discuss the upcoming Training Symposiums, advise of committees available and assign a mentor.

Mentors: The mentor is a crucial part of this program. They should be in tune with the new member's needs, be able to communicate, lend an ear, and give advice to the new member to make sure the new member gets the most of their membership. A current list of mentors will be posted on the FARA web-site. The committee will review, determine and document the method of assigning mentors to new members. The criteria and duties of the mentor will be reviewed annually. The committee will seek ways to recruit mentors.

The new member and mentor, as part of the audit process, will complete an Assessment Form to be evaluated by the Membership Committee.

Subcommittee to Explore Public Safety Association Outreach Alternatives

A subcommittee of the Membership Committee will be formed to explore the feasibility of performing outreach efforts to state public safety associations in an effort to educate and garner greater participation in FARA from those other association members. Some possibilities include State Police Chief's Associations, State Sheriff's Associations, State Crime Prevention Officers Associations, State Associations of Records Supervisors, State Police Officers Associations, Fire Marshal's Associations, State and Local Fraternal Orders of Police and other interested parties.

Training and Certification Committee

The Training and Certification Committee is responsible for the development, enhancement, coordination and implementation of all FARA training programs. The committee will further develop and implement the Professional Certification Program, adding a technical exam, and will coordinate efforts to present FARA's regional training course, as well as develop outreach protocols that can be used by law enforcement and the alarm industry to better educate citizens about false alarms and reward those who make a difference.

Regional Training

The committee will implement FARA's Regional Training Program to maximize its reach to local jurisdictions throughout North America. First, the committee will investigate and identify the best way to bring the message to the intended audience through a complete review of the existing Regional Training Program. A profile of the intended audience will be developed including their ability to travel, take time away from work, and ability to pay. The course name, content, delivery method, number of instructor, costs, and funding options will all be examined. Delivery methods including classroom, webinars and self-paced internet or DVDs will be examined. Marketing methods, including use of the existing video, will be identified and implemented. If classroom format is retained as a delivery method, ways to reduce costs will be explored

including reducing class time to one day and use of local instructors to reduce travel costs. Content will be reviewed to ensure that it supports managing fire alarms.

Professional Certification Program

The committee will continue implementation of the FARA Professional Certification Program and will develop additional aspects of the program, such as web-based certification testing, exploring additional venues in which to offer the certification program, such as offering the exam at the regional training classes, and finalizing and implementing the advanced level technical certification. The committee will explore the various technical programs that have already been developed by others and determine if successful attainment of other technical tests would/could/should constitute successful attainment of the FARA advanced level technical certification. The committee will also maintain the renewal certification process for maintaining existing Professional Certification. The subcommittee will explore whether FARA's Professional Certification Program can be part of a CALEA or other law enforcement accreditation standards program and if the CEU program can be offered online.

FARA strongly believes that alarm unit employees must have a working knowledge of the alarm industry, the various types of alarm equipment in use, what causes false alarms and how they can be avoided, the general business practices of companies doing business in their jurisdiction, ordinances in effect on a local and state level, as well as a myriad of other information. To that end, the committee will continue to update the existing Professional Certification Program, based on new issues and technological advancements in the electronic security field.

Public Safety Tips

The committee will develop additional informational one-page public safety tips that will address issues important to public safety alarm professionals, but which do not lend themselves to full-blown manuals or guides. Ideas for future public safety tips will be developed by the committee, as well as by the general membership.

Community Outreach

The committee will develop outreach protocols that can be used by law enforcement and the alarm industry to better educate citizens about false alarms and reward those who make a difference or show improvement in reducing false alarms. The outreach protocols will be recommendations only and will provide avenues to explore, segments of the community to target, and ways in which rewards can be made. The committee will create a presentation for alarm users that alarm administrators and/or alarm industry professionals can use as a training tool. The presentation will include suggested handouts and course material.

Web-Based Alarm User Awareness Course

Many alarm ordinances contain a provision whereby alarm users are either required to or can volunteer to take an alarm user awareness class when they have false alarms. Some jurisdictions provide a waiver of one false alarm fine to those alarm users who take the class. The committee will develop alarm user awareness course material and create an exam, which can be taken over the Internet in lieu of attending the awareness class in person.

Ways and Means Committee

The Ways and Means Committee will continue to explore ways to raise funds, which will enable FARA to provide greater support to municipalities on reducing false alarms. The main focus will be to involve a greater number of FARA members in the fundraising process, to develop new and innovative ideas throughout the year, and to further existing and cultivate new sponsorship opportunities.