

FARA
Annual Report 2011
Strategic Plan 2011 & 2012

Intro

2011 Plan

The False Alarm Reduction Association's (FARA) Strategic Plan for 2011 will implement a new plan designed to maximize the effectiveness of volunteer time. The plan is designed to place a new focus on committee work and reduce the amount of redundant review by the Board of Directors. Under the plan the board will focus on developing the strategic plan along with a budget to support it and monitoring progress in implementing the strategic plan.

2011 Status

Ongoing

2012 Plan

The False Alarm Reduction Association's (FARA) Strategic Plan for 2011 will implement a new plan designed to maximize the effectiveness of volunteer time. The plan is designed to place a new focus on committee work and reduce the amount of redundant review by the Board of Directors. Under the plan the board will focus on developing the strategic plan along with a budget to support it and monitoring progress in implementing the strategic plan.

Awards Committee

2011 Plan

Awards committee will gather nominations from the general membership and select the winners for Norma. C. Beaubien Public Safety Member of the Year and W. Rex Bell Associate Member of the Year Awards.

2011 Status

Awards given at 2011 Symposium. Few Nominations are submitted. Articles in newsletters and appeals at meeting continue.

2012 Plan

Awards committee will gather nominations from the general membership and select the winners for Norma. C. Beaubien Public Safety Member of the Year and W. Rex Bell Associate Member of the Year Awards.

Communications Committee

2011 Plan

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.

Triennial Review of FARA Manuals and Publications has taken a majority of the committee's time. In line with the new plan to effectively utilize volunteers, several tasks will be assigned to coordinators who will complete projects and seek guidance from the committee and board as required.

- **Newsletter** - An editor will be appointed to work with reporters assigned by the board and each committee.
- **Website** - A webmaster will be appointed to work with the Executive Director to revise, update and maintain the website.
- **Bulletins** - An editor will be appointed to review the existing bulletins that are up for Triennial review and identify any changes required by changes in technology or evolution of member opinion on the topic. Stylistic and formatting changes are not a priority. Changes made will be reviewed and approved by the full committee.
- **Manuals** - An editor will be appointed to review the existing manuals that are up for Triennial review and identify any changes required by changes in technology or evolution of member opinion on the topic. Stylistic and formatting changes are not a priority. Changes made will be reviewed and approved by the full committee.
- **Ordinance** - An editor will be appointed to review the existing ordinances that are up for Triennial review and identify any changes required by changes in technology or evolution of member opinion on the topic. Stylistic and formatting changes are not a priority. Changes made will be reviewed and approved by the full committee.

Transferred Tasks

- **Web-Based Alarm User Awareness Courses** - Responsibility will be transferred to the Training and Certification Committee.
- **Position Papers** - Responsibility will be transferred to the Board of Directors.
- **Model Fire Alarm Ordinance** - Responsibility will be transferred to the Fire Committee.

New Manuals/Guides

The reorganization will allow the committee to focus on development of new publications. The committee will develop a plan to complete or recommend removal of the following publications from the project list.

- **How to Write a Standard Operating Procedure manual**
- **Officer and Dispatcher Training manual** - correct procedures to follow
- **Standard for Reporting Zones** - The committee will develop a standard for how zone information should be provided to the PSAP.
- **Alarm Administration Outsource Vendor Best Practices guide** - Create a best practices guide for alarm administration outsource vendors that promotes coordination and open communication when administering a false alarm program.
- **NFPA 731-Standards for the Installation of Electronic Premises Security Systems-2005 Edition** - Review the standard to determine if any subject matter would be appropriate for creation of FARA bulletins.
- **Community Outreach Guide** - Develop a presentation to show members how to implement outreach initiatives to the communities in which we live and work. Create a guide about how to perform that outreach, what components should be included and providing suggestions on specific content materials to include.

2011 Status

The following report itemizes the great strides the Communications Committee made in satisfying our strategic plan initiatives and lists what we were able to accomplish. Some items on the strategic plan did not get done due to time constraints, lack of volunteers to complete them and efforts being focused on other areas deemed more important. In the future, if anyone has a suggestion for a new publication, it should be that person's responsibility to provide a rough draft from which the committee can then work.

1. **Main Focus:**

The Communications Committee is responsible for developing and creating new publications and updating existing ones, publishing a monthly newsletter and all other communications related activities of the association. The focus for 2011 was to create new documents.

2. **Committee Members**

The members of the Communications Committee include Sha Alexander, Ben Binder, Lisa Espinosa, Stacey Peacock, Jon Sargent, Kathleen Schraufnagel, Cindy Smith, Brandy Watson, Co-Chairs Amy Lobdell and Norma Beaubien, Board Liaison Pam Steiger, and ex-officio members Gerry Miller and Brad Shipp.

3. **Editors**

Based on the Board's approved Strategic Plan for 2011, the Communications Committee assigned volunteer editors to review and recommend changes to documents only if there were errors or a collective change in philosophy or position by public safety or the FARA Board. Editors are as follows:

1. **Bulletins** – Pam Steiger/Ben Binder
2. **Manuals** – Norma Beaubien
3. **Ordinances** – Amy Lowe/Brandy Watson
4. **Newsletter** – Lisa Espinosa/Shi Alexander
5. **Web Site** – Stacey Peacock/Cindy Smith

4. **Bulletins**

Two new bulletins have been created as follows:

1. What's An Alarm User To Do?
2. Maximizing Your Alarm System's Effectiveness
3. False Alarm?...Problem Solved

5. **Manuals**

The Communications Committee strategic plan called for us to write six (6) new publications. Following is information on each.

1. **Alarm Administration and 911**: This manual was published on August 24, 2011 and seeks to provide guidance to departments on what 911 center personnel, as well as first responders, should do to provide for a well crafted and enforced false alarm reduction program.
2. **Community Outreach Guide**: This guide provides information for all segments; i.e., public safety, alarm industry and alarm users, on how to start a dialogue, the various forums in which that can happen and the training that is available. The guide is currently in production and should be completed in late December 2011 or early January 2012.
3. **NFPA 731 – Standards for the Installation of Electronic Premises Security Systems**: After lengthy discussion and review of this document, it was determined that FARA would not attempt to interpret this document, but, rather, that we would look at the standard and cull out different pieces on which we could then write our own bulletins. Two of our three new bulletins were derived from NFPA 731. We are continuing to look at the standard for additional ideas for bulletins.
4. **How to Write a Standard Operating Procedure**: We had a volunteer willing to write the first draft of this manual, but that never came to fruition. The volunteer was unfamiliar with SOP's and she is committed on other projects for FARA, which left no time to work on this. It remains on the strategic plan for 2012.
5. **Standard for Reporting Zones**: Committee member Jon Sargent reported that there is an APCO/CSAA project underway that may very well address our concerns for how monitoring centers report zone information to PSAP's. Sargent is in touch with the ADT liaison to that project and will keep the committee informed of its progress. Since we do not want to duplicate effort, this project has been put on hold until we can see what APCO/CSAA develops, which may meet our needs.
6. **Alarm Administration Outsource Vendor Best Practices**: There were no volunteers who wanted to serve as lead on writing a rough draft for this document, so it is on hold.

6. **Ordinances**

The only Ordinance due for review in 2011 was the Smoke Emitting Devices Model Ordinance. A new public safety editor was appointed in early November. No changes are anticipated at this time.

7. **Triennial Review of Publications**

Triennial review of publications was accomplished by the Bulletins and Manuals editors, with any recommended changes being discussed with the committee and forwarded to the Board for approval.

The following documents were reviewed, revised as applicable and republished.

1. Home Alarm Services 101 bulletin
2. How to Calculate False Alarm Dispatch Rates manual
3. Working with Third Party Administration Companies manual
4. False Alarm Strategies manual
5. Residential Security: Helping Residents Reduce Criminal Opportunity guide
6. Alarm Management Software manual
7. Software Vendor Questionnaire
8. How to Create an Alarm User Awareness School manual
9. How to Create Regional Meetings manual
10. How to Develop and Implement a False Alarm Reduction Program manual

Looking to the future, we have five (5) bulletins and seven (7) manuals slated for review in 2012. Given the new procedures for review, it should not be a problem to get these 12 publications reviewed.

8. **Newsletters**

The InfoLink was turned over to new editors Sha Alexander and Lisa Espinosa, both of whom did an outstanding job in issuing newsletters.

9. **Web Site**

Editors Stacey Peacock and Cindy Smith were able to provide some input on the direction and content of the new web site. The Board decided to create a new Web Site Committee, so this effort was removed from the Communications Committee work plan.

2012 Plan

The Communications Committee is responsible for developing and creating new publications and updating existing ones, publishing a monthly newsletter and handling all other communications related activities of the association.

- **Newsletter** - Editors will continue to work with reporters assigned by the board and each committee. They will solicit articles from the general membership, write their own articles of interest and seek out information/articles from other sources that would be of interest to the membership.
- **Bulletins** - Editors will continue to identify and create new bulletins designed to educate the public, the alarm industry and public safety on false alarm issues and reduction measures.
- **Manuals** - Editors will identify and create new manuals and guides that help to educate about the false alarm issue, administration, etc., which are not appropriate for one-page bulletins.
- **Ordinances** - Editors will identify and create, *if appropriate*, new model ordinances that regulate specific alarm types.

Editors for Bulletins, Manuals and Ordinances will continue to review the existing publications under their purview, which are up for triennial review, and will identify any changes required in technology or evolution of member opinion on the topic. Stylistic and formatting changes are not a priority. Revisions will be reviewed and approved by the full committee.

New Publications:

1. **Standard for Reporting Zones:** Committee will monitor APCO/CSAA project and provide input or develop a supplemental document as appropriate.
2. **Community Outreach Guide:** Committee will complete work on this guide, which provides information to public safety, the alarm industry and the alarm user on ways they can open the lines of communication and educate about false alarms.
3. **How to Write a Standard Operating Procedure manual:** Committee will begin work on this initiative in 2012. The purpose of the SOP manual is to help FARU's create documents that will help with understanding the day-to-day requirements of the unit for any new staff.
4. **Alarm Administration Outsource Vendor Best Practices guide:** Committee will research to determine whether this guide should be a standalone item or should be incorporated into FARA's *Working with Third Party Administration Companies* manual.
5. **Other:** Committee will also solicit drafts for new documents from committee members, as well as other FARA members, and publish them as appropriate.

Conference Committee

2011 Plan

The Conference Committee has responsibility for the Symposiums and the FARA Institute.

Specific Objectives Include:

- Develop an agenda, create and establish educational seminars and workshops, select instructors, approve a registration packet, and determine activities involved with holding our 15th annual training symposium in San Antonio, Texas in 2011.
- Submit a budget for the 2011 Symposium to the Board for approval.
- Continue to develop sponsorships for the FARA Institute that will maximize FARA members' ability to attend future symposiums.
- Reach out to members and prospective members to market the training symposium.
- Develop an agenda, create and establish educational seminars and workshops, select instructors, approve a registration packet, and determine activities involved with holding our 16th annual training symposium in Albuquerque, New Mexico in 2012.
- Submit a budget for the 2012 Symposium to the Board for approval.
- Recommend a site for 2013 to the Board of Directors in time for the Mid-year meeting in October of 2011.

2011 Status

From January through April the Conference Committee, led by co-chairs Norma Beaubien and Kathleen Schraufnagel, worked tirelessly to refine and complete the training sessions for the 15th Annual International Training Symposium in San Antonio, TX scheduled for April 5 thru April 7, 2011. The committee met multiple times a month to ensure that the Symposium would provide the best training possible during the reduced duration of the Training Symposium. Additionally, the committee worked to ensure that the maximum number of public safety members were able to take advantage of funding provided through the generous donations from security companies and security industry associations to the FARA Institute Fund.

Since "Canada Day" was such a huge success in Buffalo and a large group of alarm industry professionals in Texas, we opted to have "Texas Day" on April 6th. This was a great opportunity to get new attendees to the FARA symposium. Fourteen first time attendees came to "Texas Day". The Opening Session/Luncheon began the 2011 Symposium on April 5th. The FARA Expo & Reception was again held on the first day of the symposium for those interested in software products and other services the opportunity to meet with specific vendors and committees throughout the following two days of the symposium. How Burglar and Fire Alarm Systems Should Work was successful in helping all members better understand how these systems work. This class received positive feedback on evaluations. The symposium ended on the afternoon of April 7th. After careful review of the evaluation forms submitted at the conclusion of the San Antonio training symposium, the Committee members developed a training agenda, which included such classes Are You Certifiable?, What Can the Alarm Industry Do For Me?, The Alarm User Has Control, Solve Your Worst Alarm Site Problem, What We Got Here is Failure to Communicate, I Did What?, How to Connect with 9-1-1, What are Those Computers Talking About? and The Best Ideas Come From Networking. The MCM Elegante offers complimentary Happy Hour cocktails each night to be utilized as networking opportunities.

At the conclusion of the San Antonio symposium, Norma Beaubien and Kathleen Schraufnagel officially stepped down as co-chairs of the Conference Committee. Kathy Rudover and Tammy Foxworthy were appointed as the new co-chairs. In May, Kathy Rudover stepped down as co-chair at her agency's request. Joe Carr was named the new co-chair. Angela Mangiaracina resigned from the conference committee at her city's request in June.

Intense work started on the May 1 through 3, 2012 training symposium in Albuquerque, New Mexico shortly after the San Antonio symposium. Led by co-chairs Joe Carr and Tammy Foxworthy, the committee is working diligently on the details of the 16th Annual International Training Symposium. The schedule has been switched to reflect the Board Meeting moving to Monday, April 30, 2012 prior to the start of the symposium. Another change is the symposium will kick-off with breakfast and meet and greet. Committees will be given time on the first day to showcase what they are about in an effort to drum up interest and participation. Each committee will man a booth in the silent auction room for additional information. In the past, committees were given booth space at the Vendor Expo & Reception but this event has been removed from the symposium. The scavenger hunt has also been scraped for next year. The location of the hotel does not lend itself to this type of activity. "Southwest Day" is in the works for Wednesday, May 2, 2012. The registration packet was completed and mailed out to FARA members. Joe has been reaching out to the New Mexico and Arizona Alarm Associations for donations for next year. Orlando, Florida has been approved by the Board for the site of the 2013 FARA symposium.

2012 Plan

The Conference Committee has responsibility for the Symposiums and the FARA Institute.

Specific Objectives Include:

- Develop an agenda, create and establish educational seminars and workshops, select instructors, approve a registration packet, and determine activities involved with holding our 16th annual training symposium in Albuquerque, New Mexico in 2012.
- Submit a budget for the 2012 Symposium to the Board for approval.
- Continue to develop sponsorships for the FARA Institute that will maximize FARA members' ability to attend future symposiums.
- Reach out to members and prospective members to market the training symposium.
- Develop an agenda, create and establish educational seminars and workshops, select instructors, approve a registration packet, and determine activities involved with holding our 17th annual training symposium in Orlando, Florida in 2013.
- Submit a budget for the 2013 Symposium to the Board for approval.
- Recommend a site for 2014 to the Board of Directors in time for the Mid-year meeting in October of 2012.

Fire Committee

2011 Plan

The Fire committee will develop and implement initiatives to reduce the huge numbers of false fire alarms and the cost to municipalities to respond to those false alarms.

Specific objectives include:

- Identify ways to expand the number of agencies managing fire alarms that join FARA.
- Liaison with fire groups.
- Review member needs for publications to support agencies that regulate false fire alarms.
- Review and recommend revisions to programs and publications to include fire alarm reduction or use them as templates for separate publications or programs.
- Create manuals, guides, bulletins, etc. to support agencies that regulate false fire alarms.
- Review and revise the model fire alarm ordinance.

2011 Status

- Need new co-chair
- Model Fire Alarm Ordinance – Pending
- Developed 3 informational bulletins – Silencing A Fire Alarm System; Central Station Service; Timer Test Not Received
- Participated in Fire Public Safety Educational Conferences

2012 Plan

- Identify ways to expand the number of agencies managing fire alarms that join FARA.
- Liaison with fire groups.
- Review member needs for publications to support agencies that regular false fire alarms.
- Create additional information bulletins geared towards end users.
- Review and revise the model fire alarm ordinance.

Membership Committee

2011 Plan

The Membership Committee is responsible for recruiting and retaining members.

Specific objectives include:

- Recruiting
 - Create incentives for new members to join.
 - Create programs to recognize and reward members that recruit members.
 - Develop and revise materials to recruit new members.
- Retention
 - Continue phone campaign to contact all previously expired members in an attempt to retain and regain membership.
 - Continue contact with existing members to:
 - increase attendance at annual symposium
 - encourage renewals
 - identify member needs
 - Continue Mentoring program

2011 Status

The membership committee continues to concentrate its efforts on retention and recruitment.

Accomplishments:

- Created incentive program to encourage existing membership to refer potential new members.
- Challenged symposium attendees to provide lists of those who "need FARA". Results of that activity were used by the committee to promote the benefits of membership in FARA.

In Progress:

- Outreach campaign to contact those who didn't renew their membership.
- Mentoring program for new members.
- Contributing articles to Infolink newsletter.
- Involvement with the website to update and maintain membership committee area.

2012 Plan

The Membership Committee is responsible for recruiting and retaining members.

Specific objectives include:

- **Recruiting**
 - Create incentives for new members to join.
 - Create programs to recognize and reward members that recruit members.
 - Develop and revise materials/methods to recruit new members.
- **Retention**
 - Continue phone campaign to contact all previously expired members in an attempt to retain and regain membership.
 - Continue contact with existing members to:
 - increase attendance at annual symposium
 - encourage renewals
 - identify member needs
 - Continue Mentoring program

Training and Certification Committee

2011 Plan

The Training and Certification Committee is responsible for the development, enhancement, coordination and implementation of all FARA training programs.

Specific objectives include:

- Convert the Essentials of False Alarm Reduction Course for online delivery.
- Develop Web-Based Alarm User Awareness Course
- On-Line False Alarm Prevention Courses for Alarm Industry Professionals-
 - Implement and promote False Alarm Reduction 101
 - Develop False Alarm Reduction 200 series

Transferred Tasks

- Community Outreach: Responsibility will be transferred to the Communications Committee.

2011 Status

Recent Accomplishments-

The committee's chair Sue Clark stepped down in April due to her impending retirement. At the annual 2011 symposium in San Antonio Kerri McDonald accepted the position as Chair of the Training & Certification Committee. The committee was fortunate to have Sue work with us until the end of July. One of the projects Sue had started and wanted the committee to finish was a webinar on "How to Create Regional Meetings". The committee held the webinar on July 27th, 2011. Even though the attendance was low the committee really enjoyed putting this together. No one on the committee had ever created and hosted a webinar. We had a wonderful team and we were lucky to have Kathleen Schraufnagel from Monitronics there to assist us. A copy of the webinar and the PowerPoint will be available on the FARA website.

Another project Sue Clark wanted the committee to work on and complete was the Multi-Alarm User webinar. The training is for locations that have false alarms due to having multiple people at the alarm site. The committee's goal was to have the webinar and PowerPoint available on FARA's website for any member of FARA to access. The course could be used for community meetings, alarm meetings or pass it along to a manager at a store that is having multiple false alarms.

Each committee member was assigned to create/modify a few slides from the Multi-Alarm User training. Committee member Shellie Reid took on the task of organizing all of these slides and put together the final product. Shellie recently completed the PowerPoint which was submitted to the committee. The committee approved of the PowerPoint but possibly would like to see the training broken up into sections. The training will be discussed at the October committee meeting.

The committee has taken over responsibilities that were previously assigned to the Professional Exam Sub-Committee. Training & Certification Committee will be responsible for reviewing any new documents for possible exam objectives. Any objectives will be given to the Professional Exam Sub-Committee for possible exam questions. Training & Certification Committee will also be responsible for the promotion of the exam.

The committee has taken this new task and run with it. It was decided by Training & Certification Committee to offer a 20% discount on the exam to anyone who is actively involved in a committee or on the Board. Another motion made by the committee was to change the recertification requirements. You no longer have to take the exam again if you fail to recertify. You will still keep your status as a Certified Alarm Manager but will on be current for that year if you have submitted the required documentation.

Listed are a few other details from the committee's accomplishments.

- Attendance for FARA Webinar – How to Create Regional Meetings: 10 Attendees, 1 Guest, 1 late attendee (last 10 min), 1 attendee left after 1 min, 7 organizers/speakers and 8 registered but did not attend.
- FARA has made \$96.00 from the Elite CEU course.
- Feature a CAM in each newsletter.

2012 Plan

The Training & Certification Committee is excited about upcoming projects and we enjoy working together. As Chair it was amazing to see a committee work so hard and so well together.

Listed are a few of the future goals or projects the committee plans to work on in the next six months.

- Find additional ways to promote the exam.
- Review any new documents for exam objectives.
- Develop training courses from FARA material for online delivery.
- Develop Alarm User Awareness material for online delivery.

Professional Certification Sub-Committee

2011 Plan

The Professional Certification subcommittee is responsible for the FARA Professional Certification Program.

Specific objectives include:

- Develop web-based certification testing.

2011 Status

The subcommittee decided with the concurrence of the full committee that the subcommittee should focus exclusively on exam content and that other issues such as pricing, promotion and rules and procedures will be decided by the full committee. The full committee will look at documents to see if additions or changes to objectives are required. The subcommittee will then look at new objectives to see if modifications to the exam are required.

Work continues on the new FARA website. After it is completed the web developer plans to offer us the capability to host the exam. The subcommittee is on hold awaiting that development.

2012 Plan

The Professional Certification subcommittee is responsible for the FARA Professional Certification Exam.

Specific objectives include:

- Develop web-based certification testing.
- Revise the exam as required

Website Committee

2011 Plan

- Created in Midyear

2011 Status

The new website is up and running. The committee has met on a weekly basis to review and improve the content and layout of the site.

2012 Plan

The website committee is responsible for fine tuning the initial debut of the new website. We are also in charge of the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the content on www.faraonline.org.

- Ensure the new website is operating smoothly and flawlessly.
- Confirm & aid in getting all active FARA members registered on the website
- Incorporate the FARA Forum. FARA Forum is the interactive piece of the website that can link all FARA members together in real time.
- Establish Committee pages. Each Committee will orchestrate their own page; Content and graphics to be overseen by the website committee representative and the committee chair.
- Creation and continual update of a website calendar to include committee meetings dates and times, symposium updates and other relevant FARA events.

2011 Annual Report - General Items

2011 General Membership Meeting

The annual FARA General Membership Meeting was held on Thursday, April 7, 2011. President Miller thanked the membership for their support of her presidency and stated she was honored to be the first Canadian president of FARA. She announced the new web site project that is coming to fruition, talked about the various assistance requests FARA put out to assist members, and thanked all of our FARA Institute sponsors, who made it possible for many public safety members to attend the San Antonio symposium.

Executive Director Brad Shipp reported on the financial condition of the association. The membership agreed that members of FARA's Mid-Atlantic Chapter should conduct the next audit of FARA's books.

All of FARA's committees; i.e., Awards, Communications, Conference, Fire, Membership, Training and Certification and the Professional Certification subcommittee, provided reports on their accomplishments in 2010 and where they want to go in 2011. All made pleas for the general membership to consider joining one of our very worthwhile committees.

Elections were held for FARA Director and Officer positions. Results were as follows:

- Vice President-Electronic Security – **Deborah Hansen**, Naperville Police Department, Naperville, Illinois
- Secretary – **Pam Steiger**, Louisville Metro Police Department, Louisville, Kentucky
- At-Large Director – **David Wilson**, Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department, Charlotte, North Carolina
- At-Large Director – **Stacey Peacock**, Barnstable Police Department, Barnstable, Massachusetts
- Associate Director-Electronic Security – **Pat Killian**, Vector Security, Richmond, Virginia

Per FARA Bylaws, President Miller appointed the following:

- Board Seat - Associate Director-Fire – **Mary Galloway**, Dynafire, Casselberry, Florida, who is replacing **Kathleen Schraufnagel**
- Committee Co-Chairs – Conference Committee, **Tammy Foxworthy**, City of Olathe, Olathe, Kansas and **Kathy Rudover**, Windsor Police Service, Windsor, Ontario who are replacing **Norma Beaubien** and **Kathleen Schraufnagel**
- Committee Chair – Training and Certification Committee – **Kerri McDonald**, Riverside Police Department, Riverside, California, who is replacing **Sue Clark**

Member Assistance

The FARA Assistance Request provides a mechanism to reach the entire FARA membership with one simple e-mail and is an excellent way to ask the entire membership a question and receive e-mail responses from those with experience on a particular issue. Over the past year, FARA sent out numerous Assistance Requests on various issues including:

- Senior Citizen Waivers
- Security Cameras
- Third Party Administration
- Different Fees for Business vs. Residence
- Info on Titles & Pay Scales
- Enhanced Call Verification
- Statistics
- False Fire Alarm Letters
- Appeals
- Sample Inspection Certificates
- Outsourcing
- Daily Logs
- Electronic Payment

Additionally, monthly Assistance Requests were issued asking for input on the reliability of alarm companies seeking IQ Certification.

Assistance Requests continue to be an excellent membership benefit. They provide an excellent tool for members to poll hundreds of alarm management staff (in public safety, the alarm industry and at the alarm user level) all at one time.

FARA Institute

FARA recognized that the economic uncertainty was making it more difficult for public safety to receive approval to attend the annual international training symposiums. Because of that uncertainty, FARA developed the FARA Institute, which was designed to make it possible for public safety members to receive reimbursement funds to attend in-person training symposiums. The basis of the program includes seeking contributions to fund the program, recognizing donors with various perks throughout the year, including thank you letters, recognition at the training symposium and in the InfoLink and via press releases to the trades, etc. We are incredibly grateful to all of our FARA Institute Sponsors, without whom we would never have been successful in holding our Annual International Training Symposium in San Antonio.

The Board of Directors would like to thank the following FARA Institute contributors:

- Broadview Security, Inc.
- National Electronic Security Alliance (NESA)
- Public Safety Corp (CryWolf)
- Texas Burglar & Fire Alarm Association (TBFAA)
- Canadian Security Association (CANASA)
- Installation Quality Certification Board
- Maryland Burglar & Fire Alarm Association (MDBFAA)
- Monitronics Security
- Vector Security, Inc.
- DSC
- ADS Security
- PMAM Corporation
- South Carolina Alarm Association (SCAA)
- Vintage Security, LLC
- Emergency 24, Inc.
- Homesafe Security Systems
- United Central Control

15th Annual FARA Training Symposium Held

The False Alarm Reduction Association held its annual international training symposium in San Antonio, Texas from April 5 through April 8, 2011. The Texas alarm associations came through in a big way by sponsoring Texas Day, which allowed more public safety and alarm industry members specifically from Texas to attend.

The participation by all attendees was outstanding, and at the end of the week, everyone went home with new ideas to help reduce false alarms. There was wonderful networking, new friends were made, old friends reconnected and feedback on FARA's 15th Annual International Training Symposium by attendees was excellent!

The FARA Board of Directors, on behalf of the entire FARA membership, extends a huge thank you to all of our event sponsors, who so generously contributed to the success of the FARA Training Symposium. These sponsors/sponsorships are *in addition* to the FARA Institute donations.

- **Vector Security** – Opening Luncheon
- **Emergency 24** – Networking Lunch
- **ATB Services, COPS Monitoring and Rapid Response Monitoring Services, Inc.** – Breaks
- **BK Companies** - Signs

Texas Day Sponsors

- Texas Burglar and Fire Alarm Association
- Houston Gulf Coast Alarm Association
- North Texas Alarm Association
- South Texas Alarm Association

Awards

Norma C. Beaubien Public Safety Member of the Year Award for 2011

Two very deserving FARA members received the Norma C. Beaubien Public Safety Member of the Year Award for 2010. The honors went to **Stacey Peacock**, Barnstable Police Department, Massachusetts and **Sue Clark**, Montgomery County Police Department, Maryland.

Stacey Peacock, Alarm Administrator for the Barnstable Police Department in Massachusetts was recognized for her immeasurable contributions to both FARA and the Barnstable community. She has been a contributing member of the Membership Committee for many years, serves as their scribe and helped to put FARA on the map in Facebook. She assisted in the creation and fine-tuning of the FARA mentoring program, which serves to get our new members acclimated to FARA and all we have to offer. Stacey has made countless phone calls to members on a variety of topics related to membership and mentoring. She is also a contributing member of the Communications Committee, writing and editing manuals, guides, brochures and bulletins. Most recently, she volunteered to become one of our Web Site Editors, in charge of coordinating the look, feel and content of our new web page. Stacey is a Certified Alarm Manager through FARA's Professional Certification Program. She has also done an excellent job of serving as a moderator and presenter at FARA symposium courses.

Stacey started a false alarm program in Barnstable, Massachusetts from the ground up. She worked tirelessly on modifying her ordinance to ensure it was effective for all parties. Through her efforts, she was successful in reducing false alarms in her community by more than 50%. She developed and maintains effective working relationships with citizens, command staff and alarm company representatives, which helped her achieve her outstanding reduction in false alarms. Stacey provides assistance and information about false alarm reduction issues to the legislature and other jurisdictions in Massachusetts. She was instrumental in researching and selecting new software to more efficiently and effectively manage their false alarm program. Finally, Stacey successfully thwarted an attempt by the local alarm association to enact statewide alarm legislation, which would have pre-empted local jurisdictions leaving them no voice in how to implement false alarm programs in their own communities.

Stacey is committed to her profession and is passionate about reducing false alarms. Her positive attitude and great work ethic also make her a great addition to the FARA team. Stacey is truly deserving of this award as she epitomizes the FARA mission. We are very fortunate to have her as a member of the FARA team.

Sue Clark, Program Specialist with the Montgomery County Police Department in Maryland was also honored for her incredible work for FARA and her police agency.

Sue serves as Chair of the Training and Certification Committee and did an outstanding job with a committee that has very few members. She recruited new members for the committee and selected and mentored a new chair for the Professional Certification Subcommittee. Sue worked tirelessly to get the regional training classes off the ground – personally making numerous phone calls to area public safety (fire and law enforcement) advising of the classes and seeking participation. She spearheaded successful Essentials Classes in San Antonio and in Maryland. She also co-authored the Train the Trainer course to get more qualified people to serve as instructors of the Essentials class. Sue promotes FARA membership and attendance in training venues at every opportunity. She served as the inaugural Secretary of the Mid-Atlantic (former Maryland) Chapter of FARA.

Sue may best be remembered as the individual who spearheaded the effort to get on-line alarm industry training implemented. She worked tirelessly, and mostly on her own time, to create the False Alarm Reduction 101 course for the alarm industry. There are six more classes to come in the 200 series and eight more in the 300 series. In fact, she is so committed to FARA and the on-line training that she has volunteered to come back from her lake-front home in Virginia to work on the upcoming 200 and 300 series courses.

Sue works closely with over 360 alarm companies that do business in Montgomery County to ensure they are properly licensed and comply with the provisions of the alarm law. She has built extensive working relationships with area alarm coordinators and their staff. She took on large corporate accounts to educate them on false alarm reduction and cut false alarms in half for one particular bank in Montgomery County. Sue is truly a valued and exceptional member of FARA and is richly deserving of this award.

W. Rex Bell Associate Member of the Year Award for 2011

The FARA Awards Committee also opted to recognize two different associate members for their outstanding contributions to FARA, their companies and the communities they serve. The W. Rex Bell FARA Associate Member of the Year Awards for 2010 went to **Kristina Walker** of Vector Security and **Stuart Forchheimer** of Homesafe Security.

Kristina Walker serves as the False Alarm Coordinator for the National Accounts Division of Vector Security, Inc. in Manassas, Virginia. She is a dedicated employee who gives 150% every day of the year towards false dispatch reduction. Kristina touts false alarm reduction and doing things the “right” way at every chance both with customers, as well as with management staff within her company. She works with customers to resolve false alarm issues and ensures that permits are current and valid. Kristina has lent great assistance in reducing false dispatch rates by 52% for the National Accounts Division. She also developed excellent working relationships with numerous local jurisdictions. On two separate occasions, she invited local alarm coordinators to the national accounts division of Vector and provided public safety with a forum to talk about why false alarms are such a big problem for law enforcement and what the employees of Vector can do to further reduce false alarms.

Kristina is Co-Chair of the FARA Membership Committee. She was instrumental in getting FARA its own Facebook page and helping to move FARA into the 21st century. She helped to define the FARA mentoring program and serves as a mentor to many FARA members. She has developed excellent and innovative ways to grow the membership and talks about FARA at every opportunity. Her enthusiasm to increase membership in FARA is infectious and her work on the Membership Committee is valuable and very much appreciated.

Kristina was instrumental in helping get FARA’s Fire Committee off the ground last year and serves as a mentor to its co-chair, Mike Mahoney. She is a member of the regional Mid-Atlantic Chapter of FARA and attends meetings giving an alarm industry perspective during discussions. She truly embraces the mission of FARA and all law enforcement personnel she works with on a daily basis. Her upbeat spirit and enthusiasm makes people want to work with her for the betterment of the entire industry.

For all the above reasons and more, Kristina Walker was the perfect candidate to receive the W. Rex Bell Associate Member of the Year Award.

Stuart Forchheimer, President of Homesafe Security in Baltimore, Maryland was also honored for his exceptional contributions to FARA, his company and the community he serves. Stu owns a local alarm company and never draws attention to himself but is always there for FARA, his customers and his employees. One of the nominations the FARA Awards Committee received stated, "If all alarm companies were as dedicated, ethical and professional as Stuart's, we would all be looking for another line of work." His company has consistently low false dispatch rates in the Baltimore Washington Metropolitan region. Stu developed working relationships with all surrounding jurisdictions to improve the reliability of alarm systems, reduce false dispatches and to protect citizens from deceptive trade practices. He worked tirelessly with regulators in Maryland to develop brochures and flyers to alert consumers to problems associated with the "summer sales" business model. He co-hosted FARA's webinar on Summer Sales Scams and spent countless hours working with FARA to ensure the webinar was a success. Under Stuart's direction, Homesafe Security repaired, at their cost, the damage caused to his customer's property when they were taken advantage of by unethical sales representatives in summer sales campaigns.

Stu is one of only two alarm industry representatives certified to teach FARA's Essentials of False Alarm Reduction course. In order to become certified, Stu had to take time out of his busy schedule to study the course and then attend a day long training session on what FARA expects of its instructors. At that training, he was required to show that he understood the content, was well versed in both the alarm industry and public safety sides of the equation, and then, while being filmed, had to give a portion of the class to other trainees and FARA instructors. Stu did all this on his own, taking valuable time away from running his business to help FARA be able to provide the Essentials class in additional venues. Stu then co-taught at the Maryland class last fall.

Stu serves as the Treasurer of the Maryland Burglar and Fire Alarm Association. He is one of the strongest voices on their Board championing FARA, the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of FARA and false alarm reduction. He donated funds to the FARA Institute to help get public safety to training symposiums and was instrumental in securing donations from the Maryland Burglar & Fire Alarm Association as well.

Stu is a truly exceptional individual, who richly deserves the W. Rex Bell Associate Member of the Year Award and FARA was very proud to honor him as such.

False Alarm Reduction Association Achievement Award

FARA created the False Alarm Reduction Association Achievement Awards to recognize public safety and alarm industry professionals who either have a false alarm reduction program that has shown meaningful or significant reductions over a three to five year period or that has shown a significant or meaningful contribution towards the FARA mission. The attendees at the training symposium received all nominations and then selected the nominees they believed were most deserving. Attendees had an excellent array of nominees from which to choose this year, and three awards were bestowed.

Public Safety False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award

The public safety award went to the **Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department**, in Charlotte, North Carolina. The department went from a high of 106,061 alarm responses in 1995 to a low of 60,105 in 2010 even while increasing the number of registered alarm users to 185,000. In 1995, alarm calls constituted 20% of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department's total calls for service, and today that number is only 3.7% - an astounding decrease. Charlotte-Mecklenburg has achieved this success through the dedication of its False Alarm Unit staff, excellent alarm ordinance, which includes a no response policy for failure to obtain an alarm user permit or failure to pay assessed fines, and through the relationship building they have accomplished with the alarm industry in Charlotte. They outsource the management of their program to a third-party vendor, but maintain Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department staff to handle things like appeals and alarm user interventions for problem accounts. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department is to be commended for their incredible and sustained false alarm reduction efforts over the past 15 years.

Alarm Industry False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award

The alarm industry award went to **Monitronics, Inc.** in Dallas, Texas. Monitronics has been successful in reducing false alarms from their monitored accounts throughout the entire United States. They created a False Alarm Control Team, whose sole job is to reduce false alarms. They instituted Enhanced Call Verification on ALL of their accounts, track and study false alarm rates for jurisdictions in which they have customers, make personal calls to high offenders (3 or more alarms in a 24-hour period or 5 dispatches in a month), and provide extensive employee training on how to address false alarms. These efforts filter through their entire company; i.e., central station, tech support, customer service, retention, dealers and dealer support. Monitronics creates a Top 9 Jurisdiction Report, which lists the top 20 customers in the 9 jurisdictions that have the most dispatches. Utilizing that report, they are able to perform personal outreach to determine the cause of the problem and then offer solutions. Monitronics has also done an excellent job of building relationships with public safety agencies. They do email, bulk mailings, phone calls and site visits. They also attend monthly false alarm prevention hearings in Dallas.

The results of their efforts are impressive. In Charlotte-Mecklenburg, they increased their number of customers yet reduced the number of alarms dispatched and went from a .249 dispatch rate in 2009 to .226 in 2010. Baltimore County, Maryland's numbers are even better with a dispatch rate of .328 in 2009 to .264 in 2010. Multnomah County, Oregon showed more alarm users in 2010 yet a reduction in the dispatch rate from .240 in 2009 to .220 in 2010. Monitronics has clearly had a positive impact on reducing false alarms from their customers and are to be commended for those efforts.

FARA Achievement Award

The FARA Achievement Award is given to the person, agency, company or association that has shown significant or meaningful contributions toward the FARA mission. The attendees at the symposium selected **Joe Carr, United Central Control** for this honor, one he truly deserves. Joe served as liaison with the Texas industry associations for the San Antonio Symposium. He became a member of the Conference Committee and participated on teleconferences and shared his extensive knowledge of the area, the alarm industry and possible instructors. He coordinated the scavenger hunt and extensively promoted Texas Day to get the greatest participation at FARA's San Antonio training symposium by public safety and the alarm industry throughout Texas. He taught classes and found speakers and panelists for several sessions. Joe attended the Regional Training Session in Dallas and attended and promoted the FARA classes at the TBFAA Dallas and San Antonio Conventions. Joe was our "go to" guy on the ground in San Antonio, and we would never have been able to put on such a successful symposium without him. Joe definitely deserved to win this award as he epitomizes the description of this award by providing significant or meaningful contributions towards the FARA mission through his cooperative efforts and championing of FARA at all levels.