

Annual Report & Strategic Plan

**Produced by the
False Alarm Reduction Association (FARA)**

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FARA 2013 Report & 2014 Strategic Plan

Intro

The False Alarm Reduction Association had another successful year! Board and Committee Members alike have dedicated countless hours to the advancement of this association. Here are a few highlights from 2013;

- Press Releases on DIY Alarm Systems, Door to Door Sales and Is Mother Nature Causing Havoc with Your Alarm System; FARA gain national attention in several publications for these press releases
- New Model Ordinances and Guide to Model Alarm Ordinances
- Member Growth
- Three New Board Members
- New FARA Chapter
- New Alarm User Website
- Continued Improvement to Member Website

Awards Committee

2013 Status

The Awards Committee accepted nominations from the general membership for the Norma. C. Beaubien Public Safety Member of the Year and W. Rex Bell Associate Member of the Year Awards. The award recipients were announced at the 2013 Symposium.

2014 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

2013 Status

Strategic Plan Initiatives:

- The Committee has been very busy this year editing and creating. We had many documents up for review this year, more than usual.
- Our two biggest endeavors to date, include giving the Alarm Ordinance a total make over and the creation of the new document, FARA Guide to Alarm Ordinances.
- Also a new document was created - FARA Standard for Smoke Emitting Devices. The standard, which is based on the position paper, delivers the knowledge in a more direct and concise manner.
- A new and exciting undertaking was the creation of two Press Releases; Door to Door Sales; Who's a Knocking? Was released in June. The second, Weather; Is Mother Nature Causing Havoc with Your Alarm System? Released in September using PR Web, a different press release company, which includes an AP Press release.
- We are currently researching and gathering industry information on Single Action Panic Buttons for the creation of a new document.
- A new document stemming from the Ordinance revision was proposed that would broach the subject of what happens when your alarm program gets stagnant? It would address things once could do to re-work and tighten up an existing alarm Ordinance.

- The document 'How to set up a False Alarm Reduction Program – An Alarm Company Perspective' has been tabled due to time/resource constraints.
- Restructuring of document review from three years to five years.

Bulletins:

- Under the triennial review process, 13 bulletins have been reviewed, amended as appropriate or reaffirmed.

Ordinances/Manuals/Guides:

- FARA Model Burglar Alarm Ordinance – This was our biggest accomplishment of the year to date. As a cohesive group we completely revised the ordinance to bring it up to date and make it more concise. It reads much differently and more effectively now.
- The FARA Model Burglar Alarm Ordinance Executive Summary was up for review but has been replaced by the new Alarm Ordinance and new document titled 'FARA Guide to Alarm Ordinances'. This new guide breaks down the ordinance and explains, in depth, its components. It explains what needs to be considered when instituting an alarm ordinance.
- There were six guides or manuals to be reviewed in 2013.
 - Consumer Guide to Purchasing an Alarm System and Understanding False Alarms
 - Working with Third Party Administration Companies
 - How to Calculate Alarm Dispatch Statistics
 - False Burglar Alarm Reduction Strategies
 - Residential Security: Helping Residents Reduce Criminal Opportunity
 - FARA / NESA Guide to Alarm Equipment – Joint FARA / NESA review. The FARA/NESA Alarm Equipment Guide will be reviewed by both the Communications Committee and NESA

Brochures:

All five brochures on false alarm prevention; i.e. Residential, Commercial, Bank, School and Church were slated for revision this year. Only minor changes have been made to the brochures.

Newsletter:

The InfoLink is a monthly newsletter. Committees are asked to submit a monthly article for the Infolink. The symposium committee had submitted a bunch of articles all at once. This was a great help as we were stocked with articles to choose from every month. It would be beneficial if all the committees could do the same. It is still difficult to get FARA members to share their news. We need more and varied subjects and contributors. Possibly an article entitled 'From the Board...' which gives membership highlights of what the Board is undertaking, might be an idea for future articles. We are struggling to get content to make this a monthly publication.

2014 Plan

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.

Due to the restructuring the document reviews from three years to five years will allow more time for the committee to focus on creating new publications.

Symposium Committee

2013 Status

Committee preparation and member participation led to another successful Symposium in Orlando, FL in 2013.

Work is underway for the 2014 Symposium with be in Baltimore, MD. Classes are set and the packet has been posted on the website.

2014 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 18th annual training symposium in Baltimore, MD in 2014.
- Submit a budget for the 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 19th annual training symposium in Las Vegas, NV in 2015.
- Recommend a site for 2016 to the Board of Directors.

Membership Committee

2013 Status

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

Accomplishments:

- 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 maintain membership committee area.

2014 Plan

The Membership Committee is responsible for recruiting and retaining members.

Recruiting:

- Use budget to create incentives for new members to join.
- Continue to maintain and recruit new members.

Retention:

- Ongoing phone campaign, contacting all previous and expired members to obtain feedback and find out what their needs are from FARA and regain membership.
- Speak about the Symposium to all members to increase attendance.
- Review and improve the Mentoring Program.

Training and Certification Committee

2013 Status

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

An ongoing project for the T& C Committee is the development and implementation of the online CAM exam. This project was originally slated to be completed earlier in 2013. However some further work was needed on the webpage portion, thus causing this project to be put on hold temporarily. We are pleased to inform the board that it looks like those issues may have been resolved and the committee is scheduled to begin testing the online exam sometime in the beginning of 2014. Our ultimate goal is to have the online CAM exam up and running before the 2014 FARA Symposium.

The committee has also completed more alarm user training presentations available for download by FARA members. The following list is now available on the FARA website under the member access section:

Multi-user – Alarm System Orientation

- FARA Tips for Banks
- FARA Tips for Businesses
- FARA Tips for Places of Worship
- FARA Tips for Residences
- FARA Tips for Schools
- Password vs Passcode What is the Difference
- Maximizing Alarm Effectiveness
- Your Alarm System Battery Backup
- Holidays
- Lightning
- Rearranging Your Home Environment
- Remodeling
- Vacation
- False Alarms & VoIP
- Appropriate Use of Duress Hold-up and Panic Alarms
- Audio Video Verification
- Door to Door Sales

2014 Plan

Work has also recently started on another project in the form of a series of webinars based on FARA publications. The first of this series will feature a Top 5 (or 10) list of commonly used False Alarm Reduction Strategies. It was first considered that the webinar would be presented in a live format as previous FARA webinars.

However, this may change due to recent developments in the use of software that will allow us to create a more permanent and interactive training format, similar to what will be used for the online CAM exam. The T&C committee has also asked to work with the membership committee in marketing this series as a recruiting tool to attract new potential members to FARA. We hope to have the first of this series available for the public sometime in the beginning of 2014.

A future project that is also slated for future development will be a CAM exam designed for FARA members that are in the alarm industry. This has been a desire expressed by the Board in the past, and it is a goal of the T&C committee to complete this task.

Future Projects:

- Continued development of FARA bulletin presentations for download for members.
- Availability of the CAM exam online.
- Development of future online training based on FARA publications made available to the public to attract new members.
- Development of an Alarm Industry-related CAM exam for availability at future symposiums and online.

Website Committee

2013 Status

2013 proceeded at a slower pace for the website committee. With the website up and running, meetings were held on a quarterly basis. Although issues arose that delayed some items of the strategic plan, the committee was able to accomplish the following items:

- Ensured operation of the website and fixed issues as they arose.
- Encouraged use of the website and its resources.
- Assisted committees in the creation and maintenance of their pages.
- Finalized agreement with webmaster for approval by the Board.

The following goals were not fully achieved:

- Expand website to include training and testing module.
 - Status: In progress. Testing of the system should commence in early 2014.
- Create and update the website calendar to include committee meetings, symposiums, and other FARA events.
 - Status: Inactive.

Other items of note:

- Due to technical issues, it became necessary to “split” the related websites to become standalone sites. This option has simplified much of the work that is required for maintenance of the site. It also allows for plug-ins to be selected “off the shelf” and will reduce the amount of work requiring outside services. However, this split significantly impacted progress in other areas.
- Two new domain names were purchased (FARAOnline.net, alarmuser.org) ensuring that FARA holds rights to 2 of the 3 FARA Online domains (currently, FARAonline.com is held by a site trying to sell the rights). The name alarmuser.org will allow for future expansion of FARA’s web presence.

2014 Plan

The website committee is responsible for maintaining the website www.faraonline.org and keeping the content current. Moving into 2014, the website committee will accomplish the following items:

- Expand FARA’s web presence with the following projects:
 - Establish a consumer website.
 - Implement the training and testing module to allow online CAM testing and host online training sessions.
- Ensure operation of the current website and new sites and troubleshoot issues as they arise.
- Encourage use of the website and its resources through various means including the FARA InfoLink.
- Assist committees in the maintenance of their pages utilizing the guidelines created by the website committee. The website committee representative and committee chair will oversee the content and graphics to assure a professional look. The website chair will provide training as needed.
- Long-term projects:
 - Create and populate an ordinance resource library with links to ordinances, permit requirements, and permit applications for current FARA members. Once achieved, the project could be expanded.
 - Create a dispatch rate library to include statistical information such as population, median income levels, and relevant information useful for comparison.

2013 Annual Report – General Items

2013 General Membership Meeting

The annual FARA Membership meeting was held on Wednesday, April 24, 2013 in Orlando, FL.

President **Kerri McDonald** reviewed significant accomplishments during her year as president, including transitioning several committees to new chairs, reaching out to industry groups, asking each committee to reexamine its goals and involving more members in the committees.

Kerri thanked two members of the board who are not seeking reelection for their service - **Stacey Peacock** and **Pat Killian**.

Institute sponsors were thanked for their continued support and help in getting many public safety attendees to Orlando.

FARA Treasurer, **Steve Heggemann**, gave the financial report of the meeting. Audit will be done by the Mid-Atlantic chapter of FARA.

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

- Vice President - Electronic Security - **Debbie Hansen** - Naperville Police Department
- Director at Large - **Pam Steiger** - Louisville Metro Police Department
- Director at Large - **David Wilson** - Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department

- Secretary - **Shellie Reid** - Loudoun County Sheriff's Office
- Electronic Security Associate Director - **Kathleen Schraufnagel**, Monitronics

Per the FARA Bylaws, President McDonald made the following appointments:

- Communications Committee Chair - **Stacey Peacock**, Barnstable Police Department, Hyannis, MA.
- Conference Committee Co-Chairs - **Tammy Foxworthy**, Olathe Police Department, Olathe, KS & **Joe Carr**, United Central Control, San Antonio, TX
- Membership Committee Co-Chairs - **Debbie Hansen**, Naperville Police Department, Naperville, IL and **Kristina Walker**, Vector Security, Gainesville, VA
- Training and Certification Committee Chair - **Sherry Couey**, Fayetteville, NC Police Department.
- Website Committee Chair - **Shellie Reid**, Loudoun County Sheriff's Office, Leesburg, VA.

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.

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.

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

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 Symposium.

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

- National Electronic Security Alliance (NESA)
- Arkansas Security Alarm Association (ASAA)
- Texas Burglar & Fire Alarm Association (TBFAA)
- Canadian Security Association (CANASA)
- Orange County & Inland Empire Alarm Associations
- Monitronics Security
- Vector Security, Inc.
- IQ Certifications Program
- IE Alarm Systems

17th Annual FARA Training Symposium Held

The False Alarm Reduction Association held its 17th annual international training symposium in Orlando, FL. As usual, 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 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.

Awards

Norma C Beaubien Public Safety Member of the Year Award for 2013

The recipients of the Norma C. Beaubien Public Safety Award for 2103 are two very deserving FARA members. The honors went to Tammy Foxworthy, Olathe Police Department, Kansas and Kerri McDonald, Lynchburg Emergency Communications Center, Virginia.

Tammy Foxworthy - Olathe Police Department

Past winner Steve Heggemann presented the award to Tammy Foxworthy and indicated that "Tammy was receiving the award for her exceptional work coordinating the Symposiums."

Here are a few reasons why Tammy was selected for the award:

- Tammy became a FARA member in 2007.
- She joined the Conference Committee in 2007.
- As a committee member she coordinated the auction and raffles at Symposiums.
- And became Conference Committee Chair in 2008.

Kerri McDonald – Riverside Police Department

Past winner Steve Heggemann presented the award to Kerri McDonald and indicated that "Kerri was selected because of her service as president, as a board member and committee chair, her outreach to the alarm industry and her involvement at several symposiums."

Here are a few reasons why Kerri was selected for the award:

- Kerri has been employed with the Riverside Police Department for 16 years.
- She has managed the Alarm Enforcement Unit for the past 13 years. During that time she has coordinated the development, implementation and revision of the City of Riverside's Security Alarm Ordinance, implemented new alarm management software and completed a full audit of the Alarm Enforcement Unit.
- Kerri became a FARA member in 2005.
- Chaired Professional Certification Subcommittee in 2006.
- In June of 2006 she became an At Large member of the FARA Board of Directors.

W. Rex Bell Associate Member of the Year Award for 2012

The W. Rex Bell Associate Member of the Year Award was presented to outstanding members for their contributions to FARA, their companies and the communities they serve. The honors went Jon Sargent of Tyco.

Jon Sargent has been active in false alarm reduction work on the front lines for many years and has always been an advocate for FARA. He actively promotes FARA whenever he can and he is a long-time member of the Communications Committee.

Jon not only contributes to the Committee in regard to the development and maintenance of its existing documents, but also by notifying the Committee whenever an issue arises that would warrant consideration from FARA as well as the creation of a bulletin or other type of communication to address it. Not only has Jon been active in FARA, he is an active member of the Electronic Security Association, the Central Station Alarm Association, and the Security Industry Alarm Coalition.

He is past president of the California Alarm Association and has worked with many jurisdictions, particularly in the western US, to successfully resolve ordinance and alarm response issues. He has also worked closely with the IACP on alarm management issues. Somehow, he has managed to stay employed by ADT, now Tyco since the split of the two companies, which means they must see some value in his work!

False Alarm Reduction Association Achievement Award

FARA created False Alarm Reduction 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 from this year. Three awards were bestowed at this year's symposium.

Public Safety False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award: Louisville Metro Police Department – False Alarm Reduction Unit, Louisville, KY

LMPD's program began on June 1, 2005 and continues to be a strong force in the reduction of false alarms in Louisville/Jefferson County, Kentucky.

A major effort has been made to work with the alarm industry, and false alarm top offenders, to help in the reduction of false burglar alarms. LMPD is extremely satisfied with the efforts of the False Alarm Reduction Program. The False Alarm Reduction Unit works diligently in our reduction efforts by getting the entire department involved. The false alarm reduction Administrator works with the majors and lieutenants at the LMPD to control the top offenders of false burglar alarms on a quarterly basis.

The Louisville Metro Police Department also takes part in community festivals, and the Mayor's monthly meetings held throughout our community, to educate all citizens to the many services that are offered by LMPD.

The LMPD completed its seventh calendar year of enforcement under Chapter 127 of the Louisville Metro Codified Ordinance on December 31, 2012. After 7 years of enforcement in reducing false alarms there are still successes being achieved. Since the program was enacted we have a total of 93,910 registered alarm users. Approximately 77,000 alarm users experienced **zero** false alarms in 2012.

The Louisville Metro Police did, however, respond to 466 more false alarms in 2012 than in 2011. While that number is low when compared to the total number of dispatch requests of 25,599 it still represents an increase over the last year. The False Alarm Reduction Unit (FARU) attributes this increase, in part, to a dramatic rise in the number of alarm systems sold during the summer months via door-to-door sales, and the increase of Do-It-Yourself alarm where no training is provided to the alarm user.

Dispatched false burglar and hold-up alarms had an increase of 2% from 2011 to 2012. The original RFP estimated false alarms for the year of 2004 at 42,500. Working from this number we have had a total reduction in false alarms from 2004 through 2012 of 20,253 or a decrease of 47%.

Alarm Industry False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award: The Control Center a division of RFI, San Jose, CA

An active member of the False Alarm Reduction Association (FARA), RFI has made reducing false alarm dispatches a focus. We have re-structured our program to reduce our false alarms by reaching out to dealers and customers that have excessive signals. We have developed reports and analyze them on a regular basis, identify problem accounts, and contact each problem account personally. Once an account has sent in 4 signals within 4 hours real time, a False Alarm Team Member from the Control Center has already reached out to the customer and or dealer advising them of the activity we have received. We then will troubleshoot with them, try and download into the panel to do a reset to correct the problem and if unsuccessful we open a service ticket and schedule a tech to go out to the premise to fix the issue. By executing this plan we have seen a decrease of 25% of excessive signals and potential false alarms reach our Central Station.

FARA Achievement Award: National Electronic Security Alliance (NESA) - Rockville, MD

Since the inception of NESA in December 2004, their focus has been to serve and promote the electronic systems industry at the direction of, and through its affiliated state associations. Within the first year they began working with FARA and supporting our mission as well.

In 2006 they co-reviewed the FARA Alarm Equipment Guide. After their invaluable input the document was reissued and renamed: FARA-NESA Alarm Equipment Guide. The reference guide contains major alarm system components, describes their function, provides recommended applications and lists either the false alarm potential or the false alarm prevention aspects of each component.

NESA supported FARA monetarily when we held our conference in Dallas, Texas and in 2009 they began contributing to the FARA Institute and have made generous donations every year since. Additionally, when FARA needed additional assistance, they donated additional funds and other support for the Annual Symposiums. They not only assist FARA with donations, their members have generously provided their expertise and insight by presenting numerous training sessions at the majority of the FARA Annual Symposiums over the past 6 years.

NESA's affiliated state associations are: Arkansas Security Alarm Association (ASAA), Kansas Electronic Security Association (KESA), Maryland Burglar & Fire Alarm Association (MDBFAA), Oklahoma Burglar & Fire Alarm Association (OKBFAA), and Texas Burglar & Fire Alarm Association (TBFAA). These individual associations have also individually provided additional support to FARA from time to time.

Summary

As you can see this truly has been a busy year with many wonderful accomplishments. The Board of Directors would like to thank all of its members and supporters and looks forward to continuing its tradition of providing excellent service and products to the entire membership for many years to come.

Mission Statement:

It is the mission of the False Alarm Reduction Association (FARA) to provide a forum for local government alarm ordinance professionals to exchange information on successful alarm management programs, to serve as a clearinghouse for agencies seeking to reduce false alarms, and to foster an environment of cooperation among public safety, the alarm industry and the alarm user.