



North American Fire Training Directors FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
John Cunningham, President
Phone: 902-861-3823, ext. 223
Email: President@naftd.org

North American Fire Training Directors hire first executive director

New leader will champion fire service learning, strengthen membership, and work to assist members as they prepare volunteer and career firefighters for modern day occupational challenges

(Feb. 1, 2020 - Waverley, NS) – The [North American Fire Training Directors](http://naftd.org) (NAFTD), the primary point of contact for state, provincial and territorial fire training academies in North America, has appointed its first executive director. Ken Willette, a 35-year veteran of the fire service, will lead efforts to support the member organizations that train more than one million volunteer and career emergency responders in the United States and Canada by working with state, provincial and federal government leaders, as well as private sector representatives.

Willette spent more than three decades in emergency services, working as a Department of Defense aircraft rescue firefighter, volunteer firefighter, municipal firefighter, and shift commander before rising to the rank of fire chief in two Massachusetts towns. He then spent eight years leading teams that support first responder standards development and fire service solutions at the [National Fire Protection Association](http://nfpa.org) (NFPA), the world's premiere fire and life safety authority. In that role, Willette launched the NFPA Responder Forum, a thinktank that educates leadership candidates from more than a dozen top fire service organizations on new life safety threats, innovative technologies, cultural issues, responder health and wellness, and fire data. The new NAFTD executive director is also a former president of the Fire Chiefs Association of Massachusetts and a graduate of the National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officers Program with a BS in Fire Protection from SUNY Stony Brook.

“NAFTD is excited to have Ken Willette leading our efforts to effectively engage our members and mobilize the resources of NAFTD to enhance the delivery of training across North America. His background as a firefighter, department official, and NFPA spokesperson; and his reputation for being a progressive industry collaborator - make him ideally suited to be the first Executive Director of our organization,” NAFTD President John Cunningham said. “The board of directors stands ready to work with Ken as he seeks to implement our Strategic Plan and develop new strategies for NAFTD to enhance its brand and foster an even greater level of fire service knowledge and skills throughout North America.”

-Continued-

Willette will oversee day-to-day operations of NAFTD including formulating and recommending policy; responding to member's needs; providing outreach to other first responder organizations; and engaging in activities that underscore NAFTD's position and priorities. He is also charged with monitoring and responding to industry affairs; ensuring that NAFTD stays current with today's growing demands of emergency response and workplace concerns; and compiling and sharing fire service training statistics and insights.

"Firefighters play an important role in our society," Willette said. "We have made great strides reducing loss, particularly here in North America, but our first responders face an even wider array of challenges today. NAFTD plays a major role in preparing the men and women of the fire service for all hazards; and by working with like-minded organizations and individuals in the days ahead, we will meet the expectations of our membership and the communities that we serve."

Ken Willette can be reached at (774)-200-7774 or kwillette@naftd.org .

About NAFTD:

The North American Fire Training Directors (NAFTD) is a national 501(c)(3) corporation comprised of fire training directors from the United States and Canada. Each year, NAFTD member training systems provide education in fire ground command and operations, emergency medical services, response to terrorism, leadership, management, fire prevention, and rescue to entry level recruits, seasoned firefighters and officers. In addition to coordinating and delivering their own training programs, each U.S. training entity of the NAFTD works in concert with the National Fire Academy (NFA) and the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) to provide NFA programming. Additional information regarding NAFTD and its membership can be found at www.naftd.org.