



# Bylaws and Constitution

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## **Council of Governors and the Congress**

**Articles 01 and 05**

23rd Edition

October 2017

Complete document includes Bylaws and Constitution of the IFSAC Council of Governors (Article 01), and the Bylaws and Constitution of the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (Article 05). Note that the Bylaws and Constitution of the Congress, Article 05, address the organization as a whole. Each assembly and board in IFSAC also has bylaws that contain rules and regulations specific to those groups.

**Attention:** The most recent amendments approved by members of the IFSAC are indicated by a vertical line next to the paragraph where the amendment has been made. The date these amendments were approved and in effect is indicated by the month and year shown on the cover page and in the footer section of this document.

# ARTICLE 01

## Bylaws & Constitution of the Council of Governors

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## **ARTICLE 01.1 ENACTMENT**

01.1.1 This Article Number 01 shall be the Constitution of the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress Council of Governors.

## **ARTICLE 01.2 RELATIONSHIP**

01.2.1 Within the scope of defined responsibility, the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress Council of Governors, in pursuit of its objectives, will work in unison with the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress and the Administrative Office, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma.

## **ARTICLE 01.3 NAME**

01.3.1 The International Fire Service Accreditation Congress Council of Governors shall hereafter be referred to as the Council of Governors (or COG) or Council.

## **ARTICLE 01.4 MISSION STATEMENT AND FUNCTIONS**

Mission Statement:

- 01.4.1 The functions of the Council of Governors are to:
- a) Work with the Congress on issues of linkage between assemblies.
  - b) Deal with issues that are common to the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors and the Degree Assembly Board of Governors.
  - c) Recommend resolutions to the Congress to resolve disputes between the Certificate Assembly and the Degree Assembly.

## **ARTICLE 01.5 COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS**

- 01.5.1 The Council of Governors shall consist of eleven (11) members:
- a) Three (3) members elected from the Certificate Assembly during the spring meeting.
  - b) Three (3) members elected from the Degree Assembly during the spring meeting.
  - c) One (1) member of the Administrative Office to serve as meeting facilitator. The administrative member will only vote in the event of a tie vote.
  - d) The public members from each assembly.
  - e) The chair of each assembly shall be an ex officio non-voting member of the Council of Governors.
  - f) Council of Governors members will serve a three (3) year term.

- 01.5.2 A member may withdraw from the Council of Governors by delivering to the Administrative Office a written letter of resignation.
- 01.5.3 Any member of the Council of Governors who is elected as the chairperson or vice chairperson for their respective board shall step down from their position on the COG upon accepting the chairperson or vice chairperson position.
- 01.5.4 In the event of a vacancy occurring on the Council of Governors, the replacement process shall be:
- a) If the member represents the Certificate Assembly, the chairperson of the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors will appoint a replacement from members of the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors to serve until the next spring meeting of the Certificate Assembly.
  - b) If the member represents the Degree Assembly, the chairperson of the Degree Assembly Board of Governors will appoint a replacement from members of the Degree Assembly Board of Governors to serve until the next spring meeting of the Degree Assembly.
  - c) Any assembly in which a vacancy occurs must elect a new member to the Council of Governors to fill the unexpired term at its next spring meeting after the vacancy occurs.
- 01.5.5 Members of the Council of Governors shall serve until replaced.
- 01.5.6 A Council of Governors member's appointment may be terminated for cause by a majority vote of the Council of Governors. A request for a letter ballot, for the removal of a Council of Governors member, requires the support of at least four (4) members of the Council of Governors.
- 01.5.7 The administrative member to the Council of Governors shall serve as facilitator.
- 01.5.8 Members of the Council of Governors, as such, shall not receive any remuneration for their services; however, the Administrative Office may reimburse the reasonable expenses of Council of Governors members for their attendance at meetings of the Council of Governors in the event of extenuating circumstances or for special meetings. Extenuating circumstances shall be determined by electronic means or conference call among the Council of Governors, the chairs of the Degree and Certificate Assembly, and Administration. Input shall also be sought from the Finance Committee regarding the decision of extenuating circumstances.

## **ARTICLE 01.6 MEETINGS**

- 01.6.1 A meeting of the Council of Governors shall be held during the semi-annual meeting of the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress. Ninety (90) days prior to the meeting, written notice of the meeting shall be sent to each member. Sixty (60) days prior to the meeting, notice of the agenda shall be published in sufficient detail to enable members to form a reasoned judgment. Agenda items may be provided to the Administrative Office between notification of the meeting

(90 days) and printing of the agenda.

01.6.1.1 The Council of Governors shall be allowed to have online or conference call discussions between regularly scheduled meetings. These discussions will be for planning and discussion purposes only and shall not be used to conduct regular business where a decision is made and/or a vote is to be taken.

01.6.2 At meetings of the Council of Governors, a majority of the members shall constitute a quorum.

01.6.3 At meetings of the Council of Governors, every question shall be determined by a simple majority vote of its members present unless specifically provided by these bylaws.

01.6.4 The administrative member of the Council of Governors shall not vote on any question put before the Council of Governors except to break a tie vote.

01.6.5 Council of Governors members are responsible for ensuring that the business and activities of the Council of Governors are conducted in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws and that the business and activities of the Council are appropriate for furthering the objectives stated therein.

01.6.6 The Council of Governors shall keep minutes of the proceedings of its meetings in which shall be recorded all actions taken by the Council of Governors. Preparation of the minutes shall be the responsibility of the Administrative Office and shall be submitted to the members of the Council of Governors within sixty (60) days of the meeting. Minutes will be considered for approval by the Council of Governors at its next meeting and shall be distributed to the Congress within sixty (60) days of approval by the Council.

01.6.7 The Council of Governors, may, in any regular meeting or regularly called special meeting, for the purpose of discussing certain matters privately, adopt a motion to enter into executive session; provided that, in any such motion proposing an executive session, the general nature of the discussion to be held and a limitation as to the time permitted for the discussion shall be specified. Upon the adoption of any such motion, all persons not members of the Council of Governors, the parliamentarian or a member of the Committee on Rules who is not a member of the Council of Governors, or individuals requested by the chairperson of the Council of Governors by name shall excuse themselves from the room. And provided further, that:

01.6.7.1 No binding action shall be taken while in any such executive session except for matters related to 01.6.7.5 (2).

01.6.7.2 No topic(s) other than that (those) specified in the original motion authorizing the executive session shall be discussed.

01.6.7.3 The time limit specified in the original motion authorizing the executive session shall not be exceeded.

- 01.6.7.4 No minutes shall be kept and no recordings shall be made of any discussion occurring in an executive session.
- 01.6.7.5 Matters discussed in executive session shall be limited to: 1) consideration of nominations for awards to be made; and 2) allegations or complaints of wrongdoing in office of elected officers, member organizations, agents, or employees.
- 01.6.7.6 Any action(s) resulting from or out of any discussion held in executive session shall be taken immediately upon the return of the COG to regular session. The only exception would be matters related to 01.6.7.5 (2).

## **ARTICLE 01.7 AMENDMENTS**

- 01.7.1 Amendments to these bylaws must be proposed in writing and submitted to the Administrative Office at least sixty (60) days prior to a regular or special meeting of the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress.
- 01.7.2 Properly proposed amendments to these bylaws shall be balloted at Congress meetings. They shall require a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting for adoption. Once the amendment has passed the Congress, it must be placed before each assembly and concurred by a majority vote of both assemblies.
- 01.7.3 Any amendments to these bylaws passed by the Congress and concurred by a majority vote of the assemblies shall take effect immediately upon completion of the meeting at which they are approved unless otherwise specified.

# ARTICLE 05

## Bylaws and Constitution of the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress

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## **ARTICLE 05.1 ENACTMENT**

05.1.1 This Article Number 05 shall be the Constitution of the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress.

## **ARTICLE 05.2 GENERAL**

05.2.1 The purpose of the Congress is to provide a forum for the consideration and/or arbitration of certain issues which involve the Congress itself or two or more assemblies of the Congress.

05.2.2 The International Fire Service Accreditation Congress, in pursuit of its objectives, shall conduct appropriate operations. Such operations will be based on an assessment of the needs and shall be carried out without remuneration to its members.

## **ARTICLE 05.3 NAME**

05.3.1 This Congress shall be known as the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress, hereafter referred to as the Congress.

## **ARTICLE 05.4 MEMBERSHIP**

05.4.1 Membership in any approved assembly such as the Degree Assembly or Certificate Assembly shall qualify an individual as a member of the Congress. Membership in the Congress shall take place immediately upon membership in either assembly.

05.4.2 Members will only remain active members of the Congress while active members of their respective assemblies. Membership by a single entity in more than one assembly will not constitute multiple memberships in the Congress.

05.4.3 An entity will be considered withdrawn from the Congress upon withdrawing from an approved assembly unless active membership exists in another assembly.

## **ARTICLE 05.5 MEETINGS**

05.5.1 Meetings of the Congress and its assemblies shall be held semi-annually; one in the spring and one in the fall. Ninety (90) days prior to the meeting, written notice of the meeting shall be sent to each member. Sixty (60) days prior to the meeting, notice of the agenda shall be published in sufficient detail to enable members to form a reasoned judgment. Agenda items may be provided to the Administrative Office between notification of the meeting (90 days) and printing of the agenda.

05.5.2 The Spring Meeting shall include annual training for the Certificate Assembly's and Degree Assembly's membership and meetings of the Congress, Certificate Assembly, Degree Assembly, and committees. The Fall Meeting shall include the meetings of the Congress, Certificate Assembly, Degree Assembly, and their

committees. Specific meeting dates shall be determined by the Congress. Specific meeting locations will be determined by the Administration office.

- 05.5.3 A voting member may appoint as proxy a member of the voting entity's staff or a voting member of the Congress. Such proxy, which is valid only for the meeting for which it is given, must be in writing and must be on record with the Administrative Office prior to the commencement of the meeting.
- 05.5.4 At meetings of the Congress, a quorum shall consist of more than thirty percent (30%) of the existing voting entity members including proxies.
- 05.5.5 At meetings of the Congress, every question shall be determined by a simple majority vote of its members present and proxy votes unless specifically provided by these bylaws.
- 05.5.6 The Congress shall keep minutes of the proceedings of its meetings in which shall be recorded all actions taken by the Congress. Preparation of the minutes shall be the responsibility of the Administrative Office and shall be submitted to the members of the Congress within thirty days of the meeting. Minutes will be considered for approval by the Congress at its next meeting and shall be distributed to the Congress within thirty days of approval by members of the Congress.
- 05.5.7 Congress members are responsible for ensuring that the business and activities of the Congress are conducted in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws and are appropriate for furthering the objectives stated therein.

## **ARTICLE 05.6 SEAL**

- 05.6.1 The seal of the Congress shall be shown on the original of these bylaws.

## **ARTICLE 05.7 MISSION STATEMENT AND FUNCTIONS**

Mission Statement: To increase the level of professionalism of the fire service through the accreditation of those entities who work with assemblies within the Congress, for the accreditation of public fire service certification programs and/or fire-related, postsecondary educational programs, by increasing the coordination of efforts between the assemblies of the Congress, and serve as a mechanism of arbitration on issues of debate between assemblies.

- 05.7.1 The functions of the Congress are to:
- a) Consider policy statements and operational guidelines submitted by any of the assemblies of the Congress or Council of Governors.
  - b) Inform members of the fire service and educational community regarding the system of accreditation and of the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress, including recommendations of promotional materials, exhibits, etc.
  - c) Develop and promote an awareness among state, provincial, territorial, federal government agencies, educational institutions, and those members of the public served by an accredited or certifying entity regarding the accreditation system.

- d) Ensure compliance with any recognized national or international standards of accrediting bodies, and where conflict may exist between accreditation standards, evaluate and approve specific standards for use by the Congress in measuring itself.
- e) Approve internal evaluation instruments by the Congress, separate and apart from specific instruments used by the separate assemblies.
- f) Work with the Administrative Office and Council of Governors concerning financial and long-range planning.
- g) Ensure nondiscriminatory accreditation processes.

## **ARTICLE 05.8      RULES AND REGULATIONS**

- 05.8.1 The Council of Governors may prescribe rules and regulations consistent with Article Number 05 relating to the management and operation of the activities within the Congress as they deem expedient, provided that such rules and regulations shall have force and effect only until the next semi-annual meeting of the Congress when such changes are placed before the members for decision.
- 05.8.2 Rules and regulations are prepared so as to clarify and amplify the provisions of Article Number 05 in order to provide guidance for the effective administration of the Congress.
- 05.8.3 The authority of the Congress shall be limited to:
- a) Setting dates for the meetings of the Congress.
  - b) Referring issues to the individual assemblies for concurrence.
  - c) Developing issues of linkage and methods by which the individual assemblies can be directed to work cooperatively on issues that would result in an increased effectiveness of IFSAC.
  - d) Establishing cooperative committees between assemblies for combined issues.
- 05.8.4 Business before the Congress shall be for discussion purposes, with decision-making referred to each assembly for concurrence. The Congress may be utilized as an arbitration instrument or forum between assemblies, but concurrence by each assembly shall be required for the transaction of business.
- 05.8.5 The Congress should be utilized as a mechanism for an individual assembly to raise an issue addressed by other assemblies.
- 05.8.6 Any question coming before a meeting for which no provision has been made in these bylaws shall be decided according to *ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER, NEWLY REVISED* or its successors.

## **ARTICLE 05.9      AMENDMENTS**

- 05.9.1 Amendments to these bylaws must be proposed in writing and submitted to the

Administrative Office at least sixty (60) days prior to a regular or special Congress meeting.

- 05.9.2 Properly proposed amendments to these bylaws shall be voted on at Congress meetings. They shall require a majority vote of the Congress to be referred to each assembly for concurrence.
- 05.9.3 Bylaw amendments must be concurred (approved) by all assemblies prior to taking effect.
- 05.9.4 Any amendments to these bylaws passed by the Congress and concurred by a majority vote of the assemblies shall take effect immediately upon completion of the meeting at which they are approved unless otherwise specified.

## **ARTICLE 05.10 COMMITTEES**

- 05.10.1 The Congress shall establish committees with an equal number of members appointed from each assembly. The term “committee” shall include standing committees, panels, task forces, ad hoc groups, and so forth. Each committee shall have a clearly defined function or specific charge. Any ad hoc committee shall disband at the completion of its charge.

Each committee shall endeavor to elect chairpersons and vice chairpersons from different assemblies.

### **05.10.2 Standing Committees**

- a) Finance Committee - The Finance Committee shall be a standing committee of the Congress. The Finance Committee shall be composed of three voting members from each assembly to be appointed by the chairperson of the board of governors of each assembly. The chairperson and vice chairperson of the Finance Committee shall be elected by members of the Committee from among its membership and shall serve one-year terms. Appointments to the Finance Committee shall be for a term of three years.

The Finance Committee shall establish the criteria and procedures for budget development, management, and reporting. The Finance Committee is also responsible for reviewing and making adjustments to the budget as necessary. IFSAC Administration shall prepare the budget for submittal to the Committee for review of recommended changes as necessary. The Finance Committee will present the budget to the Council of Governors at the spring meeting for approval.

- b) Committee on Rules - The Committee on Rules shall be a standing committee of the Congress. The Committee shall be composed of three voting members from each assembly to be appointed by the chairperson of the board of governors of each assembly. The chairperson and vice chairperson of the Committee on Rules shall be elected by members of the Committee from among its membership and shall serve one-year terms. Appointments to the Committee on Rules shall be for a term of three years. The IFSAC parliamentarian shall be an ex officio non-voting member of the Committee.

The Committee on Rules shall receive and review all proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws of the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress for conflicts, procedural concerns, and consistency with key documents-of-reference promulgated by organizations or bodies to which IFSAC itself subscribes or belongs (e.g.- NFPA 1000; CHEA bylaws and requirements). The Committee on Rules is additionally authorized to initiate and conduct such reviews on its own initiative on a periodic and continuing basis. The Committee on Rules shall report its findings and recommendations through the Council of Governors of the Congress.

- c) Committee on Promotions - The Committee on Promotions shall be a standing committee of the Congress. The Committee on Promotions shall be composed of three voting members from each assembly to be appointed by the chairperson of the board of governors of each assembly. The chairperson and vice chairperson of the Committee on Promotions shall be elected by the Committee from among its membership and shall serve one-year terms. Appointments to the Committee on Promotions shall be for a term of three years.

The Committee on Promotions shall be responsible for pursuing new members and testimonies from existing members, promote and support the ambassador(s), provide press releases to the public and internally, maintain the history of IFSAC by keeping the history book updated with photos and significant actions from the meetings, designing presentation materials, provide news and updates at approved social and professional networking websites and produce videos for prospective new members.

All representatives of IFSAC are considered to be “ambassadors” and are encouraged to promote IFSAC [see bylaw 5.7.1(c)]. The “Ambassador Program” is intended to be a formal extension of IFSAC for recruiting, but is not limited to, outside the United States. The Committee on Promotions shall develop and maintain for distribution to its members, sections within the IFSAC Handbook, that detail policies and procedures of the Congress relating to the Ambassador Program in regards to oversight, evaluation, and qualifications. Revisions or amendments to the Ambassador Policy shall be handled in the same manner as bylaws (see Article 05.9).

- d) Ethics Committee – The Ethics Committee shall be a standing committee of the Congress. The Ethics Committee shall be composed of four voting members from each assembly, to be appointed by the chairperson of the board of governors of each assembly. The chairperson and vice chairperson of the Ethics Committee shall be elected by members of the Committee, from within its membership and shall serve one-year terms. Appointments to the Ethics Committee shall be for a term of three years.

The Ethics Committee shall receive and review all questions concerning ethical discussions raised by member entities of the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress. Where necessary, they shall work in conjunction with the Rules Committee. The Ethics Committee shall report its findings and recommendations through the Council of Governors of the Congress.

- e) Committee on Business Operations - The Committee on Business Operations shall be a standing committee of the Congress. The Committee shall be composed of three voting members from each assembly to be appointed by the chairperson of the board of governors of each assembly. The chairperson and vice chairperson of the Committee on Business Operations shall be elected by members of the Committee from among its membership and shall serve one-year terms. Appointments to the Committee on Business Operations shall be for a term of three years. The IFSAC parliamentarian shall be an ex officio non-voting member of the Committee.

The Committee on Business Operations shall receive and review all proposed amendments to the Strategic Plan of the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress for conflicts, operational concerns, and consistency with key documents-of-reference promulgated by organizations or bodies to which IFSAC itself subscribes or belongs (e.g.- NFPA 1600, bylaws, and business plan). The Committee on Business Operations is additionally authorized to initiate and conduct such reviews on its own initiative on a periodic and continuing basis. The Committee on Business Operations shall report its findings and recommendations through the Council of Governors of the Congress.

- f) Training and Mentoring Committee – The Training and Mentoring Committee shall be a standing committee of the Congress. The Training and Mentoring Committee shall be composed of three voting members from each assembly, to be appointed by the chairperson of the board of governors of each assembly. The chairperson and vice chairperson of the Training and Mentoring Committee shall be elected by members of the Committee, from within its membership and shall serve one-year terms. Appointments to the Training and Mentoring Committee shall be for a term of three years.

The Training and Mentoring Committee shall coordinate and/or develop training programs and mentoring criteria. Mentoring criteria shall be approved by the Council of Governors. In addition, the Committee shall oversee the mentoring program within each assembly. Assembly specific training programs may be developed at the assembly level as appropriate. The Training and Mentoring Committee shall report their findings and recommendations through the Council of Governors of the Congress.

## **ARTICLE 05.11 IFSAC EMERITUS STATUS**

Purpose: To recognize and honor IFSAC participants by nomination of their respective board upon their participation in IFSAC for a period of five consecutive years and:

- a) who are no longer active in his or her fire service or related career; or
- b) have retired from the organization or college he/she represented, and have been granted emeritus status by that organization or institution; or
- c) have retired from the organization or college he/she represented, but may have

returned to the same or other organization with a change in employment status. Possible examples, with the approval of the respective assembly and the Congress, might include:

- i) A person is full time within the organization or college, retires, then returns as a part-time employee or consultant, but is no longer the organization or college's representative to IFSAC.
- ii) A person retires from one organization or college, but is not granted emeritus status from said organization or college; is or becomes employed elsewhere in a less than full-time capacity, but is not the organization or college's representative to IFSAC.

A nominee must be approved by the majority of their respective assemblies, and then referred to the next Congress meeting for approval. Individuals granted emeritus status shall:

- a) Be invited, at his or her own expense, to IFSAC conferences and meetings.
- b) Be allowed to speak at attended meetings with chair approval.
- c) Maintain a non-voting status.
- d) Be listed in the IFSAC member directory of each respective assembly as Emeritus Status.