REPORT TO LEGISLATURE – FY 2004

Prepared by
Office of the State Fire Marshal

Submitted to

Members of the Senate and House subcommittees on
DLEG
As required by Sec. 353 of 2004 PA 354

January 11, 2005

Executive Order

Executive Order 1997-2 transferred certain responsibilities to the Department of Labor & Economic Growth as follows:

Department of Labor & Economic Growth

- Plan review and fire safety inspection functions
- Fire inspector certification and training
- Fire alarm and fire suppression system installation, documentation, and certification
- Fire extinguishing compound use and approval
- Hazardous chemicals in the workplace
- The State Fire Safety Board

Executive Order 2003-18 transferred certain responsibilities to the Department of Labor & Economic Growth including, but not limited to:

Department of Labor & Economic Growth

- Public Education
- Fire incident reporting
- Hazardous Materials Incident
- The Michigan Insured Fire Loss Reporting System
- Fireworks
- The Fire Fighters Training Council

Requirement for Report

This report was prepared pursuant to the directive of Act 354 of the Public Acts of 2004 (DELG Budget Act), specifically Section 353, which reads as follows:

Sec. 353. (1) The department shall prepare a detailed report and deliver it to the subcommittees not later than January 15, 2005.
(2) The report shall contain input from a delegate appointed from and by the following organizations:

(a) Michigan fire chiefs association.
(b) Michigan state fireman's association.
(c) Michigan firefighter's union.
(d) Michigan fire service instructors association.
(e) Michigan fire inspector's society.
(f) Michigan chapter of the international association of arson investigators.

(3) The report shall contain information about the quality and adequacy of service from the state fire investigation, education, and training under the reorganization of the fire marshal division responsibilities. The report shall be based on the performance of the fire marshal division in the performance of its fire safety duties during fiscal year 2003-2004.

Process

A letter was directed to the head of each of the organizations identified in the budget act. The letter was sent December 13, 2004 and requested that comments be directed to our office no later than January 4, 2005.

Comments Received

As a result of the mailing, responses were received from the Michigan Fire Chiefs Association, the Michigan State Firemen's Association, the Michigan Professional Fire Fighter Union, Michigan Fire Inspectors Society, and the Michigan Fire Service Instructors.

All the responses shared the same basic concerns: Most believed it was not fair to evaluate the quality and adequacy of this office, due to that fact that it has been only in the last few months that the State Fire Marshal and the Director of Firefighters Training positions have been filled. Most feel that the move from the Michigan State Police to DLEG will be positive for the future of the fire service in the State of Michigan. In all, most remarks were positive in regard to the Office of the State Fire Marshal in the performance of its fire safety duties during fiscal year 2003-2004.

Fire Marshal Programs

Following is information about each of the specific programs for which the Office of the State Fire Marshal was responsible for during FY 2004:

Public Education:

The Office of the State Fire Marshal has adopted an aggressive Public Education strategy to guide its efforts.

- A Senior Fire safety Module for *Safe at Home*, designated to be used by fire departments in senior centers, apartment complexes, and assisted living facilities.
- Fire safety news releases during holidays, Fire Prevention Week, Arson Prevention Week, and when significant events took place.
- Promotion of nationally recognized safety programs.
- Issuance of alerts on unsafe products or practices to educate the public and the fire service.
- Support of a website containing public education materials.

Fire Incident Reporting:

- Michigan's 1,075 fire departments were required to report their activity to the Fire Marshal Division.
- Michigan was the first state to implement and go on-line with the new National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS), a state-of-the-art, internet-based, data collection system. Michigan leads the nation with the highest percentage of fire reporting. All fire departments in the state were converted to electronic filing effective January 1, 2003. This allowed for timely annual reports, as well as real time access to Michigan's data for training, investigation, and public education purposes.
- The data was used to identify trends in fire causes that were used in education efforts, for investigative purposes, and as the basis for changes in standards, codes and statutes.

The Michigan Insured Fire Loss Reporting System:

- Data on insured fire loss was entered into the system to be used primarily in identification of arson-related fraud.
- The data can be compared to the National Fire Incident Reporting System as a further crosscheck on suspicious fires.

Fireworks:

Work is continuing on a proposed revision of the Fire works Law, PA 328, as amended.

Fire Fighters Training Council:

The Office of Fire Fighter Training staff served the training needs of the state's more than 31,000 fire fighters and 1,075 departments and provided the following services:

- Prepared and published advisory standards for the selection of fire fighters
- Prepared and published training standards
- Established instructor qualifications and certification
- Established courses of study
- Evaluated instructors and schools
- Developed and administered certification examinations for new fire fighters
- Established regional training centers to assist departments with training
- Cooperated with state, federal, and local fire agencies for training of fire fighters
- Issued certificates of training and maintained individual records