

**The Advantages and Disadvantages of Implementing Shift Commanders in the  
Violet Township Fire Department**

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## **CERTIFICATION STATEMENT**

I hereby certify that the following statements are true:

1. This paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions, or writings of another.

2. I have affirmed the use of proper spelling and grammar in this document by using the spell and grammar check functions of a word processing software program and correcting the errors as suggested by the program.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## ABSTRACT

The problem this study investigated was the ability of the Violet Township Fire Department (VTFD) to provide a dedicated incident commander outside the rank of company officer. The purpose of the study was to investigate the appropriateness and identify the advantages and disadvantages of implementing shift commanders in the Violet Township Fire Department.

Evaluative research was conducted to answer the following questions:

1. What are the national standards for command and control?
2. What are the advantages for implementing this position?
3. What are the disadvantages of implementing this position?
4. Is the position appropriate for our organization?
5. What are comparable organizations doing?

The procedure involved literature review and conducting an evaluative study that demographically compared organizations to the VTFD. The survey revealed that 86% of the departments that responded had implemented the position of shift commander in some form. Only 25% of the respondents have implemented this position with a rank appropriate to comply with national standards.

Comments received by this study can be utilized by departments searching for guidance in implementing this position into their organization. Discussion and recommendations were made to further evaluate this position in regards to staffing levels, budgetary considerations, levels of training and education necessary for this position.

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## INTRODUCTION

### **Statement of the Problem**

The Violet Township Fire Department (VTFD) is faced with challenges associated with rapidly expanding development and population. This rapidly expanding population has provided the department with increases in run volumes, which have lead to difficulty providing a dedicated incident commander.

The problem this study investigated is that the organization has experienced times when a chief officer was not available to respond. Those times have required the company officer to perform the function of incident commander. The company officers have performed this function, but when this occurs, it removes a member and leader of a functional crew to perform incident command. This transition from company officer to incident commander is difficult, and detracts from the functional effectiveness, abilities and staffing of that crew.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the appropriateness of implementing a shift commander position in the Violet Township Fire Department. The rank associated with a shift commander varies by department, and organizations refer to this position by various titles. The responsibilities of the position are more important to this study than the actual rank. This study can be utilized to determine a future path for the organization to follow in regards to shift supervisory staffing.

It is the intent that the information and knowledge that is assembled can be presented to the department for information and reference in regards to the organizations future staffing and planning as it relates to shift commanders.

### **Research Questions**

The following questions will be answered by this evaluative research:

1. What are the national standards for command and control?
2. What are the advantages for implementing this position?
3. What are the disadvantages of implementing this position?
4. Is the position appropriate for our organization?
5. What are comparable organizations doing?

### **BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE**

The Department currently provides service from two stations, with a third station under construction. Service is provided to approximately 30,000 residents in a 42 square mile area, which encompasses Violet Township, the City of Pickerington, a portion of the City of Reynoldsburg located in Fairfield County, and a portion of the Village of Canal Winchester located in Fairfield County. Current minimum staffing consists of 12 shift personnel each day, including two lieutenants. In the absence of a chief officer, those lieutenants serve as the incident commander. The normal truck staffing is two fire fighters and one Lieutenant per Engine or Rescue Company.

When a chief officer is present, the lieutenants normally function in the role of company officer, performing tasks as assigned on the incident scene. The current organizational structure consists of a career fire chief and assistant fire chief that work normal forty-hour schedules, consisting of Monday through Friday.

The chief officers are residents of the community by choice, and are assigned department staff vehicles, which they are permitted to drive home. Chief Officers coordinate after hour's coverage the best they can, to respond to incidents as needed and requested after normal business hours.

The organization has experienced times when a chief officer was not available to respond. Those times have required the company officer to perform the function of incident commander. The company officers have performed this function, but when this occurs, it removes a member and leader of a functional crew to perform incident command. This transition from company officer to incident commander is difficult, and detracts from the functional effectiveness, abilities and staffing of that crew.

The organization is currently experiencing rapidly expanding run volumes and increases in population and development density. According to figures obtained from Violet Township Fire Department records, from the years 2002 to 2004, run volume has increased 19%, and according to figures obtained from the City of Pickerington and Violet Township Building Departments, 1,235 building permits have been issued in our service area in the same time period. Future plans include the addition of a fourth facility located in the southern end of our service area, dependent upon future development and incident demands. With the addition of future facilities, it would also be logical to increase apparatus and staff to provide the service delivery function.

The department actively participates in mutual aid and automatic response with all neighboring agencies, and provides fire, rescue, emergency medical service (EMS), and fire prevention as the core services to our residents. Numerous public relations services have been implemented that reflect our mission statement “We are your Friends for Life”.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Klaene & Sanders (2000) emphasize the importance of implementing the incident command system to improve operations and safety while functioning at incidents. They describe how the incident command system is utilized to organize, coordinate, and command fireground activities. They stress the importance of the incident commander’s evaluation of the fireground, the use and implementation of strategic plans, and applying sound principles to risk management. Through the use of charts and tables, they illustrate the importance of each incident having a single incident commander, and refer to that optimally being a chief officer.

Coleman (1997) discusses numerous aspects of the incident command system (ICS) while stressing the importance of applying the Incident Command System to each and every incident. The literature provides history of the incident command system, differences in command systems, the need for the use of a uniform command system, as well as the application of ICS to urban firefighting. Coleman stresses the importance of a single incident commander, to improve the overall safety and operation of incidents. The literature describes the modes of command and passing command from a company officer to a chief officer upon their arrival and briefing.

Brunacini (2002) emphasizes the importance of implementing the incident management system (IMS) and the fireground commander. The fireground commander is described as the facilitator to safely orchestrate the fireground functions.

The literature emphasizes the importance of the fireground commander being consistent in the application of the IMS, and applying it in some form to all incidents. The literature describes the importance and need for central command, and five major responsibilities of the incident commander.

Brunacini describes in detail the eight basic command functions, and the qualities that this incident commander should possess to be successful. The literature describes company level officers establishing initial command, then being relieved by a ranking (chief) officer upon their arrival.

International City Management Association (1979) provides a comprehensive description of the management of fire services. The literature contains sample illustrations and recommends a shift commander be implemented in departments deploying as few as four fire companies. The basis of this recommendation is improved overall management, and assisting in defined areas of administrative functions as the overall responsibility for safety. Although valuable as a resource for this project, the publication was developed in 1979. It is very comprehensive as a resource for managing fire services, but lacks specific information on the importance of incident command, and the functions of a chief level officer performing that function as part of their responsibility.

NFPA 1201 (2002) the standard for developing fire protection services for the public, refers and suggests aspects of community fire protection. Specifically, the standard refers to management and supervision of fire companies and fire suppression force staffing.

Section 5-6.2 states “Each company shall be led by an officer who shall be considered part of the total personnel of the company whenever the company is involved in any firefighting activity”.

NFPA 1201 Section 5-6.3 states “Supervisory chief officers shall be available to command the fire companies or response group at each fire or other emergency scene. Provision shall be made for chief officers to designate aides for support in managing an incident.”

NFPA 1201 Section 9-4.3 states, “A suitable number of chief officers shall be designated for incident command purposes, based on the size and workload of the fire department. Departmental procedures shall provide for at least one command officer to be available to respond and direct operations at a fire or other emergency incident at all times”

NFPA 1500 (2002) the standard on fire department occupational health and safety, Chapter 8, section 8.2 discusses risk management during emergency operations. Section 8.2 refers to the term incident commander and assigned responsibilities of this position in the risk management function.

NFPA 1500 Section 8.4.12.1 describes the incident commander and their defined responsibilities during fire fighter rescue operations.

NFPA 1500 Annex A, section A.8.2.1 states “the incident commander has the ultimate responsibility for the incident safety of all fire department members operating at an incident and for any and all other operations.” The annex continues to describe risk management provisions that should be applied consistently to emergency operations.

NFPA 1561 (2002) the standard on emergency services incident management, refers to the structure and requirements of an incident management system. Chapter 5, section 5.1.3 states, “Following the initial stages of an incident, the incident commander shall establish a stationary command post. In establishing a command post, the incident commander shall ensure the following:

1. The command post is located in or tied to a vehicle to establish presence or visibility

2. The command post includes radio capability to monitor and communicate with assigned tactical, command and designated emergency traffic channels for that incident
3. The location of the command post is communicated to the communications center
4. The incident commander, or his or her designee, is present at the command post”

Chapter five relates a total of fourteen different responsibilities and provisions for the position of incident commander. Chapter five continues to expand upon the incident command system and define a total of seventeen positions that may be implemented under the incident commander, with each position possessing its own unique span of control.

NFPA 1710 (2004) the standard for the organization and deployment of fire suppression operations, emergency medical operations, and special operations to the public by career fire departments. Chapter 3, section 3.3.26.3 defines a supervisory chief officer as “a member whose responsibility is to assume command through a formalized transfer of command process and to allow company officers to directly supervise personnel assigned to them”

NFPA 1710 (2004) Chapter 5, section 5.2.2.2.2 states, “Each Company shall be led by an officer who shall be considered a part of that company”

NFPA 1710 (2004) Chapter 5, section 5.2.2.2.3 states, “Supervisory chief officers shall be dispatched or notified to respond to all full alarm assignments”

NFPA 1710 (2004) chapter 5, section 5.2.2.2.4 states, “The supervisory chief officer shall ensure that the incident management system is established as required in Section 6.2”

NFPA 1710 (2004) Annex A Explanatory Material, section A.3.3.26.1 defines a company officer, and states “This person can be someone appointed in an acting capacity. The rank structure could be either sergeant, lieutenant, or captain.

NFPA 1710 (2004) Annex A Explanatory Material, section A.3.3.26.3 defines a supervisory chief officer, and states “This position of supervisory chief officer is above that of a company officer, who responds automatically and / or is dispatched to an alarm beyond the initial alarm capabilities, or other special calls. In some jurisdictions, this is the rank of battalion chief, district chief, deputy chief, assistant chief, or senior divisional officer (U.K. fire service)”

### **PROCEDURES**

Following the literature review, a survey was conducted to collect data that was relative and specific to the research questions. The evaluative research was conducted by distributing a survey electronically to members of the Ohio Fire Chiefs Association. Distribution was by electronic mail, sent from the authors fire department e-mail account. The e-mail contained an introduction, and instructions on how to complete the survey.

A link to the survey was contained in the e-mail, so that respondents could complete the survey in a minimal amount of time and effort. The survey contained drop down menus to assist in continuity of data, and ease of completion. For informative purposes, the survey also contained areas that respondents could provide comments in the areas of “shift commander advantages,” “shift commander disadvantages”, and “shift commander administrative duties”. The survey requested demographic information from the respondents, and a total of seven questions to collect data and comments from. The survey distributed consisted of the following;

*This survey investigates the advantages and disadvantages of implementing shift commanders in fire department. I wish to thank you in advance for your valuable time.*

*Assistant Chief John Eisel  
Violet Township Fire Department*

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Your Department Name

Population Served

Number of Stations

Number of Apparatus Staffed each day

Minimum Daily manpower staffing totals:

Total Number of Personnel:

Career

Part Time

Volunteer

Number of Responses in 2004:

Fire

Emergency Medical

Does your department provide EMS Transport?:

*For the purpose of this survey, a "shift commander" is defined as a ranking officer that responds to emergencies and functions as the incident commander*

1. Does your Department have a "shift Commander?"

*If your answer was No, PLEASE STOP AND PROCEED TO QUESTION #7.  
If your answer was Yes, please continue below.*

2. What rank does your shift commander hold?

If your selection was other, please list

3. Does the shift commander respond as part of a Fire or EMS Company, or in an assigned vehicle?

4. Does the shift commander have specific administrative duties?

If Yes, please list them:

5. What are the advantages of this position in your organization?

6. What are the disadvantages of this position in your organization?

There are just a few more questions.

7. For accuracy purposes, please list your name:

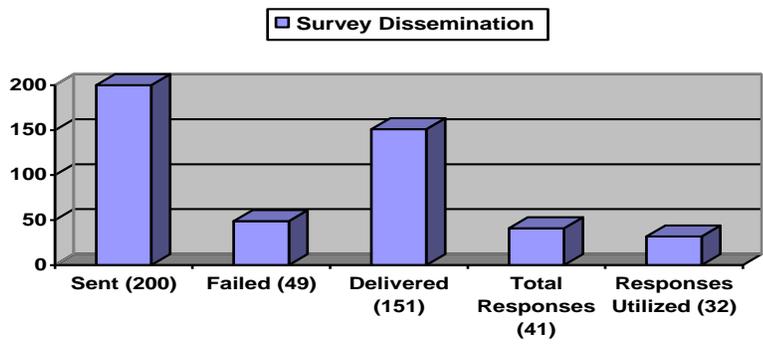
Please list your rank:

If other, please list

May I contact you if there are questions?:

Phone number you may be reached at (please include area code):

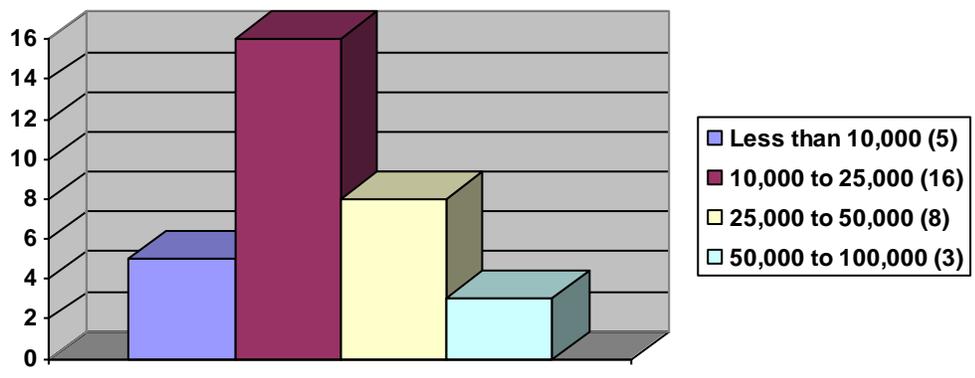
Your Email address:



**Figure 1.**

Survey distribution and dissemination data

A total of 200 surveys were distributed by random selection, in groups of 25. Of the 200 surveys distributed, a total of 49 surveys or 25% received “delivery failure notices”. 151 surveys or 75% were delivered successfully. Of the 151 surveys successfully delivered, 41 or 27% responses were received. For comparative purposes, of the 41 responses received, nine responses or 22% of those were removed due to the fact that they had no career personnel. A total of 32 or 16% of the total surveys distributed were utilized.



**Figure 2.**

Number of survey responses received, categorized by population served

Survey results were collected into a database program, and the results were exported into a spreadsheet for tabulation and analysis of the data collected.

## **Definition of Terms**

Department – Violet Township Fire Department

Organization – Violet Township Fire Department

VTFD – Violet Township Fire Department

ICS – Incident Command System

IMS – Incident Management System

NFPA – National Fire Protection Association

Company Officer – firefighting personnel holding the rank of sergeant, lieutenant or captain

Supervisory Chief Officer – an officer designated in a fire organization whose responsibility is to assume command at incidents.

## **Limitations of the Study**

Limitations of the study include the assumption that Chief level officers provided the answers to the survey questions, as the survey was distributed to them. Limitations also include the fact that opinions could have been given where factual data was requested, and the reliance on the accuracy of the data provided.

## **RESULTS**

The original research questions were answered through the survey results and literature review.

Original research question number 1 asked, “What are the national standards for command and control”? Through the literature review, national standards for command and control were identified in NFPA Standards.

NFPA 1201 (2002), NFPA 1500 (2002), NFPA 1561 (2002), and NFPA 1710 (2004), are descriptive and detailed in regards to incident command and control, the rank associated with this position, the responsibilities of this position, and the expectations of this position at emergency scenes. Although these standards are not fire laws, these standards are considered best practice in our industry, and are utilized as industry benchmarks. These national standards recommend that at least one supervisory chief officer be available to respond and direct operations at fire and emergency scenes at all times. The standards continue to describe and require this position to implement the incident command system. The standards continue to address that the rank of the position of supervisory chief officer is above that of a company officer.

Original Research Question 2 asked, “What are the advantages for implementing this position?” The evaluative research survey question number 5 asked respondents, “What are the advantages of this position in your organization”? The research survey results provided a total of 31 responses to this question (Appendix 2). 14 of the responses indicated this position was responsible for implementing and managing the ICS system. 13 of the responses indicated that this position was responsible for supervision and provided a chief level officer presence during the absence of the fire chief. 6 of the responses indicated that the advantages of the shift commander were to provide a leadership role for the crew or shift, and were responsible for items such as leadership, cohesiveness, and team building. 6 of the responses indicated that this position was responsible for administrative and management functions.

Original Research Question 3 asked, “What are the disadvantages for implementing this position?” The evaluative research provided 31 responses to this question (Appendix 3).

Of the 31 responses, 14 of the responses indicated that no disadvantages existed due to this position being implemented in their organizations. 6 of the responses indicated that the position did not have adequate time to complete assigned administrative duties during their shift(s). 4 of the responses indicated that problems existed with enforcing policy and performing discipline because this position was a member of a bargaining unit. 3 of the responses indicated that lack of operational consistency suffered due to this position. 2 of the responses indicated that a lack of training and preparation was a disadvantage, and that proper education and preparation was essential to this position. Finally, 2 responses indicated that issues surrounding cost associated with the position were listed as a disadvantage of the position.

Original Research Question 4 asked “Is the position appropriate for our organization?” This question is as unique as the fire service itself. As the fire service is guided by standards at the local, state and federal levels, the decision to establish the staffing levels of a fire department is based at the local level.

As stated previously, The NFPA standards are not “fire laws”, they are standards to guide the industry in what is considered to be best practice. By analyzing the demographic comparisons of the survey, VTFD is demographically comparable to the survey respondents.

The results of the demographic questions in the survey are utilized to compare VTFD in the number of fire stations, number of apparatus staffed daily, daily minimum staffing levels, total number of personnel, and total number of calls. VTFD compared well to the respondents, and exceeded the average number of the respondents in all categories except the number of apparatus staffed daily.

With the original research question being “is the position appropriate for our organization? The data received indicates that like size organizations have implemented this position with advantages that exceed disadvantages. The results of the demographic questions of the survey are contained in appendix 4.

Original Research Question 5 asked, “What are comparable organizations doing?” The data received indicates that like size combination fire departments have implemented this position into their organizations. Variables exist such as rank of the position, response mode of the position and varied administrative responsibilities. In the absence of law, Village or Township resolution, or city charter that establishes authorized strengths and positions of a local fire department, it is incumbent upon those organizations and their governing body to establish the “who” and “how” the service delivery function will be accomplished. The following charts illustrate relevant data received from the survey results in regards to the departments that have implemented the position of shift commander, and the rank associated with the position.

Survey question number 1 asked if their department had shift commanders. Of the 32 responses utilized, 28 respondents indicated that their organizations utilized the position of shift commander, while four of the respondents did not.

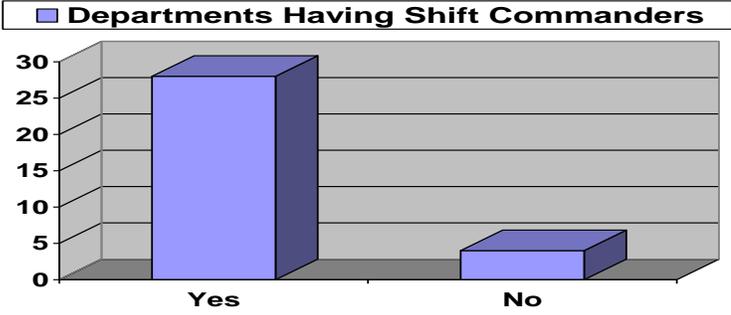
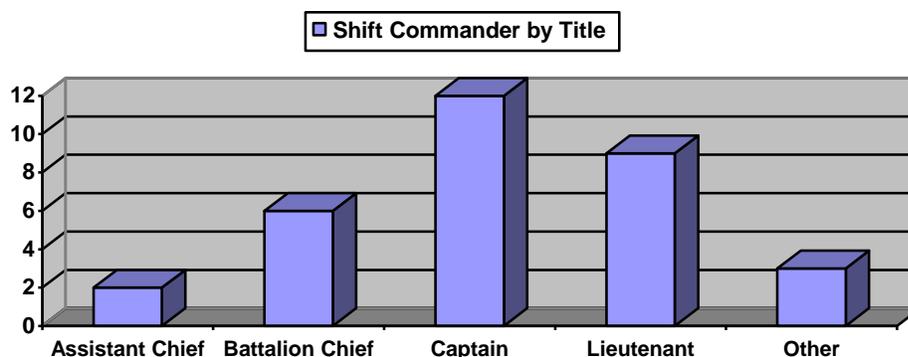


Figure 1.

Surveys results of departments that have a shift commander

Survey question number 2 referred to the rank or title associated with the shift commanders. The survey indicated that two or 6% held the rank of Assistant Chief, six or 19% held the rank of Battalion Chief, 12 or 38% held the rank of Captain, nine or 28% held the rank of Lieutenant, and three or 9% of the responses indicated a title of other.



**Figure 2.**

Survey results of shift commander positions by title

## DISCUSSION

The literature review identifies NFPA standards as well as citations from respected fire service authorities regarding incident management, safety, and command and control. Citations from Klaene & Sanders (2002), Coleman (1997) and Brunacini (2002) describe the importance of the supervisory chief officer position within fire departments. This position is described as the on duty supervisor that provides risk management and applies sound principles to incident management with the intent of improving the safety, morale and efficiency of the organization. International City Management Association (ICMA) (1979) recommends that a shift commander be implemented in fire departments deploying as few as four fire companies. ICMA continues to describe this position as one designed to improve overall management and safety of the fire department, and provide assistance with administrative responsibilities.

The NFPA standards, although not law, are utilized, referenced and implemented by fire departments throughout the United States as industry best practices. These standards are descriptive in regards to the implementation of an incident management system, the desired effect of improved incident management, safety, and accountability of fire department personnel. The NFPA standards also define the position of a supervisory chief officer, and require this supervisory chief officer to be available and designated to respond at all times for incident command purposes, with a recommended rank of battalion chief or above.

As the literature review and survey results indicate, the advantages far exceed the disadvantages for implementing shift commanders in fire departments. The survey results illustrate the importance of this position by identifying the shift commander as a position that manages daily operations, including the management of incidents. The difference in rank structure associated with this position among fire departments is as diverse as each individual community. The various ranks associated with this position are not nearly as significant as the duties and responsibilities that this position entails.

Statistical Results from the survey indicate there are more organizational advantages to the position than disadvantages. Advantages of the shift commander position (Appendix 2) include improved supervision, safety, leadership, teambuilding and organizational leader concepts, as well as the facilitator of ICS. Of the 32 responses in the survey of disadvantages of the position (Appendix 3), 14 respondents listed “none”. Disadvantages of the position include the lack of authority, the position being a member of a bargaining unit, the lack of time to complete administrative assignments, and the cost associated with the position.

Organizational implications of this position in the VTFD are the financial impact associated with the position, and clearly defining the administrative duties and expectations that encompass this position to create an effective asset for the organization and community. Through the use of leadership principles, the survey result comments and responsible planning, it is possible for the VTFD to implement this position with great success. The research survey demographic comparison results (Appendix 4) reveal that the position of shift commander is appropriate for the VTFD, and has been implemented with success in 86% of the demographically comparable organizations.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The stated problem is the VTFD is faced with challenges associated with providing a dedicated incident commander outside the rank of company officer. The purpose of this study was to investigate if the position of shift commander is appropriate for the VTFD. The literature review and survey results support the recommendation to implement this position, as 86% of the demographically comparable fire departments have implemented this position in their fire departments. 96% of the departments that have implemented this position have required this position to complete specific assigned administrative duties.

The results of the survey indicate that these departments have benefited in areas of improved communication, leadership, improved administrative resources, and a designated incident commander from this position. The recommendation is that the VTFD begin planning for this position, and utilize the comments received from the survey as a guideline for implementation. These comments provide positive aspects (advantages) associated with the position, as well as pitfalls (disadvantages). These pitfalls can be addressed and overcome through proper planning and clearly defining the expectations related with this position.

It is recommended that a time period of twenty-four months be utilized to plan for issues that relate to the staffing, financial impact and professional development that this position would need to be successful. Alternatives such as the expanded use of part time personnel, and the possibility to share this position with neighboring departments should be investigated as well.

As the statement of the problem indicated, the VTFD is facing challenges associated with providing a dedicated incident commander outside the rank of company officer. Based upon this research, the author believes that by implementing the position of shift commander, the VTFD can benefit in the areas of improved supervision, safety, efficiency, effectiveness and morale of the organization.

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**APPENDIX 1**

<b>Comments Received - Shift Commander Administrative Duties</b>
EQUIPMENT MAINT., SCHEDULING, PAYROLL, FIRE PREVENTION SUPERVISION
Administrative, Operations and Logistics
Shift Activities
IC & documentation
They are assigned different responsibilities, such as Training, Records and Reports, and Maintenance.
Scheduling, special projects
Incident reporting for significant incidents, DFWP requirements, injury and accident documentation
Attendance/payroll/staffing Project supervision
Reports and Record keeping. Building Inspections
Complete basic fire reports on incident
State ems and fire reporting, purchasing and stocking of supplies, grant research, and duties of a line officer

<b>Comments Received - Shift Commander Administrative Duties</b>
<p>Oversight on the operational aspects of his tour. Responsible for Training, Inspections and other duties as assigned.</p>
<p>In charge of the call and all that goes with it.</p>
<p>We have three Asst. Chiefs. Each is in charge of a bureau in the department</p>
<p>Each shift commander does have an assigned duty, EMS Operations Chief, Chief of Training, Chief of Fire Prevention, and Special Projects.</p>
<p>Incident Command Functions.</p>
<p>Each one has a specific assigned duty such as, EMS Coordinator, Training Officer, etc.</p> <p>Each is responsible for the proper input of run data.</p>
<p>In charge of the personnel on that shift.</p> <p>Employee evaluations, discipline Etc.</p>
<p>Each BC is given one of the following to administer. Hydrant, SCBA or Facility Maintenance programs.</p>
<p>Scheduling, equipment maintenance and requests, personnel issues</p>
<p>Payroll, performance evaluations, monitors daily duties.</p>
<p>They do all the annual reviews for shift personnel. We use FireHouse Software &amp;</p>

<b>Comments Received - Shift Commander Administrative Duties</b>	
track  budget	our staff by shift & position, which the commander enters. They each make up a budget for the areas they are responsible for.
tools,	Each one has other duties (maintenance of units, PPE, portable equipment/hand tools,  Payroll, scheduling of shifts etc...
	ICS, Shift and Station Admin, Company Officer
They each  example. All	The shift commanders all have duties, which are not administrative in nature.  have duties such as turn out gear, maintenance, tools and equipment, as an example. All administrative work is handled by the Asst. Chief, Chief or I.
to them.	Each of the Shift Captains have different administrative responsibilities assigned to them.  They function as part of the Management Team.
	Daily Journal Vacation Scheduling Daily Manpower Between Stations  QC NIFRS  QC EMS Runs
	Payroll, Professional Standards development, several work groups, EMS Officer, Apparatus development, training coordination, budget recommendations /

Comments Received - Shift Commander Administrative Duties
approval, etc.

## APPENDIX 2

Comments Received - Shift Commander Advantages
HANDLES DAY TO DAY OPERATION IN THE FIRE CHIEFS ABSENCE
Each officer is responsible for their duties as well as line authority. It prepares them for promotion. It allows the chief to work on strategic issues.
In charge of daily activities. Usually establish the IC system until the Chief or Assistant Chief arrives
Provides structure & leadership as well as continuity
Always have senior "chief" officer on duty to handle emergencies and personnel issues.  The AC is the IC on all fire incidents and other significant incidents. This position is a management position and is not part of the bargaining unit.
Unless large scale incident chief doesn't respond
Designated IC with command post
Senior officer available to respond to significant incidents at all times; also available

Comments Received - Shift Commander Advantages	
by	cell phone for consults on other issues
	Makes figuring out "Who's in charge" easy.
	Allows the Chief some flexibility
	Give people experience in commanding an incident
disciplines	This person frees up time for the chief to do scheduling, inspections and daily of the dept.
responsible	In a growing city such as ours, this position enhances our two person Administrative team (Chief & Ass't Chief) by having an operational supervisor to oversee day-to-day activities. We find ourselves having more time to concentrate on administrative duties and not responding on minor MVA's, Odors and other nuisance type calls. This also assists in the evaluation of employee job performance as well as providing a
the	figure to evaluate equipment related problems. From the ongoing educational aspect, each tour has essentially one person distributing SOG's and objectives. This negates chances of personnel obtaining" opinion" based training.
	You have someone that is responsible for what happens.
the	The Chief's duties are delegated to the Asst. Chiefs therefore additional people have

Comments Received - Shift Commander Advantages	
	training and knowledge to cover for the Chief.
	Organizer of the staff and response
it  one  Shift  and	<p>The position is second in command to the fire chief, as a dedicated shift commander, allows the fire chief to delegate administrative task to his shift commanders. With the shift commander assigned to his on vehicle, it allows for the ICS to be established by one person that is not dedicated to a operational tasks, this allows the incident to flow smoothly with out the worry of the IC becoming involved with operational issues.</p> <p>Shift commanders work well to manage the everyday projects at the station, plan trainings, and manage personnel without the worries of being a functional member of the engine company.</p>
get  smooth	<p>This works very well for us. He can take a good look at the big picture and does not get involved in patient care. Does handle Incident Command functions. Ensures a smooth call!</p>
	<p>Team Building! Both for the crew and for the organization.</p> <p>Cohesiveness of the organizations mission. Building future leaders.</p>

<b>Comments Received - Shift Commander Advantages</b>	
	Having someone responsible for what happens on a shift.
	Shift Commander responds to calls in all three areas to serve as a safety officer or as additional personnel.
(White	Direct authority of the Fire Chief in his/her absence. Presence of a Chief Officer Hat) on shift. Incident Commander.
	Hands on dealing with personnel issues, liaison with mutual aid departments
detail.	24/7 Supervision, extra Paramedic on EMS calls, responds on EVERY fire & EMS
	They are proud that they are in this position/rank
	Day to Day operations and leadership
accountability	This position allows us to conform to the County EMS protocol without having 2 Paramedics on the Ambulance. This also allows us to have a command and structure by a designated person on most fire responses. The person in this position changes every six months when the Lt's rotate stations. The Lt. at the main station is the shift commander.
	Shift Commanders take some of the workload; they also learn to work with budgets.

<b>Comments Received - Shift Commander Advantages</b>	
	They are also utilized to perform the duties of other officers during their absence.
	It provides a Management Presents 24/7
service	This allows a specific IC on each run and if necessary be able to put their self in and available sooner. This allows a mediator anytime the police are involved. This position may act as an EMS advisor or help in various EMS incidents. This position can also put equipment back in service quicker by picking up manpower if needed on a EMS run.
leadership	Leader for Company-level Officers, provide cohesiveness for stations and operations, safety and incident management, provides for adequate, effective, competent Officer on fire companies to lead firefighters into dangerous situations without pulling from Company to serve as command.

### APPENDIX 3

<b>Comments Received - Shift Commander Disadvantages</b>	
	N/A
	Currently, the shift commanders work 24/48. Many of their duties are tied to

**Comments Received - Shift Commander Disadvantages**

typical day  
shift schedules when making contacts outside the Division. There are either time delays  
delays  
due to the work schedule or overtime issues.

It has worked well for many years.

None known of

would be  
I'm not sure there are any, other than the position is probably mis-titled and  
more appropriate as Battalion Chiefs. The Asst. Chief position goes back 60  
years when  
the Asst. Chief was the only officer on duty. It really doesn't matter what you call  
them,  
one person has to be the "go to" guy on each shift. When our Asst. Chiefs are off,  
the  
Lieutenant moves up to Acting Asst. Chief and becomes the "go to" guy.

None

None

None so far

There are none.

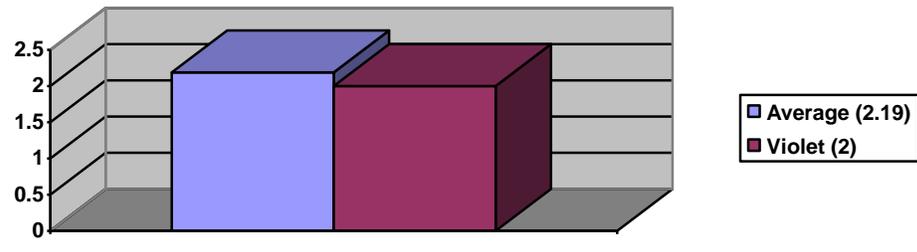
None

<b>Comments Received - Shift Commander Disadvantages</b>	
	Becomes a "good old boy" thing at times
it's been a	Only that the shift leader can get quite backed up in his administrative duties if  busy call day
	I am unaware of any disadvantages to this position.
	Don't think there are other than the fact that you have to pay them more.
	Don't know of anybody
do not	They have no authority (city's preference) and are union members; therefore they  (will not) discipline people.
part of a	Lose touch of "operational" work, attack, ventilation, EMS skills from not being  company. Over tasked by fire chief, since you become part of "management"
level of	Sometimes it is filled with non officer level people that do not have the correct  training. Does give the lower ranks a taste of officer duty.
out  must.	If the person in this position does not have strong leadership skills it doesn't work  well for the individual or the organization. Preparation for this transition is a  must.

Comments Received - Shift Commander Disadvantages	
None	
presence	They are still in the local and don't always enforce policies or show the correct necessary.
	<p>Union member.</p> <p>Unsure of Labor or Management role.</p> <p>Responsibility tied only to one-third of the Division.</p> <p>Minimizes desire to advance in organization due to shift work (tour).</p>
	Consistency with policy and procedures
found	None, when they are real busy Administrative items can be delayed; we have also
that the	that it is very important to meet with the shift supervisors on a regular basis so
right after	whole management team knows what's going on. We meet Monday's at 08:00
off has	shift change so that 2 of the 3 shift supervisors are already there, the third who is
	the option to come in.
to do	All 3 captains run their shifts differently & the firefighters ask why their shift has
	something the other 2 aren't doing. We don't always have an officer on the trucks

<b>Comments Received - Shift Commander Disadvantages</b>	
which	makes it hard to make sure things are done the same way.
	They are proud that they are in this position/rank
role of a	This positions administrative time, often detracts from available time to fill the  good Company officer.
spot is not	If the Shift Commander rides an EMS run to the hospital as a third person that  filled and leaves an opening.
day	Shift commanders may not have the time to devote to extra duties due to day-to-  operations, such as training and run volume.
	I can't think of any.
	The cost of purchasing and maintaining a vehicle.
	None

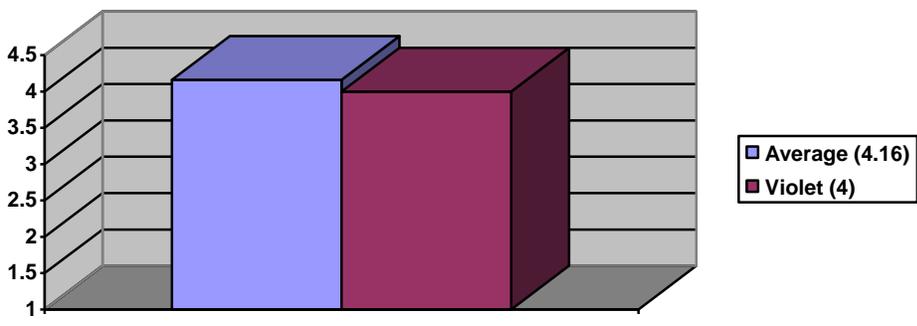
#### **APPENDIX 4 - Demographic Results of the Evaluative Research Study**



**Figure 3.**

Average number of fire stations in comparison with VTFD

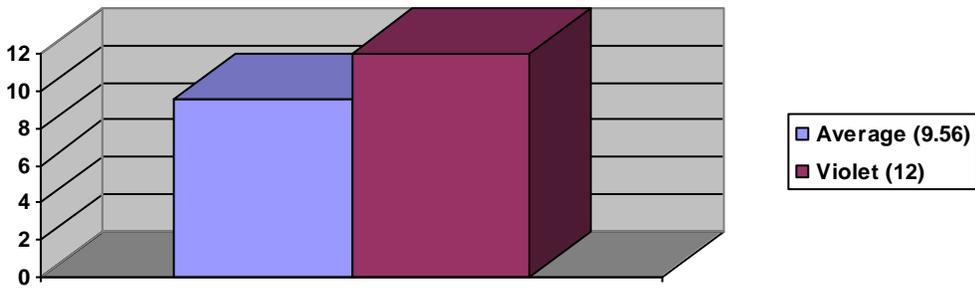
Demographic question number 2 compared the “number of apparatus staffed each day” in comparison to the VTFD. The average of the respondents was 4.16 pieces of apparatus, while the VTFD staffs four pieces of apparatus each day.



**Figure 4.**

Average number of apparatus staffed each day in comparison to VTFD

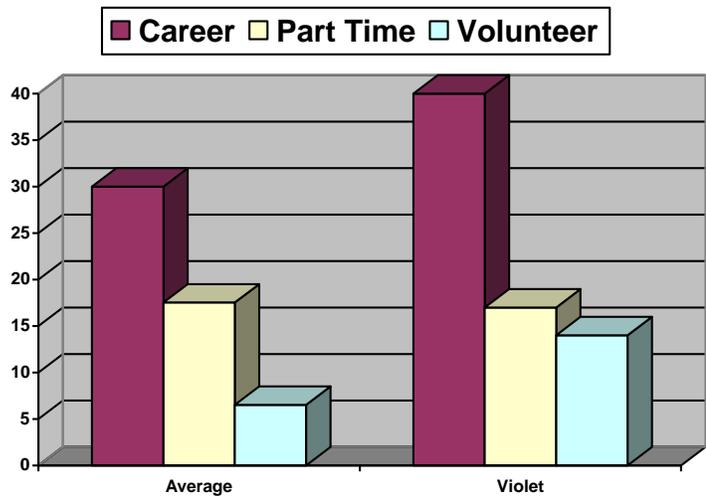
Demographic question number 3 compares minimum daily manpower staffing totals. The average of the respondents was 9.56 fire fighters for minimum staffing each day, and the Violet Township minimum staffing is 12 fire fighters each day.



**Figure 5.**

Average daily minimum staffing of departments in comparison to VTFD.

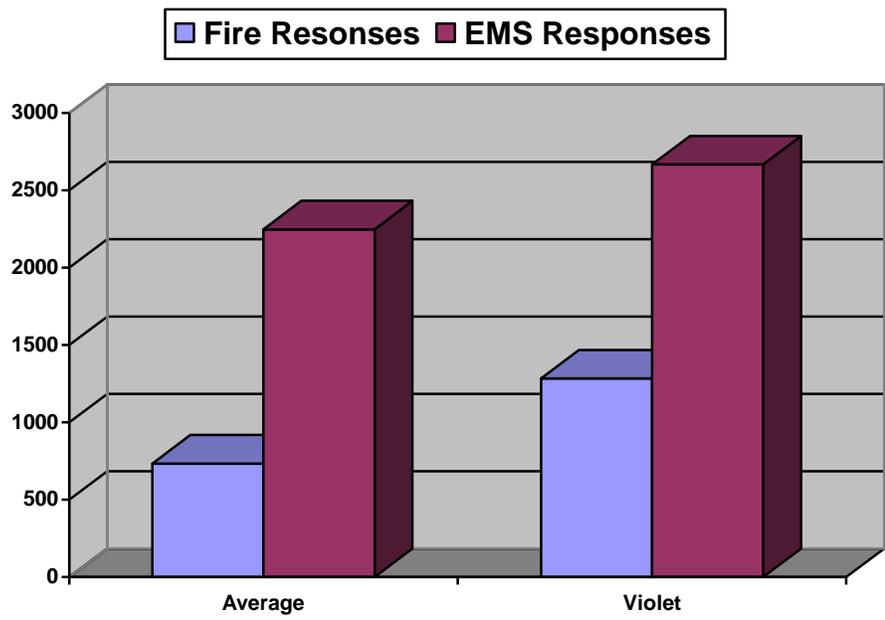
Demographic question number 4 asked respondents their total number of personnel, to include career, part time and volunteer. The average number of career personnel was 30, in comparison to the VTFD at 40. The average number of part time personnel was 17.53, in comparison to VTFD at 17. The average of the respondents for volunteer personnel was 6.53, and in comparison to VTFD were 14.



**Figure 6.**

Comparison of the average number of total personnel by category, in comparison to the VTFD

Demographic question number 5 compares the total number of fire and emergency medical responses in 2004. The average number of fire responses from the respondents was 733.8, while the VTFD responded to 1284 fire responses in 2004. In the comparison of emergency medical responses, the average number of responses from the respondents was 2248.19, while the number of responses for the VTFD was 2667.



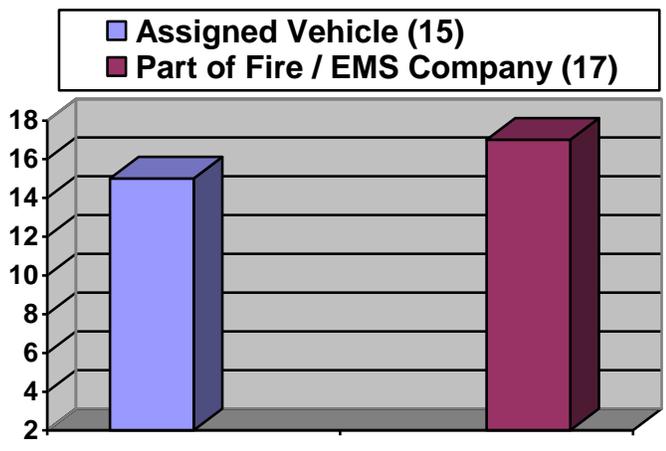
**Figure 7.**

Average number of fire and emergency medical responses in the year 2004 in comparison to the VTFD responses in 2004.

Demographic question number 6 asked the respondents if their departments provided emergency medical transport in their communities. All of the 32 responses utilized in this study

provided emergency medical transport service.

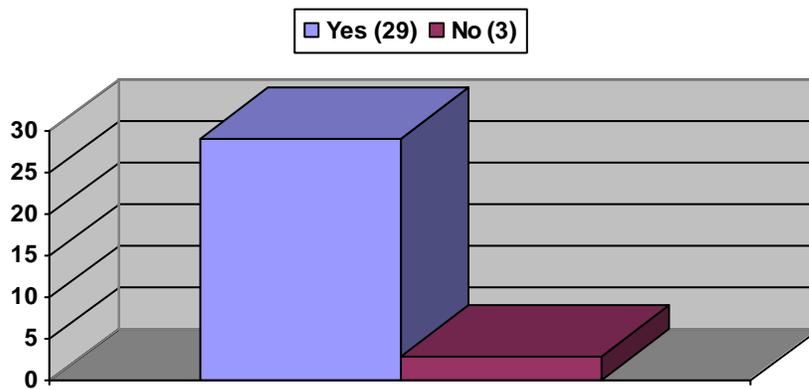
Survey question number 3 related to the response mode of the shift commanders. A total of 15 responses indicated that the shift commanders responded in an assigned vehicle, while 17 of the respondents indicated that the shift commander response was part of a fire or EMS company.



**Figure 10.**

Results of survey responses of responses modes by shift commander

Survey question number 4 asked the respondents if the position of shift commander in their organization had specific assigned administrative duties. Of the 32 responses, 29 responded yes, while three responded no.



**Figure 11.**

Survey results of departments that shift commander have specific administrative duties