

Constitution and By-Laws

Virginia Chapter

International Association of Arson Investigators

ARTICLE I NAME AND OBJECTIVE

Section 1. **Name** – This organization shall be known as the Virginia Chapter of the International Association of Arson Investigators and is hereinafter referred to as the Virginia Chapter.

Section 2. **Objectives** – **The objectives and purposes of the Virginia Chapter shall be:**

- a. To unite for mutual benefits, those public officials and private persons engaged in the control of arson and kindred crimes.
- b. To provide for exchange of technical information and developments.
- c. To encourage cooperation between public service agencies and associations to further fire prevention and the suppression of crime.
- d. To encourage high professional standards of conduct among arson investigators and to continually strive to eliminate all factors which interfere with administration of crime suppression.
- e. To foster greater professional competence.

ARTICLE II - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. **Active Membership** - Any representative of government or of a government agency and any representative of a business or industrial concern who is actively engaged in some phase of the suppression of arson at the time he/she makes application shall be eligible for active membership on application, provided such person possesses the other qualifications for membership at the discretion of the Membership Committee and provided such person is not less than eighteen years of age at the time of application. All applicants for active or associate membership, if approved by the membership committee, will be on a temporary status until approved by the Board of Directors.

- a. Active membership in the International Association of Arson Investigators is required for a member to hold office in the Virginia Chapter.

Section 2. **Associate Membership** - Persons not qualified for active membership may become associate members, after determination of their qualifications by the Membership Committee. The Virginia Chapter, may, by majority vote of active members present, exclude associate members from any particular business meeting. Associate members shall have all the rights and privileges of an active member with the exception of voting and holding office.

Associate Membership in the International Association of Arson Investigators qualifies an individual for Associate Membership in the Virginia Chapter subject to the approval of the Membership Committee and the Board of Directors.

Section 3. **Life Membership for Past Virginia Chapter Presidents** – All past presidents of the Virginia Chapter shall be granted a life membership to the Virginia Chapter and such life membership will carry all rights and privileges of an Active Membership.

Section 4. **Honorary Life Membership** – The Virginia Chapter may, by a majority vote of members present at the annual meeting, confer honorary life membership upon any person qualified for membership who has rendered distinctive service to the Virginia Chapter or to its purposes. An honorary life member shall have all the rights and privileges of an active member without payment of dues. Nominations for honorary life membership shall be made to the Board of Directors at least sixty (60) days prior to the annual meeting. No more than two nominations for such membership may be approved in any one-year.

Honorary life membership in the International Association of Arson Investigators qualifies an individual for honorary membership in the Virginia Chapter subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.

Section 5. **Friends of the Virginia Chapter** - Upon application, a related business may be recognized as a Friend of the Virginia Chapter. This category is intended for related business and professional organizations. A minimum annual contribution of \$100 is required for this category of membership. All funds derived through this category will be used to defray seminar expenses. Proper recognition will be afforded all members in this group.

Section 6. **Sustaining Members** - Upon application, a related business may be recognized as a Sustaining Member. This category is intended for related business and professional organizations. A minimum annual contribution of \$500 is required for this category of membership. All funds derived through this category will be used to defray seminar expenses. Proper recognition will be afforded all members in this group.

Section 7. Personal Qualifications – Prior to approving each application, the Membership Committee shall give due consideration to the following, among other qualifications it deems applicable, to wit:

- a. personal character and reputation of the applicant;
- b. the nature, character and reputation of the applicant’s business.
- c. the character and reputation of the applicant’s employer and associates.
- d. the general nature, character, and reputation of the principal business of the applicant’s employer and associates.

No person shall be eligible for any class of membership if he/she has been a member, or is presently a member, or becomes a member of a subversive organization or of any organization whose objectives and operations are inconsistent with the purposes of the Virginia Chapter.

Section 8. Election – Upon recommendation of two references and a member in good standing, applications for membership shall be submitted to the Chairperson of the Membership Committee. The application shall be reviewed and voted upon as described in Section 1 and Section 7 of this Article.

Section 9. Termination – Membership in the Virginia Chapter shall terminate by:

- a. voluntary withdrawal;
- b. the Secretary when, after notice, such member is in arrears in the payment of dues or any other obligation to the Virginia Chapter;
or
- c. by a majority vote of the Board of Directors if the applicant is still within the aforementioned temporary status period.

Sanctions - The Board may place on probation, censure, suspend or terminate the membership of any member. The Board may, upon receipt and after initial review of the circumstances, temporarily suspend the membership of any member pending evaluation by the Ethical Practices and Grievances Committee. Actions requiring referral to the Ethical Practices and Grievances Committee shall include but are not limited to:

- a. falsifications or misrepresentations in applications for membership;
- b. conduct in a manner prejudicial to the good name or best interests of the Virginia Chapter;
- c. exhibited traits of character or conduct inconsistent with the qualifications for membership;

- d. other questionable conduct. Following an evaluation of the information by the Ethical Practices and Grievances Committee and upon its recommendations, the Board of Directors shall provide such member with due notice, a hearing and an opportunity to be heard.

A majority vote of the Board present in a duly convened meeting shall be sufficient to place on probation, censure, suspend or terminate membership for any reason specified in this section.

Section 10.

Reinstatement – Any former member may be reinstated in the Virginia Chapter at the discretion of and by a majority vote of the Board of Directors. If such a former member shall have been in arrears in the payment of dues or other financial obligation to the Virginia Chapter at the time of separation, payment of all such arrears shall be a condition of reinstatement, unless the Board of Directors, by majority vote and for good cause, shall waive the payment thereof. If the payment of dues in arrears is waived, no creditable service of any type will be recognized by the Virginia Chapter for those years.

Section 11.

Formal policy regarding Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action.

- a. The Virginia Chapter of the International Association of Arson Investigators has a continuing policy to afford equal opportunity to all members and applicants for membership without unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap or veteran status.
- b. The Virginia Chapter of the International Association of Arson Investigators is committed to making positive efforts to increase membership for minorities, the handicapped, women and veterans.

ARTICLE III

ELECTION, TERMS AND OFFICES

Section 1.

Eligibility for Office - Active members of the Virginia Chapter shall be eligible to hold office after serving at least two years on the Board of Directors.

- a. Active members shall be a member of the International Association of Arson Investigators to be eligible to hold office in the Virginia Chapter.

Section 2. Officers – The officers of the Virginia Chapter shall be President, 1st Vice President, and 2nd Vice President.

- a. The Secretary, Treasurer and Sergeant-at-Arms are not elected but appointed by the President, with the agreement of the Board of Directors. The Secretary, Treasurer, and Sergeant-at-Arms are staff personnel and are voting members of the Board of Directors.
- b. The Board of Directors may, at their discretion and by majority vote, appoint an Executive Director to assume the duties of the Virginia Chapter Secretary and/or Treasurer, as defined in Article IV, Sections 12 and 13 of these by-laws, and perform other duties as assigned by the President. If any duly appointed Executive Director is otherwise eligible to hold elective office in the Virginia Chapter, he/she may be designated a voting member of the Board of Directors by a majority vote of that Board.

Section 3. Board of Directors - The Board of Directors shall consist of the Chapter President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Executive Director if appointed, Sergeant-at-Arms and six (6) other active members of the Virginia Chapter duly elected. The immediate past president shall be Ex Officio.

Section 4. Terms of Office –

- a. Each duly elected officer shall serve a term of one (1) year.
- b. Each elected member of the Board of Directors shall serve a term of three (3) years. Two Directors shall be elected at each annual meeting.
- c. The immediate past President is not elected and serves until such time as he/she is replaced by the President Elect. He/She shall have the privilege of attending and participating in all meetings of the Board of Directors but shall not have voting power in such meetings.

Section 5. Election - The Officers and Board of Directors shall be elected at the annual meeting. Election shall be by written ballot and a majority of the votes cast shall elect.

Each elected officer shall take office immediately upon his/her election and shall serve such term as designated in the by-laws and until his successor is duly elected and qualified.

Section 6. Removal from Office and/or Membership - The Board of Directors shall have the power to remove from office by majority vote, any officer or member of the Virginia Chapter for any of the following:

- a. Conduct or actions that would tend to discredit or lead to disrepute of the Virginia Chapter.
- b. For good cause as submitted in writing by any member of the Virginia Chapter.

Any officer or member removed in accordance with this section shall have the right to appeal. Appeals shall be submitted in writing within 30 days following the removal to the Board of Directors via the Secretary.

Section 7. Committee Appointments - The President, subject to the approval of the Board of Directors, shall yearly appoint such standing or subcommittees as may be required by the by-laws or as he/she may deem necessary.

Section 8. Standing Committees –

- a. Nominating Committee – The President shall appoint a chairperson and two members to serve as the Nominating Committee no less than 90 days prior to the annual meeting, and this committee shall submit to the membership at the annual meeting a list of nominees to fill the expiring terms of officers or members of the Board of Directors, or to fill the vacancy created by the resignation or removal of any such officer. At the time of election, the floor shall be open for the purpose of additional nominations.
- b. Training Committee – The President shall appoint a chairperson and as many members as he/she deems necessary to serve as the Training Committee to carry out the Virginia Chapter objectives as set forth in Article I, Section 2.
- c. Legislative Committee – The President shall appoint a Chairperson and as many members as he/she deems necessary to serve on the Legislative Committee to carry out the Virginia Chapter objectives as set forth in Article I, Section 2.
 - (1) The member appointed to represent the Virginia Chapter on the Fire Board shall be a member of the Legislative Committee.
 - (a) This member should attend all Board of Directors meetings and report the activities of the Fire Board

and any legislation that would be of interest to the Virginia Chapter.

(b) This member shall always keep foremost in his mind the interest of the Virginia Chapter.

- d. Membership Committee – The President shall appoint a Chairperson and as many members as he/she deems necessary to serve on the Membership Committee to obtain the objectives as set forth in Article I, Section 2.
- e. Audit Committee – The President shall appoint a chairperson and as many members as he/she deems necessary to serve on the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee shall make an audit of the accounts in keeping with the provisions of Article V, Section 2.
- f. Arson Award Committee – The President shall appoint a chairperson and as many members as he/she deems necessary to serve on the Arson Award Committee to carry out the objectives of the Virginia Chapter in keeping with the rules and guidelines established by the Arson Award Committee.
- g. Members of all committees serve at the pleasure of the President or shall terminate on the expiration of the term of the appointing President.

ARTICLE IV

Government

Section 1. The Government of the Virginia Chapter shall be vested in the Board of Directors.

Section 2. The Board of Directors shall have supervision and control of the affairs of the Virginia Chapter, shall determine it's policies or changes therein, within the limits of the by-laws, shall actively promote it's objectives and shall have discretion in the disbursement of Virginia Chapter funds.

Section 3. The President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Sergeant-at-Arms, and six elected Directors shall be members of the Board with the right to vote. If an Executive Director is appointed by the Board of Directors to fulfill the duties and obligations of the position of Virginia Chapter Secretary and Treasurer, he/she will not have voting privileges, unless such privilege is conferred in accordance with Article III, Section 2.

Section 4. The President shall act as Chairperson of the Board of Directors and shall preside over all meetings.

Section 5. Meetings – Except that the Board shall have a regular meeting at the time and place of the annual meeting, the Board shall meet upon the call of the President at such times and places as he/she may designate, and shall be called to meet upon demand of a majority of the Board of Directors. All board meetings shall be open to all members, except executive sessions called by the President.

Notice of all meetings of the Board of Directors shall be sent by mail, e-mail or fax to each of the Board of Directors at least fourteen (14) days in advance of such meetings.

Section 6. Quorum – A majority of the Board shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the Board. Any less number shall cause adjournment for a time until a quorum is present.

Section 7. Meeting by Telephone or Similar Communications - Any Officer or Director may participate in board of directors' meetings by means of telephone or similar communications equipment, whereby all Officers and Directors participating in the meeting can hear each other at the same time, and participation in any such meeting shall constitute presence in person by such Officer and/or Director at such meeting. The unavailability of equipment to accommodate telephonic or similar participation shall not prevent a lawfully called meeting from proceeding if a quorum is otherwise present. Telephonic or other electronic presence of a voting member or members will count to establish a quorum; however, if the loss of contact with members so participating results in less than a quorum remaining, no further action will take place and the meeting will be immediately adjourned. The Chair of the meeting will be physically present. The Board of Directors may by majority vote adopt rules to limit the number of times telephonic or other electronic participation by a member may occur each year.

Section 8. Official Order of Business – (Robert's Rules of Order)

1. Call of meeting to order.
2. Reading and approval of minutes of previous meeting.
3. Financial report.
4. Report to officers.
5. Reports of Committees
 - a. Standing Committees
 - b. Special Committees
6. Unfinished business.
7. New business.
8. Election of Officers (Annual Meeting)

9. Adjournment

- Section 9.** Absences and Vacancies – Any member of the Board of Directors unable to attend a meeting shall, in a letter, email or fax addressed to the President or Secretary, state the reason for such absence. The same may be communicated by telephone. If a Board Member fails to communicate the reason for the absence and is absent for two (2) consecutive Board meetings a resignation shall be deemed to have been tendered and accepted. Any vacancies that may occur on the Board by reason of death, resignation, or otherwise may be filled by the President with the approval of the remaining members of the Board until the next annual meeting. In the event of a vacancy in the office of President, 1st Vice President or 2nd Vice President, between the annual meetings, the vacancy or vacancies shall be filled by the Board of Directors, and the newly appointed officer or officers shall hold office only until the next annual meeting. An officer appointed to fill such vacancy shall serve until the expiration of the term of the vacated office.
- Section 10.** President – The President shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Virginia Chapter and shall preside at all membership meetings and meetings of the Board of Directors. He/She shall also, at the annual meeting and at such other times as he/she shall deem proper, communicate matters to the membership of the Board of Directors, as may in his opinion tend to promote the welfare and increase the usefulness of the Virginia Chapter, and shall perform such other duties as are necessary incident to the office of President or as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors.
- Section 11.** 1st Vice President – In the absence of the President, the 1st Vice President shall be the Chief Executive Officer and shall act as such.
- Section 12.** 2nd Vice President – In the absence of the President and the 1st Vice President, the 2nd Vice President shall be the Chief Executive Officer and shall act as such.
- Section 13.** Secretary – The Secretary shall keep the records and record the minutes of the Virginia Chapter and shall maintain the roll of members, the constitution and all other documents of value. He/she shall receive and acknowledge all communications of the Virginia Chapter addressed to him/her or that may be submitted to him/her by officers of the Virginia Chapter and perform such duties as assigned by the President.
- Section 14.** Treasurer – The Treasurer shall be custodian and sole depositor of the funds of the organization. He/she shall render a complete summary of all income, disbursements and balances at each regular meeting of the

Board of Directors and to the members at each annual meeting. A written copy of this report shall be made available to any member upon request.

Section 15. Sergeant-at-Arms – The Sergeant-at-Arms shall identify all members and guests at Virginia Chapter Meetings and perform any other duties assigned by the President.

ARTICLE V Finance

Section 1. Dues – Dues for Active and Associate Membership in the Virginia Chapter shall be proposed by the Board of Directors and must be approved by a majority vote of members present at the annual meeting. Seminar fees to be approved by the Board of Directors.

Section 2. Audit – The Audit Committee shall make an audit of the accounts of the Treasury sixty days prior to the annual meeting and shall verify all assets and liabilities of the Virginia Chapter.

Section 3. Gifts or Grants – All gifts or grants to the Virginia Chapter may be accepted by the Board of Directors. The Secretary shall make proper acknowledgement of all gifts or grants accepted.

ARTICLE VI The Virginia Chapter Logo and Seal

Section 1. Use by Members – No member shall use the logo, seal or other associated artwork or representations identifying the Virginia Chapter of the IAAI without the expressed written consent of the Virginia Chapter Board of Directors. This shall include use of such seals or logos on business cards, letterhead, etc., except for conducting business directly related to the operations of the Virginia Chapter.

ARTICLE VII Amendments

Section 1. These by-laws may be amended at any annual or special membership meeting of the Virginia Chapter by a vote of two-thirds of the members present.

ARTICLE VIII RATIFICATION

Section 1. Articles – Upon ratification vote by two-thirds of the members present at the any duly called membership meeting, all provisions and articles shall become effective and be enforceable by the Virginia Chapter.

Section 2.

Membership – Those provisions or articles relating to membership shall apply to all members of the Virginia Chapter from the date of ratification.