



*City of Charleston*  
*South Carolina*

JOSEPH P. RILEY, JR.  
MAYOR

BARBARA W. VAUGHN  
DIRECTOR  
PUBLIC INFORMATION

*For Immediate Release, August 2, 2007*

## **MAYOR ANNOUNCES POST INCIDENT ASSESSMENT AND ENHANCEMENT REVIEW TEAM MEMBERS**

Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr. announced last week that the City of Charleston is moving to initiate a comprehensive independent review of the City's preparation for and response to the June 18, 2007 fire at the Sofa Super Store and other critical incidents. Led by Mayor Riley, Chief Thomas and Chief Mullen, there will be a thorough review, advised by consultants with expertise in a range of areas. This will be called the Post Incident Assessment and Enhancement Review Team (Fire Review Team). Procedures related to the City's fire safety systems, fire procedures and practices, and critical incident response will be assessed to develop a strategic action plan that the fire department, city departments and City leadership will implement as soon as possible. The results of this review will be made available to the public.

Mayor Riley introduced today Chief J. Gordon Routley as the Fire Review Team Leader. Chief Routley is a life long fire fighter, retired fire chief, fire protection engineer, and active member of many professional fire fighting groups. Frequently used as a consultant for the US Fire Administration and National Fire Protection Association, he is considered a top expert in the field of firefighter health and safety. Chief Routley is coordinating the work of a team of five other highly qualified national experts in a range of specialized components of the fire service.

Mayor Riley said, "We made a commitment to learn from this tragic event and this is the next step in that process. Under the leadership of Chief Gordon Routley, we have assembled an outstanding group of professionals with widely recognized expertise in a range of areas who will provide essential information to enhance our readiness. Chief Routley and his team will conduct an intense, independent and thorough assessment of the city's fire safety systems, fire department and fire operations. The team will produce a series of recommendations based on national best practices that we will implement immediately."

Chief Rusty Thomas said, "The Charleston Fire Department welcomes this opportunity for a thorough assessment of the city's fire safety systems. We look forward to using their recommendations to make our fire department the best we can possibly be. "

Team Leader Chief Routley said, "We have assembled an outstanding group of fire service professionals and will fully assess this tragedy to learn everything we can to help provide recommendations for improvements for the City of Charleston."

**FOR MORE INFO:**

Barbara W. Vaughn, Director  
Media Relations/Public Information  
Phone: (843) 724-3746 Fax: (843) 724-3734  
Email: [vaughnb@ci.charleston.sc.us](mailto:vaughnb@ci.charleston.sc.us)

### **Project Team Leader**

J Gordon Routley

- Fire service management consultant and fire protection engineer
- Fire Chief - Shreveport, Louisiana (retired)
- National Fallen Firefighters Foundation- safety program specialist
- International Association of Fire Chiefs –Safety, Health and Survival Section

### **Research and Resource Management Specialist**

Kevin Roche

- Assistant Fire Marshal – Phoenix, Arizona
- Assistant to the Fire Chief – Phoenix, Arizona
- Fire Service Consultant and Researcher

### **Training Specialist**

Tim Sendelbach

- President of the International Society of Fire Service Instructors
- Former Chief of Training – Savannah Fire and Emergency Services
- Fire Service Training Consultant

### **Administration Specialist**

Brian Crawford

- Assistant to the Fire Chief – Shreveport, Louisiana
- National Fire Academy (NFA) resident instructor
- Maryland Fire Rescue Institute (MFRI) Staff and Command faculty member.

### **Fire Prevention and Code Enforcement Specialist**

Mike Chiramonte

- Fire Inspector and Former Fire Chief – Lynbrook, NY
- Northeastern Regional Board – International Codes Council

### **Public Information Specialist**

Pete Piringer

- PIO Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services, Maryland

## **Chief J. Gordon Routley**

**Gordon Routley** is a fire protection engineer providing consulting services to fire departments and related organizations across the United States and Canada. He spent 16 years with the Phoenix Fire Department, serving as Assistant to the Fire Chief; then from 1989 to 1991 served as the Fire Chief in Shreveport, Louisiana. He was the Director of Fire Service Consulting for TriData from 1992 to 1996, before launching an independent consultancy. He also served as Volunteer Safety Officer for the Prince George's County, Maryland Fire/EMS Department until 1999. He now lives in Montreal, Canada and serves as a technical advisor to the Montreal Fire Department.

He has been very active in the cause of fire fighter health and safety, working on numerous projects and committees with the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the United States Fire Administration and the National Fire Protection Association. He is a past chair of the IAFC Health and Safety Committee and currently serves on the Board of the IAFC Safety, Health and Survival Section. He was directly involved in the establishment of the Fire Fighter Life Safety Initiatives Project for the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation. He is also a member of the Society of Fire Protection Engineers (SFPE), the Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE), the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association.

Chief Routley's education includes a degree in Civil Engineering from McGill University, graduate studies in Fire Protection at the University of Maryland and a Master of Public Administration degree from Arizona State University. He was a 2006 recipient of the U.S. Fire Administration's Harvard Fellowship to attend the program for Senior Executives in State and Local Government at the university's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

## **Chief Tim Sendelbach**

**Tim Sendelbach** is a 21 - year student and educator of the fire & emergency services currently serving as President of the International Society of Fire Service Instructors (ISFSI). He previously served as Chief of Fire Training for Savannah Fire & Emergency Services, Georgia; Assistant Fire Chief for Missouri City Fire & Rescue Services, Texas; and Firefighter/Paramedic with the Kansas City, Kansas Fire Department.

Tim has earned B.S. degrees in Fire Administration, Arson and an A.S. degree in Emergency Medical Care from Eastern Kentucky University. He is pursuing a master's degree from Bellevue University and is enrolled in the Executive Fire Officer Program at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland

He is the editor of the International Society of Fire Service Instructors (ISFSI) monthly publication *The Instructor* and a contributing author to numerous other publications including: *The Volunteer Voice*, *Firehouse.com Members Zone*, *National Fire & Rescue*, *The Atlantic Firefighter* and the *Fire & Emergency Television Network (FETN)* in which he is the writer/developer of the featured "SURVIVAL!" program.

In July 2002, Tim was awarded the prestigious Innovator of the Year Award from the International Society of Fire Service Instructors (ISFSI) for his innovative training ideas and concepts in the area of firefighter safety & survival. In 2001, Tim was awarded the

George Hughes Award from the Texas Association of Fire Educators for his accomplishments as a speaker and trainer in the state of Texas.

### **Chief Mike Chiramonte**

Mike Chiaramonte is a 36-year veteran of the Lynbrook Fire Department on Long Island, New York. He served as Chief Fire Inspector for over 20 years and formerly served as Chief of Department. He is certified as a New York State Code Enforcement Official and serves on the North East Regional Code Committee of the International Code Council.

He is the past chairman and current board member of the Volunteer and Combination Officers Section of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) and a current member of the Advisory Board of the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation. He also serves as 2nd vice president of the Eastern Division of the IAFC and a member of Fire Chief Magazine's advisory board.

Chief Chiaramonte serves as an adjunct instructor at the National Fire Academy and the Nassau County, New York EMS Academy. He was a high school communications teacher at Jerico High School for 34 years. He has a Bachelor of Science in Communication Education from the University of Houston and a Master of Arts in Education from Hofstra University. He has also completed extensive Post Masters Graduate Work in Communications Education

### **Chief Brian Crawford**

**Brian A. Crawford** is an assistant chief and 23-year veteran of the Shreveport (LA) Fire Department, currently serving as the Assistant to the Fire Chief. He is a National Fire Academy (NFA) resident instructor and Maryland Fire Rescue Institute (MFRI) Staff and Command faculty member. Crawford is a NFA Executive Fire Officer Program graduate as well IAEM Certified Emergency Manager. He is a member of the IAFC Human Relations Committee and serves on FIRE CHIEF Magazine's Editorial Advisory Board.

He was a 2006 recipient of the U.S. Fire Administration's Harvard Fellowship to attend the program for Senior Executives in State and Local Government at the university's John F. Kennedy School of Government. He holds a master of arts in industrial psychology, a bachelor of science in organizational management, and an associate degree in paramedic. Crawford is national speaker and author on issue related to leadership and management in the fire service.

### **Kevin Roche**

**Kevin Roche** is currently the Assistant Fire Marshal for the Phoenix Fire Department. He was previously responsible for the overall management of Support Services including purchasing and maintenance functions for the Phoenix Fire Department. He is a graduate of the Fire Protection program at Oklahoma State

University and has a master's degree in political science and public administration from the University of Florida.

Kevin began his career with the Gainesville Fire-Rescue Department in Florida and has been a member of the Phoenix Fire Department since 1990. He is also an active writer and consultant on firefighter safety and management issues, with an emphasis on fire department resource deployment and firefighter health and safety.

### **Pete Piringer**

**Pete Piringer** is currently Director of Community Outreach and Public Information for the Montgomery County (Maryland) Fire and Rescue Service and is assigned to the Division of Community Risk Reduction. In this capacity he serves as the Public Information Officer and oversees the Life Safety Education Team. Prior to joining the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service in February of 2001, he was Director of Content and Strategy for the website Firehouse.com where he continues to consult. For nearly three years he was a Public Information Officer for the Maryland State Police. While with the Maryland State Police, Mr. Piringer took a six-month assignment as Special Assistant for the Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor. Mr. Piringer presently serves as Chairman of the Washington (D.C.) Area Public Safety Media Relations Council.

He has over 35 years of public safety experience and for 23 years, from 1975 to 1998, Mr. Piringer worked for the Prince Georges's County (Maryland) Fire/EMS Department initially as an Emergency Equipment Dispatcher, later as a Special Projects Coordinator and eventually as Public Information Officer. For over 10 years, from the late 80's to the time he left the Department in early 1998, he served as the Prince George's County Fire Department Public Information Officer. He also served as Special Assistant to the Public Safety Director in 1990. As Public Information Officer he supervised the Public Education and Audio-Visual Section of the PGFD. He also served as Co-Chairman of the Prince George's County SAFE KIDS Coalition.

He is the recipient of numerous fire, rescue and community service awards, including a Prince George's County Chamber of Commerce Gold Medal of Valor, Prince George's County Firefighter of the Year, the City of College Park Volunteer Firefighter of the Year, Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services System Outstanding Contribution to EMS Award, as well as several American Legion and VFW Firefighter of the Year awards. He is an Honorary Maryland State Trooper and Honorary Chief for the Delaware State Fire Chief's Association. He is an active member of the International Association of Fire Chief's.