



Fire Department

**Mark Rohlifing**  
Chief

**Gerard Washington**  
Assistant Chief  
**Michael Payne**  
Assistant Chief  
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May 3, 2011

Public Safety Committee  
Alderman Robert Donovan, Chair  
Common Council City Clerk  
200 East Wells Street, Room 205  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

RE: *Civilianization of the Milwaukee Fire Department Since 2000*

Dear Public Safety Committee Members:

The Milwaukee Fire Department has civilianized its staff since 2000 in various ways, as summarized below.

Fire Cadets have been hired by the department from 1995 – 2006. They are hired as general city employees who do both civilian and firefighter duties (such as assisting with maintenance and cleaning of firehouses, and assisting with various public education programs). If they successfully complete the Fire Cadet Program, they enter the next firefighter class and then become sworn firefighters. The Department is preparing to re-implement the Cadet program in 2012.

The sworn position of Fire Audiovisual Training Specialist in the current Training Division was converted to the civilian Audiovisual Specialist II at the end of 2003. It was determined that a civilian could substantially replicate the duties of the sworn person for lesser compensation and benefits.

The position of Battalion Chief in the current Technical Services Division was changed in the 2009 budget to the civilian Fire Technical Services Manager, again, because it was determined that a civilian could substantially replicate the duties of the sworn person for lesser compensation and benefits. Previously, in 2006, one position of Administrative Fire Lieutenant had been deleted as part of a reorganization in that area. The civilian position of Information Technology Manager was also deleted and the civilian position of Information Technology Specialist was added. Network Coordinators (Associate) were added in the 2004 and 2005 budgets, and a Network Coordinator (Senior) was reclassified from a Fire Dispatch Supervisor in the 2009 budget.

In Technical Services' Dispatch Office, the sworn position of Chief Dispatcher was converted to the civilian Fire Dispatch Manager in the 2005 budget. Again, it was determined that a civilian could substantially replicate the duties of the sworn person for lesser compensation and benefits. There are no sworn personnel serving in the Dispatch Office at this time.

Overall, since 2000, we have lost 126 sworn positions, while adding 12 civilian positions. In addition to the positions referenced above, we have also added two additional Fire Equipment Dispatcher positions, and Health and Safety Officer, Painter, Database Specialist, Inventory Control Assistant III, and Accounting Assistant III positions.

If I can provide you with any additional information, or you have questions regarding the above, please call me directly at 414-286-8947.

Sincerely,

  
MARK ROHLFING  
Chief

MR/jlb

FPC\Miscellaneous\Civilianization History MFD 0511