

MINUTES

HEALTHCARE INTERPRETATIONS TASK FORCE

15 MAY 2001
DISNEYLAND HOTEL
ANAHEIM, CA

1. The meeting was called to order at 4:07 PM.
2. Members and guests present were:

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Joe Bermes*	Indian Health Service (IHS)
Doug Ericson	ASHE
Ken Faulstich*	VA
Greg Harrington	NFPA
Phil Hoge*	US Army Corps of Engineers (DOD)
Tom Jaeger	Gage-Babcock & Associates, Representing AHCA
Phil Jose	VA
Dean Samet*	JCAHO
Dale Woodin	ASHE
Robert Solomon	NFPA

*Eligible to vote on Interpretation Issues.

3. The agenda was reviewed. Added items included discussion on upcoming changes to NFPA 90A and NFPA 101 and a HCFA change that may impact NFPA 99.
4. The minutes of the November 2000 meeting were approved as submitted.
5. The following issues were addressed and an action was taken as noted:

VA Request-SICU Expansion: This request centers on the allowance under NFPA 101(97): 12-3.8.1 concerning an allowance to have a suite arranged in such a manner that not every cubicle is required to have an outside door or window. (See NFPA 101:A-12-3.8.1) While this annex note clearly expresses the intent of NFPA 101 for new construction, the identical note is not found in companion section A-13-3.8 for existing construction. It appears that the note was simply not included for existing construction. This will be brought to the attention of the TC on Health Care Occupancies at a future meeting to verify that this is simply an editorial fix. No additional action from HITF.

IHS Request-Non-Library Stack Rules and Sprinklers: This issue has been in the HITF agenda for future action. IHS had agreed to prepare a specific question for consideration by the HITF at this meeting. The basic premise is if, and when the NFPA 13 rules for library stack areas can be applied to medical storage areas that utilize fixed shelves. As the application of this rule is more appropriate for the TC on Automatic Sprinklers to interpret, the HITF agreed

to submit the following to that TC to render an FI on the 1999 edition of NFPA 13:

Background Information: Section 5-5.6 states that the clearance between the sprinkler deflector and the top of storage shall be 18 in. (457 mm) or greater. Section 5-13.10 provides guidance on sprinkler protection of library stacks. This guidance allows floor to ceiling bookshelves and requires sprinklers to be installed in every aisle with a distance between sprinklers along aisles not to exceed 12 ft (3.6m).

Question: Is it acceptable to apply the principles of NFPA 13, 5-13.10 to the storage of Medical Records on fixed open bookshelves, thereby allowing the tops of bookshelves used for this purpose to come within less than 18 inches of the horizontal plane of the sprinkler deflector?

NFPA Request-Frequency of Fire Drills at SNF: This issue relates to the need to conduct enough drills (12 per year) in the SNF to meet basic NFPA 101 requirements. In this case, the SNF is connected directly to a hospital facility and the inquiry asks if some of the drills conducted in the hospital can qualify as drills in the SNF as well since staff from the SNF respond to alarms in the hospital. The HITF did not issue a formal response on this item, as the requirements of NFPA 101 are clear in that the drill frequency is independent of whether or not one type of facility is connected to another. Drills are intended to test response in a given area or building with varying circumstances. Unless the state regulatory agency made some determination with respect to licensing that the SNF and the healthcare facility are one in the same, the drills must be completed independent of each other. NFPA will follow-up with the individual who raised this item.

6. **New Business.** The HITF members were made aware of three upcoming issues relating to code changes that may impact healthcare facilities. Members were asked to monitor and do any follow-up as necessary with regard to these items.
 - A. **NFPA 13, 2002 Edition.** A proposal has been submitted that would preclude dry pipe sprinkler systems from being used in any part of a healthcare or detention/correctional facility.
 - B. **NFPA 90A, 2002 Edition.** A proposal has been submitted that would mandate the installation of combination fire/smoke dampers at all penetrations instead of just fire dampers.
 - C. **NFPA 101/NFPA 99.** When HCFA recognition of the 2000 edition of NFPA 101 is completed, users of NFPA 99 (1999 edition) will notice some more stringent criteria for Level I power supplies.
7. **Old Business.** The HITF members expressed a concern that HCFA and IFMA were not represented at this meeting. It is important that the other enforcer points of view be taken into account and it is desired that both groups be present at the November 2001 meeting.
8. **Date and location for next meeting.** The HITF will plan to meet in November of 2001 during the NFPA Fall meeting in Dallas, TX. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, 13 November 2001 from 4:00-6:00 PM.
9. **Adjournment.** The meeting adjourned at 5:15 PM.

Minutes prepared by Robert Solomon, PE NFPA