

## MINUTES

### HEALTHCARE INTERPRETATIONS TASK FORCE

16 NOVEMBER 1999

HYATT HOTEL

NEW ORLEANS, LA

1. The meeting was called to order at 3:45 PM.
2. Members and guests present were:

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Doug Erickson	ASHE
Ken Faulstich	VA
Greg Harrington	NFPA
Richard Hart	USAF
Tom Jaeger	AHCA
Phil Jose	VA
George Mills	ASHE
Dean Samet	JCAHO
Robert Solomon	NFPA
Walt Smittle	IFMA
Joe Bermes	Indian Health Service (IHS) (Guest)
Phil Hogue	US Army Corps of Engineers (Guest)
Craig Kampmier	NFPA (Guest)
Sue McLaughlin	ASHE (Guest)
Steve Raynor	Indian Health Service (IHS) (Guest)
Francis Reuer	HCFA (Guest)

3. The agenda was reviewed and it was noted that the HITF would have an executive session under new business to discuss membership. Since there is a new voting member at this meeting, it was also agreed to require 4 out of 5 votes by the AHJ members in order to issue a response to a question.
4. The minutes of the May 1999 meeting were approved as submitted.
5. The following issues were addressed and an action was taken as noted:

Evac plan routes NFPA 101 (AHCA): This question was posed as the result of KTAG inspections that have resulted in requirements for posting of an evacuation plan. The KTAG references NFPA 101 for this requirement but the Code does not require such plans for healthcare facilities.  
Action: See HITF Interpretation on this item

**Illumination source-NFPA 101 (VA):** This issue deals with an internally illuminated exit sign losing its light source. In essence, if the local external light source satisfied the illumination requirements, and if the contrast ratio of the sign met the requirements of NFPA 101: 5-10.3, then would the sign be compliant? Three members voted NO while one member voted YES.

Action: This item was then tabled for reconsideration at the meeting in Denver next May.

**Fire watch-NFPA 101/NFPA 241 (VA):** This was a two part question concerning the need for a fire watch in an unoccupied portion of a facility when that area was under construction.

Action: See HITF Interpretation on this item

**Signs for extinguishers-NFPA 10 (VA):** This was a three part question concerning the marking of fire extinguisher locations. There is some question as to how much, if any marking is necessary under select conditions.

Action: See HITF Interpretation on this item.

**Library shelf rules-NFPA 13 (VA):** A discussion was held concerning the applicability of the NFPA 13 rules for library shelves to storage shelves. There are a number of complications involved in applying the library shelf rules to medical record storage areas as one example. TF members were asked to look at documents such as NFPA 232, NFPA 232A and NFPA 909 among others. NFPA 909, Appendix C contains a summary of fire test data on compact shelf storage.

Action: This item was then tabled for reconsideration at the meeting in Denver next May.

**Linen chutes-NFPA 101 (ASHE):** One state agency had been requiring a four foot extension to be provided at the top of existing linen chutes to satisfy NFPA 82: 3-2.2.4. The TF agreed that the language in NFPA 101 and NFPA 82 clearly intend to apply this extension rule to new installations only.

Action: See HITF Interpretation on this item.

6. Two discussion items were presented. The first had to do with the issue of sprinklers in wardrobes units. NFPA 13 contains an appendix section that suggests that portable wardrobe units are furniture and therefore should not be protected with sprinklers. This then begs the question that if a similar size wardrobe is built into the building, it is treated as a closet and it would require sprinkler protection. This was the intent of the NFPA sprinkler committee. If there is a desire to get NFPA 13 changed to address some threshold at which a sprinkler would not be required, then that will have to be handled as a proposal to the 2002 edition of NFPA 13.

The second issue dealt with the future of NFPA 82. At present, the NFPA Standards Council is considering withdrawing NFPA 82. The HITF wants to go on record stating their support for NFPA 82 and to oppose the withdrawal of NFPA 82. NFPA 82 contains several subject matter sets that are important in the healthcare environment. It was suggested that the project could be turned over to the NFPA TC on Air Conditioning systems; the TC on Chimneys Fire Places and Vents; or the TC on Handling and Conveying of Dusts, Vapors and Gasses.

7. **Old Business.** The HITF was informed that HCFA has been sending the interpretations out to the regions who were then to forward those out to the state agencies. To the best of HCFA's knowledge, this is being accomplished.
  
8. **New Business.** The HITF conducted an executive session concerning the membership of the HITF. As word has spread about the HITF, there is more interest from groups who want to become involved. In the formation of the HITF, it was agreed that in order to remain viable, conduct business and achieve our mission, that the size of the HITF would have to remain small. As a result of this discussion, it has been determined that the HITF will limit its numbers to:  
  
Not more than 7 AHJ members and not more than 4 non-AHJ members. It was also voted to ask IHS to participate in the HITF as an AHJ member. It was also recommended that the USAF representative position be treated as a DOD position and that the other services (Navy and Army) rotate through this position as principal or alternate members. Based on this, we will have 6 AHJ members and 3 non-AHJ members on the HITF for the May 1999 meeting. As a result, we will require 4 out of 6 votes in order to advance an issue.
  
9. **Date and location for next meeting.** The HITF will plan to meet in May of 2000 during the NFPA WFSC in Denver, CO. This is scheduled for 14-18 May 2000. Exact date and time will be determined later.
  
7. **Adjournment .** The meeting adjourned at 6:30 PM.

Minutes prepared by Robert Solomon, PE NFPA