

## INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION FORUM

*Note: This Session was run as a TV Talk Show – Issues listed here were given to the audience (Seminar Registrants) for their views. In most instances, the audience did not come up with a correct answer.*

**Good afternoon. We're glad you tuned into Channel 100 for "The Afternoon Show"**

**I am your Host, Sandy Choate.**

**For our viewers out there, in our audience today, we have the world's foremost experts on the fire and emergency services provided by the federal government.**

**And, we're going to hear their views on some of the problems faced by federal firefighters.**

**First, let's find out a little about some of the members of our audience –**

**Jeff – give the Mike to that Gentlemen on your right –**

**Who are you and where are you from – now you're an expert on the federal fire and emergency services – how did you get all of your knowledge?**

**Tony – give the mike to the Gentlemen on your left –**

**How about you sir – How did you get to be such an expert?**

**Well – now you can see, we have a room full of experts and we will be calling on them to give their views on some pretty interesting questions –**

**These questions were actually submitted to the AFGE Firefighters Council and they have provided them to us especially for this show.**

**Here we go --**

**1. We work 24-hours shifts. Our Director wants to know how the pay bill changed the old standard of 8 hours duty time, 8 hours of standby and 8 hours of rest.**

**2. A two-part question: (a) At our facility, we have been hiring firefighters into GS-5 and GS-6 firefighter positions for the reason that although these firefighters have FF I and II and HazMat Awareness and Ops, they don't have both EMT-B (Intermediate) and HazMat Tech. Is this the right thing to do?**

**And (b) now those firefighters are complaining because HR is saying they must serve for a full 52 weeks before moving to the 7 position. Is HR right?**

**3. I have been in the fire service for 10 years now. When I took this position, I had been diagnosed as having type I diabetes but I have always been cleared on my annual physical. I have never had a "diabetic episode". Now, I am told that I am not medically qualified and so must be removed from my position. Do I have any recourse?**

**4. We just got this notice – it says – "We are canvassing the workforce to determine if there are any members of the workforce interested in serving as auxiliary firefighters. Individuals would receive the appropriate level of training necessary to meet Department of Defense requirements and will be furnished with the appropriate personnel protective equipment. These individuals would be called upon to augment the installation firefighting force in the event of a fire emergency, natural disaster or other event that necessitates a need for additional resources. All volunteers will be**

considered, but not necessarily accepted. Acceptance will depend on the number of volunteers received, their background, physical capabilities and ability to meet other requirements. Interested applicants should submit their names to their Director who will submit them to me.” Can they do this – is this for real?

5. We just finished negotiating an AWS of 48/72. So, I guess this supersedes all past practices regarding duty time including the old MOU that said the firefighters would have 8 hours of regular work to be assigned and 16 hours of standby. Is this correct?

6. Here’s a humdinger for you – After the firefighters arrived today and put their gear in their bunk rooms—lap tops and whatever else you put in your bunk room, they reported for duty shutting their doors behind them. Sometime, during the day, one of the AC’s entered each room. They firefighters were told that this was an unannounced inspection of government property? What do you think about that?

First – tell me – what goes on in a bunk room?

Now I’ve got a lot more of these but – since we have a room full of experts –

Let’s hear what’s on your mind --