



# THE REVIEW

Central Arizona Fire and Medical - 8603 E. Eastridge Dr., Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 – **February 3, 2023**

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*"When a great team loses through complacency, it will constantly search for new and more intricate explanations to explain away defeat."*

Pat Riley

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## The Chief's Desk

Still under siege but saw my doctor yesterday. He's released me to work in the office as tolerated, a few hours a day, and with limited driving. Hopefully, the nerves will start firing properly in the next weeks, or months, but until then they're causing significant pain and discomfort from my thigh to my knee, while everything below the knee to the ankle remains numb. My surgeon has some concerns with the nerve issues effecting the right leg, so I'm headed back down to Phoenix today for a follow-up MRI and Ultrasound to see if they can find the problem.

I'm sure by now many of you have read the stories, watched the body cam video, and/or heard the news reports regarding the death of Tyre Nichols in Memphis, TN. I'm not writing about the law enforcement portion of the incident, but I'll say that I am glad I work here and with the law enforcement partners we have.

I'm sharing an article with you this week from *Fire Engineering* that goes into more details about the incident, as well as information regarding the termination of three Memphis Fire Department personnel. Two EMTs and their Lieutenant were terminated for multiple violations of agency policy regarding their response and treatment of Mr. Nichols, or in this case, their lack of treatment.

Late last year a Florida paramedic was fired for declaring an 83-year-old man dead in the bathtub without actually checking his vitals – he performed a doorway check for six seconds. Hours later when an agency arrived to remove the man's body, they found he was breathing and responsive to touch. Unfortunately, he died two weeks later in the hospital. Would the outcome have been different if the man would have been treated two hours earlier? While we can't say definitively one way or the other, what we can say is that he certainly would have had a better chance at survival. The paramedic was not only terminated for failure to check vitals and run a strip, it's reported that he also lied about his actions and falsified a report.

Neither of these incidents is isolated. I did a Google search to refresh my memory regarding the Florida story and found countless stories of EMTs and paramedics not properly assessing and treating patients. As a former paramedic of 24 years, I find stories like these unconscionable. Yet here they are splashed all over news.

What is it that leads not just one medic or EMT, but entire crews to engage in substandard patient care? While I can't pinpoint one specific cause, I'll go out on a limb and say that complacency is likely a contributing factor. The more calls a crew runs, the more fatigued they become. The more fatigued a crew is, the more likely they are to make a mistake. **Cont. Page 4**

### Upcoming Events:

Feb 6: Senior Staff Meeting  
Feb 7: Labor/Management Meeting, Lunch meeting  
Feb 8: Chamber Breakfast, Coffee with the Contractors  
Feb 9: AFSI, Meet with YC

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### Board Meeting:

February 27: Administration  
CVFD – 1600-1630  
CYFD – 1630-1700  
CAFMA – 1700-1830

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## **Two Memphis (TN) Fire Department EMTs, Fire Lieutenant Fired in Tyre Nichols Death**

**By: Memphis, TN Associated Press**

Two more Memphis police officers have been disciplined and three emergency responders fired in connection with the death of Tyre Nichols, officials said Monday, widening the circle of punishment for the shocking display of police brutality after video showed many more people failed to help him beyond the five officers accused of beating him to death.

Officer Preston Hemphill, who is white, was relieved of duty shortly after Nichols' Jan. 7 arrest, the police department announced. Later in the day it said another officer had also been relieved, but without naming the person or specifying what role they played in the incident.

That brought the total number of Memphis officers who have been disciplined to seven, including the five Black officers who were fired and charged last week with second-degree murder and other offenses in Nichols' beating and Jan. 10 death.

Also Monday, Memphis Fire Department officials announced the dismissal of emergency medical technicians Robert Long and JaMicheal Sandridge and Lt. Michelle Whitaker. The EMTs had previously been suspended.

Fire Chief Gina Sweat said in a statement that the department received a call from police to respond to a report of a person who had been pepper-sprayed. The workers arrived at 8:41 p.m. as Nichols was handcuffed on the ground and slumped against a squad car, the statement said.

Long and Sandridge, based on the nature of the call and information they were told by police, "failed to conduct an adequate patient assessment of Mr. Nichols," the statement said. Whitaker and the driver remained in the engine.

[fireengineering.com](http://fireengineering.com)

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## **'Remember what you witnessed': Memphis is a wake-up call for the entire fire service**

**By: Fire Chief Gary Ludwig**

As a former deputy fire chief who ran the Memphis Fire/EMS system for 10 years, I watched intently when the videos of Tyre Nichols' interaction with first responders were released by the City of Memphis. Like many of you, I watched in horror as he was tazed, pepper-sprayed, repeatedly kicked in the face, and punched numerous times. It was retching to hear him repeatedly call for his mom.

Even though I have been gone from Memphis Fire for eight years and now serve as the fire chief of Champaign, Illinois, I have many friends and acquaintances who still work for Memphis Fire. That is one reason why I turned down CNN's request to go live with Don Lemon to provide analysis the night the videos were released. I would not do that to Memphis Fire or any other fire department.

## **RUMORS BECOME REALITY**

Several weeks ago, before the nation knew about the death of Tyre Nichols, the rumors started leaking out of Memphis about his beating and death, plus questions about the EMS response. They were just that – rumors. Nothing was confirmed. And if you have been in the fire service long enough, you know that by the time a rumor gets through three or more fire stations on different shifts, it is never close to the truth.

Unfortunately, the rumors I heard about medically trained firefighters standing around, rendering little or no medical aid to Mr. Nichols, while the company officer sat in the engine until much later in the incident, played out in front of my eyes as I watched the videos.

For close to 20 minutes, Mr. Nichols lay on the ground, slumped over, was propped back up or slumped again while two firefighter-EMTs did little to nothing to medically aid him until the ambulance arrived. I had to go back through the video several times and dissect down to the minute and second of what I was seeing.

[firerescue1.com](http://firerescue1.com)

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## **Chief's Desk Continued**

Similarly, running on the same patient time and again can, in some instances, become a bit tiresome. It can be frustrating, but our job is to provide the highest quality service no matter how many times we respond. The one time we dismiss the patient's complaints may be the time they're actually in crisis.

Complacency can be a killer in our profession. Whether on an EMS call, or another type of emergency incident, getting too comfortable and dropping our guard is typically when bad things happen. Following standard protocols is typically the safest way to protect yourself and other members of your crew.

If you read about some of the incidents where a paramedic or EMT did not perform a proper assessment, it's usually not just an individual who finds themselves in trouble. In the case of the paramedic out of Delray, Florida, his company officer received 48 hours off without pay. In Memphis, the LT was fired for not even getting off the engine to assist or direct her crew.

Career Survival is not just a great training program, it's reality. We train, we have policies and SOGs, and we discuss our career as both a profession and a passion. So, why would we take short cuts that undermine our career survival? It's the normalization of deviance that leads to a predictable surprise.

If I had to hazard a guess, I'd say that Mr. Nichols is not the first patient that crew failed to properly assess. Regarding the Delray firefighter/paramedic, I don't know what led him to determine the patient was deceased without ever actually touching him. What I'll say is that if you must falsify a document to make it appear as if you followed protocol, then you clearly knew what you did was short of what's expected.

I know right now many of you are worn out and frustrated. We're short personnel, and the ambulance thing is a never-ending headache. Being short personnel is putting added pressure on everyone else to

fill the void, and the ambulance challenges are putting extra pressure on all our paramedics. Please know that we are aware, and we continue to work to rectify both issues.

In just a few short weeks we will have nine new personnel on the floor and hopefully some of our injured will be back on the engine as well. This will help reduce the mandatory OT issues and spread the workload around a little better. That said, we still do not have the staffing we need. As I discussed last week, we've developed a staffing plan in which we hope to bolster our firefighter ranks with 21 new positions over the next three years. Yes, I'd love to do it sooner, but you know as well as I do that we have very limited revenue resources and we do not generally have a large enough pool of candidates to hire that many personnel at one time.

Regarding the ambulance and paramedic situation, we're meeting our current staffing requirements; however, it's clear that the current requirements are not sufficient to meet future needs. We have reached out to Yavapai College in an effort to partner with Priority, AMR, and Prescott FD for a paramedic class later in 2023.

The more paramedics we have, the easier it is to spread the workload. I wouldn't mind having my paramedic certification back. I had it for 24 years and loved the work. That said, if I'm running medical calls, who'd be beating down doors at the State trying to improve the overall EMS system?? If I ever had the opportunity to go back to an earlier time in my career, I'd absolutely slide right into the position of firefighter/paramedic, splitting time between the FD ambulance and the engine or truck company. Best time of my life!! Although, this pushing people's buttons politically can be amusing at times 😊 Someone has to do it...

For now, remember, complacency kills – people and careers. Don't let it happen to you or our Agency.

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## **January Call Statistics**

**By: GIS/Statistician Michael Freeman**

See charts next page....





# January Response Report - 2023

Land Area: 369 sq. miles    Population: ≈106,500    Fire Stations: 10 Full-Staffed

### Responses in District

TOTAL FIRE INCIDENTS	13
STRUCTURE FIRE	0
STRUCTURE FIRE; CONFINED	4
MOBILE HOME/PORTABLE BLDG	1
VEHICLE FIRE	0
BRUSH/GRASS/WILDLAND FIRE	7
TRASH FIRE/OTHER	1

**Fire is 1.06% of call volume**

TOTAL RESCUE & EMS	868
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**EMS is 70.74% of call volume**

OVERPRESSURE / OVERHEAT	0
HAZARDOUS CONDITION	10
SERVICE CALL	221
GOOD INTENT	86
FALSE ALARM/OTHER	29

**Other is 28.2% of call volume**

TOTAL INCIDENTS IN DISTRICT	1,227
INCIDENT RESPONSES BY CAFMA	1,367
TYPE-1 UNIT RESPONSES BY CAFMA	1,483

### Fire Loss Summary

Residential Fire Loss	\$11,400
Commercial Fire Loss	\$0
Vehicle Fire Loss	\$0

### Top 5 Call Types

807	EMS
126	Assist Invalid
50	Public Service
48	Cancelled en Route
22	Vehicle Accident w/Injuries

Average total # of calls per day	39.58
Average fire calls per day	0.42
Average EMS calls per day	28.00
Average all other calls per day	11.16

### Call Volume at PRCC

	Month	Year-to-Date
PFD	894	894
CAFMA	1,227	1,227
GCFD	12	12
OD	9	9
WKFD	2	2

### Unit Responses

Unit	District	Total	Move Up
E50	150	156	22
E51	40	205	53
E53	191	192	5
E540	32	35	12
E54	142	143	0
E57	59	64	6
E58	163	164	3
E59	171	184	3
E61	108	109	4
E62	155	160	1
E63	62	66	31
TR50	3	5	0
B3	39	45	0
B6	21	24	0
Rescues	44	45	0

TYPE-1 ENGINES

### Calls by Municipality

Calls in Town of Chino Valley	193
Calls in Town of Prescott Valley	631
Calls in Town of Dewey-Humboldt	48
Calls in District, Unincorporated Areas	355
Calls Out of District	7

### Aid Agreement Summary

Aid Given to Prescott	166
Aid Received from Prescott	70
Aid Given to WVFD	0
Aid Received from WVFD	3
Mutual Aid Given	0
Mutual Aid Received	0