

History and Survey on Volunteer Fire Departments in Serbia

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Abstract : Volunteer fire departments (VFD) in Serbia were established as civic associations in XIX Century. The founders and members of the first VFDs were prominent members of local communities. Today, those are volunteer organizations for preventing and extinguishing fires and rescuing people and property in various accidents. The paper presents the results of research about the number and resources of active VFDs done in Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, Serbia and about activities they perform today. The survey was done based on data provided by all registered VFDs in Vojvodina. Firefighters Association of Vojvodina includes 35 municipal firefighting associations, 230 volunteer fire departments with 5,300 active members in qualified fire units and more than 15,000 supporting members. Volunteer involvement is primarily an expression of high moral values and as such it has to be respected and stimulated. Better position of the volunteers would have a major impact on the formation of safety culture concept and general public awareness of fire safety and risk reduction, and therefore the security of the society as a whole. Volunteer fire departments make a significant contribution to educate young people and prevent catastrophic consequences of fires and natural disasters.

Keywords : education, prevention, rescue, volunteer fire departments

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