

Hungarian Firefighter Association

19-20 September 2014
Balatonföldvár

DEAR READER!



The rich past of the Hungarian Firefighter Association and the achievements of our predecessors push us to greater accomplishments on the fields related to public safety, be it firefighting, rescue, teaching the younger generation, keeping traditions, or improving international ties. For the latter we have events such as the conference on Balatonföldvár held on 19-20 September 2014.

In our organization – established 144 years ago – we have all the requirements necessary for high-quality work: almost 150 years worth of experience, tradition, expertise, solidarity, and the strength to build communities – features we cannot be successful without.

In our profession success and results cannot be based on lone work, only on cooperation and teamwork. For this I wish us strength and health, tenacity, with the motto of the firefighters in mind:

„Glory to God, help to each other”

19 September 2014, Balatonföldvár

Dobson Tibor brigadier general
president of Hungarian Firefighter Association

THE PAST OF THE HFA

The idea of the organizing national firefighting associations was the idea of count Ödön Széchenyi. It was he, who said in 1862 that *„judging by the chivalrous and courageous nature of our fellow hungarians, and also because of various financial reasons, we think the most appropriate and suitable system would be the founding of volunteer fire associations”*.

Thanks to the hard work of count Széchenyi, the inaugural session of the firefighters' association was held on 5 December 1870, on which the members agreed that the association would (among others)

- represent the interests of firefighters,
- publish and edit fire related statistics and data,
- develop the theory and practice of firefighting.

During its 75 years of existence the association held regular meetings, 27 in total. The work was ended at the end of the II. World War by the Hungarian Provisional Government, and was only resumed 45 years later – it was in 1990 when the Hungarian Firefighter Association (being the direct descendant of the national association founded 120 years before) was officially founded.

The world and technology underwent huge changes during the past 144 years, but the goals and determination of the association remained the same: to represent firefighters, to develop firefighting theory and practice, and to be an association bringing everyone interested in these goals together.



Count Ödön Széchenyi

THE HFA NOW

STRUCTURE AND LEADERSHIP

Hungarian Firefighter Association – as an organization performing a statutory public duty – strives to ensure public safety. As a result of organizational development the general assembly – accepting



new statutes on 12 April 2014 – decided to fundamentally renew the structure of the association. According to this the association – keeping the existing county based setup – installed a new specialty based system.

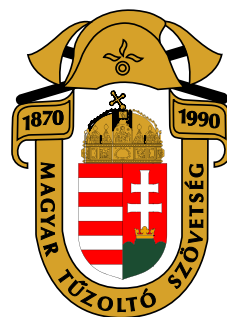
Structure of the HFA:

- general assembly,
- presidency,
- facility, municipal and volunteer fire association sections,
- Supervisory Board
- professional committees (competition, education, tradition and cross-border committee).

The HFA coordinates and helps organize the member organizations' work and contributes in performing the public duties.

GOALS

The HFA has continuously partaken in the legislative work, and made itself active



in financial and development areas. As a result there is a quality shift in education and technical equipments towards the positive. Thanks to the training programs the majority of volunteer firefighters now have the required qualifications, and the HFA even had enough energy to organize cross-border trainings and conferences.

For keeping the traditions of the past and to build communities there are special



„Florian Day events”, firefighter contests (home, youth and traditional), and participation on CTIF contests. There are special acknowledgements for firefighters issued by the HFA (X., XX., XXV., XXX., XL., L., LX. medals and the

Count Ödön Széchenyi plaque). The Saint Florian medallion is reserved for sponsors and individuals providing outstanding performance,

The member organizations of the Hungarian Firefighter Association actively take part in the fire prevention educational campaigns directed toward the general public, and also in the training of new professional firefighters.



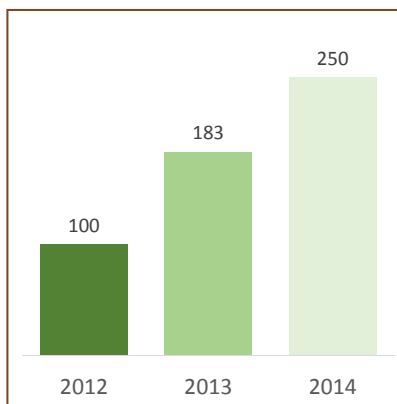
VOLUNTEERS: AN INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT ROLE

„Volunteer firefighter association: regulated by the 1996 XXXI. Act, it is a social organization involved in fire prevention, firefighting and technical rescue tasks, composed of members who undertake these tasks voluntarily, without any payment, in their spare time.”

The volunteer firefighter associations (VFAs) are an important part of firefighting and rescue in Hungary. From the 1000 VFAs 550 undertake actual firefighting tasks, and 425 VFAs (57 I., 286 II., 82 III. category) entered into a cooperation agreement with official fire departments. There are also 81 joint civil guard and firefighting associations as well.

Cooperating with National Directorate General for Disaster Management, in recent years – in addition to the municipal fire departments – these associations also received

increasing support, which was spent on developments related to technical rescue, covering operating costs, training or construction, renovation and expansion of the headquarters.



Support increase for VFAs (in %)

FOUR CATEGORIES

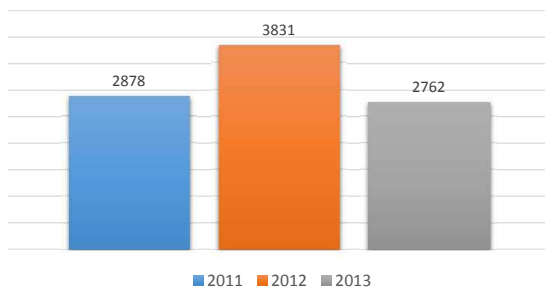
The associations are classified into four categories based on various criteria (eg. technical equipment, personnel, etc.)

I.: has a fire fighting vehicle with distinctive markings and regular, tested equipment

II.: has a vehicle suitable for firefighting and non-regular and not tested equipment,

III.: has no suitable vehicle, has only non-regular and not tested equipment at its disposal,

IV.: undertakes no firefighting tasks, only social and historical tasks.



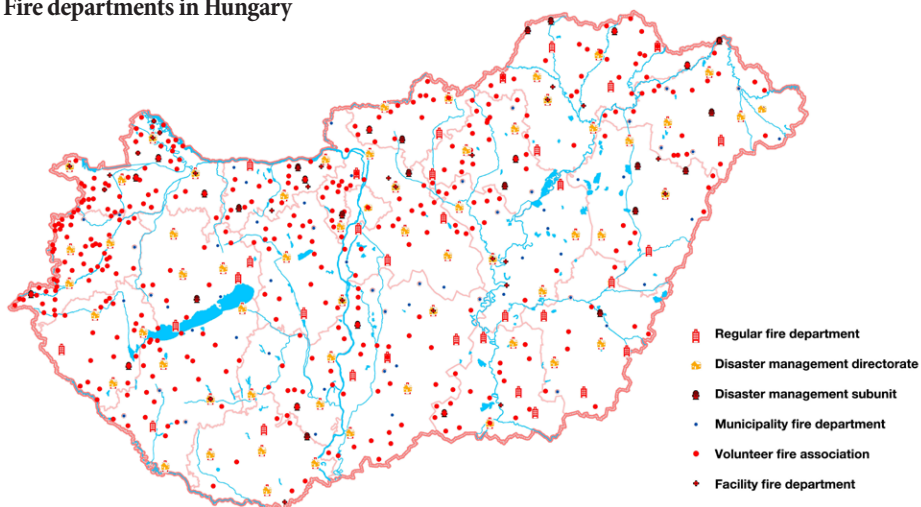
AUTONOMY

With a change in the regulation – from 2014

VFA deployments in recent years

onwards – the VFAs are able to carry out professional activities on their home turf independently. This way the fire security is improved, especially on areas further away from professional firefighting departments. As of now 8 such independent associations exist in the country, watching over a total of 752 km² of land, and over 137.000 citizens. The aim is to further increase the number of these volunteer firefighter associations!

Fire departments in Hungary



UNIFIED PROFESSIONAL ADVOCACY

In Hungary the firefighters outside the professional staff organize themselves into three independent, equal associations. Based on these, the main goal of the HFA is unified professional advocacy.

VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTING ASSOCIATIONS

Volunteer firefighting organizations (VFAs) play an increasingly large role in fire protection of Hungary. The work that they do is important not only during fires and technical rescues, but in general disaster management.

During the Danube flood in 2013, 3500 volunteer firefighters defended the dams generating 60.000 working hours. The members of the regional and county rescue associations – which can be deployed in disaster situations – are also consisted mainly of volunteers. They have been integrated into the national disaster management system – one good example for this is the SMS-based warning system installed in 2012.



Flood 2013: 150 VFAs, 60.000 working hours

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT FIREFIGHTERS

Municipal Government Firefighter Departments (MGFs) are organizations created by local associations and municipal governments



Vehicles of the Tab Municipal Government Fire Dept.

together for performing fire prevention and technical rescue operations. They are active in a designated area, using required equipment. In Hungary there are 60 MGFs watching over a total of 1,5 million civilians in 533 settlements.

They were deployed in 6791 cases (including fire fighting and technical rescues). The rate of independent deployments was 60,8% in 2012, whereas 66,1% in 2013.

FACILITY FIREFIGHTING DEPARTMENTS

Facility Firefighting Departments (FFDs) are firefighting organizations bound to a particular facility and perform firefighting and technical rescue tasks at this facility. They do not have an own deployment area as for instance MGFs do, but they do help out in the firefighting tasks of 12 settlements.



Operational control vehicle at the Paks FFD

FFDs can operate as an individual organization or as a subunit of the facility in question. They are expected to be deployed within two minutes if they are fulltime FFD firefighters, and within five minutes if they are only parttime firefighters.

In Hungary there are 72 FFDs at the moment. Their professional work and equipment is adequate; they have been deployed 592 times in 2014.

THE FUTURE: PLANS AND GOALS

The HFA was founded as an organization that is ready to represent every firefighter risking his life for the public safety voluntarily.

On 13 October 2014 a new era began in the modern hungarian firefighter movement. On this day presidents of the Hungarian Volunteer Firefighting Association, the Hungarian Firefighter Association and the Hungarian Facility Fire-



Presidents of the three organization signing the document

fighting Association (László Balog, Tibor Dobson and Sándor Udvardi respectively) signed a Memorandum of Understanding in Balatonföldvár, which will result in a unified hungarian firefighting organization.

TASKS OF THE ASSOCIATION

The most important task of the association is to help the development of the hungarian firefighting, and to represent every hungarian firefighter.

These are the responsibilities:

- Professional firefighting tasks



- Fire prevention and prevention campaigns
- Community building, education, keeping traditions
- Coordination and support of professional and scientific projects
- Contacts with hungarian professional and social organizations
- Developing international contacts

The association actively participates in the international firefighter movement and pays particular attention to the strengthening of cross-border cooperation.

Our goals connect us to the traditions of the past, because they are built on its strong foundations.



