

designated fire marshal in a county or municipal corporation, the State Fire Marshal shall carry out the provisions of this article therein.

(i) The minimum qualifications for an assistant State fire marshal shall be the completion of National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 1031 – Fire Inspector I or the equivalent, as determined by the State Fire Marshal. However, all legally appointed deputy State fire marshals or special deputy State fire marshals serving as of July 1, 1985, are exempt from the minimum standard provisions of this section. The State Fire Marshal may administer an examination based upon NFPA 1031 before a person is certified as an assistant State fire marshal.

(ii) Upon recommendation of the State Fire Marshal, an assistant or special assistant State fire marshal may be removed after an administrative hearing for just cause by a majority decision of the State Fire Prevention Commission.

(2) Upon the advice of an assistant State fire marshal, the State Fire Marshal may designate as a special assistant State fire marshal, a member of any fire department, duly organized and operating in this State, if the designee is a full-time employee of the fire department and performs fire inspections or fire investigations. The Fire Marshal may designate as a special assistant State fire marshal any law enforcement officer involved in arson investigations or any other suitable persons meeting the standards established under this article. A special assistant serves at the pleasure of the State Fire Marshal and without compensation from the State. The special assistant shall assist the State Fire Marshal in carrying out his duties under this article.

(d) The State Fire Marshal's office shall have such assistants, consultants, and employees as may be provided for in the budget from time to time. The full time investigative and inspection assistants in the office shall be known as deputy State fire marshals and shall meet the minimum qualifications required and complete the training prescribed by the Maryland Police Training Commission for a police officer. The requirement of minimum qualifications and training shall apply only to the full time investigative and inspection assistants in the State Fire Marshal's office and not to the fire inspectors and fire investigators of the local political subdivisions of the State.

[(e) The State Fire Prevention Commission may make recommendations to the Secretary of Public Safety and Correctional Services on the daily administration of the State Fire Marshal's office, including recommendations on budget and personnel matters.]

7A.

(a) Subject to the provisions of Article 27, §§ 742 through 755 of the Code, fire departments and rescue squads of the State or any of its political subdivisions, volunteer fire companies and rescue squads, and any ambulance service licensed under § 13-515 of the Education Article may request the State Fire Marshal or other authorized agency that has access to the Criminal Justice Information System CENTRAL REPOSITORY IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES to conduct an initial criminal [record] HISTORY RECORDS check on an applicant for employment or appointment as a volunteer or paid fire fighter, rescue squad member, or paramedic on a form prescribed by the State Fire Marshal.