

## **Troy Dulaney – Investigative Summary and Board Recommendation**

### **I. Summary of the Investigation and Findings of Facts:**

On March 10, 2023, the EMS division of IDHS received a complaint regarding alleged cheating during in EMT certification exam that took place in early 2023 at the Muncie Fire Department. The course was instructed by Captain Troy Dulaney of the Muncie Fire Department, who was also a part-time instructor for the Indiana Fire and Public Safety Academy of IDHS. The complaint alleged that Dulaney, in his capacity as course instructor and Captain at Muncie Fire Department, was leading a cheating scheme in which he provided test questions to students prior to their exam, and in return asked the students to provide him with the questions they recalled after taking the exam. Attached to the complaint as evidence were multiple pages containing photographs of test questions that Dulaney provided to students via text message. After several weeks of interviews and evidence gathering by IDHS investigators, questions arose about other fire certification exams and processes led by Dulaney, dating back to 2018.

All the exams in question, from 2018 to 2023, took place at the Muncie Fire Department. The investigation revealed a pattern of Dulaney instigating and encouraging “quid-pro-quo” conduct with students, in which Dulaney provided his students with test questions prior to their examinations, and in return pressured the students to report back to him with questions they remembered from the exam after they finished taking the exam, often telling these students they “owed him.” For some courses, there is only evidence of Dulaney providing test questions to one student, however, in 2023, Dulaney sent test questions via text message to all the students enrolled in the EMT course.

After receiving the complaint, IDHS investigators conducted nearly thirty (30) interviews of witnesses, students, firefighters, and Dulaney himself. Based on the evidence collected, IDHS notified Dulaney on April 13, 2023 that he was suspended indefinitely from any employment with IDHS until the investigation was completed.

During the investigation, witnesses shared their accounts of Dulaney facilitation cheating on course examinations at Muncie Fire Department, which he primarily conducted via group text messages to student recruits. One student provided 65 pages of screenshots that included test questions he received via text messages from Dulaney’s personal cell phone number.

Among the information corroborated through witness interviews are the following facts:

- Dulaney collected personal phone numbers of students and created a group text message thread without their consent. The students did not ask to be put on these text message threads.
- A paper copy of multiple text messages from Dulaney showed he stated “you owe me,” and “see how much you are willing to invest back in me,” as he requested recruits to collect and share test questions.
- One text message from Dulaney to students stated, “These are actual Registry questions my students had that have great recall.”
- All eight (8) of the recruits of the 2023 EMT courses indicated they felt pressured to participate and were in fear of losing their jobs or facing personal repercussions. However, the students admitted to sharing test questions or other information from the exam with Dulaney.

### **II. Details of Dulaney’s Misconduct from 2018 to 2023:**

2018 FOST Course: The complaint sent to IDHS in March 2023 contained 6 pages of photographs of test questions from this 2018 course examination, taken within a foot of the computer screen (likely via cell

phone camera), showing the name of the student, Sean Burcham, at the top of the screen. This testing was done locally through the Acadis computer system, with the proctor monitoring the testing site. Dulaney was the proctor for this exam, however, Sean Burcham was on vacation when this test was taken, so someone else with access to his PSID and test code must have logged into Sean's Acadis account to take these images. Dulaney, as proctor of this examination, had access to Sean Burcham's PSID and test code. The test questions from these 2018 images were used in the 2022 FOST course (see below). Deductive reasoning suggests that Dulaney used his position and access as proctor to log in student Sean Burcham's Acadis testing portal to view the questions on this exam and used his cell phone camera to take the images of these 2018 FOST exam questions.

2020: IDHS investigators spoke with Lt. Mark Hill about his interaction with Dulaney at Muncie Fire Department in 2020. At his time, Mark was at the end of his career and reaching retirement and had accidentally let his EMT certification lapse. While he was in the basement of station 3 with Dulaney, Dulaney told Mark he could get Mark through the test because he had the test bank. Dulaney went on to ask Mark to give him 10 questions in return. Mark said no and told IDHS investigators he did not want to owe Troy Dulaney and was not intimidated by Dulaney.

2021 Ropes Ops Course: IDHS investigators interviewed Braydon Fields, who was a student in this course led by Troy Dulaney. Troy showed Braydon the test questions for the ropes ops examination on his phone. This was unsolicited - Braydon did not ask Troy to show him the test questions. Braydon told IDHS investigators that Troy Dulaney would pick his "favorites," provide them with unsolicited test questions, and asks them to report back to him with questions from the exam.

2022 FOST course: Troy was an adjunct instructor of this course in 2022, and during the course examination, Troy sat in the back of the classroom. During this test, one student opened a folder that contained 8 photographs of the 2018 test questions (i.e. the images taken during the 2018 course), which were questions on this 2022 exam. Like the 2021 Ropes Ops Course, there is only evidence of this being provided to one student, rather than the entire class of students (which we see in 2023).

Note: At this time, an internal promotional process was taking place at the Muncie Fire Department, and Dulaney solicited students to engage in quid-pro-quo exchange of test materials – he wanted 10 promotional exam questions back in return for the test questions he provided his students. Essentially, Dulaney is giving students test questions with the expectation that he receives questions in return that will advance his own career.

2023 RRO Course: By the time this course ended, and testing took place in spring of 2023, Troy Dulaney had already removed himself because he had received a suspension letter from IDHS and knew that IDHS was aware of his actions. While this course was ongoing, however, the test questions were found on site at the training facility in students' test packets. Before this course' examination took place, IDHS personnel rolled out new questions for the exam, and every single student failed the exam. This emphasizes the seriousness of Dulaney's conduct and suggest that students were relying on memorizing the answers to the test questions they received prior to the exam and may not have been competent enough to pass the exam without knowing the questions/answers in advance.

2023 EMT0130 course: From January 10 through February 9, 2023, Muncie Fire Dept. as its own training institution conducted EMT course (EMT0130), containing 8 students. Dulaney initiated a group text to all eight (8) students/candidates, in which he offered unsolicited assistance in preparing for their EMT examination. Dulaney texted what he labeled as NREMT test questions with answers and directed them to give him information in return. Without the students' permission or agreement, the students gained information on questions from prior NREMT examinations. Following the exam, Dulaney texted all 8

students indicating that they should give him test questions and answers from their own NREMT exam. He texted them messages stated that since he had “invested” in the students, they should “invest back in him.”

All 8 EMT 0130 students acknowledge receiving the unsolicited text messages from Dulaney and indicated they replied with either specific test questions from their NREMT exam or general information related to their test questions to appease Dulaney’s request.

Dulaney’s EMS certifications have been revoked for a period of seven (7) years for his role in this 2023 EMT 0130 course, and all eight students are required to retake the examination within 120 days.

### **III. Analysis/Conclusion:**

Dulaney used his position as Captain at Muncie Fire Department to repeatedly initiate/ facilitate cheating on EMT/Fire course examinations from 2018 to 2023. Interviews with past students and colleagues reveal that students felt pressured to engage in this quid-pro-quo exchange of test questions because Dulaney was in a position of authority at Muncie Fire Department, and they feared repercussions if they did not give Dulaney what he wanted. Past Muncie Fire Dept. colleague Lt. Mark Hill corroborated the students’ accounts through his own run-in with Dulaney, in which Dulaney claimed to have test banks that he would offer in return for more questions from the recent test from Hill.

Dulaney’s pattern of misconduct threatens the integrity of the firefighting and EMT professions because it raises concerns about the competency of Dulaney’s past students who now serve in public safety roles. The fact that every single student failed the 2023 Ropes Ops course at Muncie Fire Department when the questions were changed at the last minute strongly suggests that students affiliated with Dulaney relied upon the test questions he provided and may not have learned the material they needed to learn to pass the test on their own.

### **IV. Authority to Sanction & Violations:**

#### Authority to Sanction:

655 IAC 1-1-7(b) – Revocation or denial of Certification – the board may take action with respect to the application for or certification of any fire service person...upon information provided to the board that the fire service person has: (1) failed to uphold and respect a student’s right to privacy, dignity and safety....(3) failed to comply with the board rules.

#### Violations:

655 IAC 1-1-12(j)(12) – Application and testing procedures; appeals; challenges; reciprocity: A proctor shall not discuss any test question or possible answer thereto with any student taking the examination.

655 IAC 1-1-13(a)(4)(C) – Qualifications of evaluators and proctors: ...the qualifications for lead evaluator shall be as follows: .... Commitment to uphold the board’s practices and policies.

IC 35-43-5-4(a)(3) – Fraud: A person who...possesses, manufactures, uses or alters a document, instrument, computer program, or device with the intent to obtain...an educational, governmental or employment benefit to which the person is not entitled... commits fraud, a Class A misdemeanor.

### **V. Recommendation:**

The Board has the discretion to choose the sanction it finds appropriate, based upon the findings of the investigation. Respondent’s EMS certifications have been revoked for a period of seven (7) years, the highest sanction, for his role in the 2023 EMT 0130 course, and the National Registry has conducted its

own investigation of Respondent's misconduct. BFPSE, however, must operate within the confines of the BFPSE rules found in Title 655, which is somewhat narrower than the EMS Commission rules. The Board should consider the public interest, as well as the rights of Dulaney, and make sure that the sanction is appropriate, taking into consideration how this may impact Dulaney's penchant, etc.

Although the EMS Commission and the BFPSE operate under different rules, the sanction options are the same: letter of reprimand (like a red flag on license/certification record), probation (still able to practice/work, but monitored and conditions can be imposed), suspension (unable to practice for certain period of time), or revocation (unable to practice for period of 7 years).

The seriousness and repeated nature of Respondent's misconduct likely merit serious sanction – either suspension or revocation up to a period of 7 years. This was not an isolated instance, but a pattern of misconduct, which took place in his capacity as fire chief at a fire department, over a period of at least 5 or 6 years. Helping students pass EMT/Fire exams dishonestly and without having to learn the material is a serious concern to the public because these individuals are serving the public and may not be fully competent to do so.

Ultimately, the decision is in the hands of the Board, and a vote must be taken by the Board. After a vote takes place, IDHS will draft the Final Order for Board Chairman's signature.