

DIVISION OF STATE FIRE MARSHAL

Alex Sink

Chief Financial Officer

State Fire Marshal

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**CFO SINK ANNOUNCES NEW STATE FIRE MARSHAL
DIVISION DIRECTOR**

TALLAHASSEE - Florida Chief Financial Officer and State Fire Marshal Alex Sink announced today that Longboat Key Fire Chief Julius Halas will be the new Director of the Department of Financial Services' Division of State Fire Marshal effective May 4, 2009.

“From investigating arson to training firefighters, the Division of State Fire Marshal works aggressively to protect Floridians from fire hazards,” said CFO Sink. “With his extensive experience in the field of fire protection, I am confident that Chief Halas will do an excellent job as State Fire Marshal Director and I am pleased to have him on board.”

“I am honored to have this opportunity, and I look forward to joining the employees in the State Fire Marshal Division who work hard every day to keep Floridians safe,” said Chief Halas.

Chief Halas brings over 35 years of experience to the position, having worked as a firefighter, paramedic, instructor and fire officer. Halas achieved the position of Fire Chief for the City of Sarasota in 1992 and has served as the Fire Chief for the Town of Longboat Key since 1999.

As SFM Division Director, Chief Halas will oversee the four bureaus within the Division of State Fire Marshal -- [Fire and Arson Investigations](#), [Fire Prevention](#), [Fire Standards and Training](#), and [Forensic Fire and Explosives Analysis](#) (the [Arson Laboratory](#)) -- as well as the [Florida Fire Incident Reporting Section](#) within the Director's Office. He will also be responsible for leading the management and staffing of firefighters and search and rescue teams at the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) in the event of a disaster or state emergency.

“As one of the past Presidents of the Florida Fire Chiefs Association, I think Chief Halas will be a great addition to the State Fire Marshal team in Tallahassee,” said Nat Ippolito, President of the Florida Fire Chiefs Association. “I will look forward to working with him to make sure that

Florida's fire and emergency service professionals have what they need to best protect our citizens."

"It is very important that Florida's firefighters have someone with Chief Halas' qualifications and history of achievements in the State Fire Marshal's office," said Bob Carver, President of Florida Professional Firefighters. "I know that he will be an effective liaison between the state and local fire departments throughout Florida."

Chief Halas is a former President and current member of the Florida Fire Chiefs Association. He also serves as a representative to the Florida State Domestic Security Oversight Council. Chief Halas received his Associate's Degree in Fire Science Technology from Manatee Community College, graduating Summa Cum Laude, and received a Master of Science and a Bachelor of Arts Degree from National-Louis University.

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As a statewide elected officer of the Florida Cabinet, Chief Financial Officer Alex Sink oversees the Department of Financial Services, a multi-division state agency responsible for management of state funds and unclaimed property, assisting consumers who request information and help related to financial services, and investigating financial fraud. CFO Sink also serves as the State Fire Marshal.