

Pennsylvania State Fire Academy Modernizes Operations with Acadis



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Deputy Fire Commissioner

The Pennsylvania State Fire Academy plays a critical role in delivering next-level fire service education across the state.

While the Academy does not provide entry-level training, like Firefighter I or Firefighter II, it offers resident and on-the-road advanced fire programs, leveraging 24 Education Training Agencies (ETAs) and 28 certification test sites to support professional growth.

Fragmented Systems and Manual Processes Hinder Efficiency

Over decades of operation, the Academy accumulated half a dozen siloed databases and used paper-based methods to manage training records, student registration, certification data, and more. As the Academy grew, these processes became more cumbersome and time-consuming.

“There were six or seven databases, depending on where you looked, and none of them talked to each other,” said the Deputy Fire Commissioner. “You couldn’t just pull one record and know what you were looking at.”

Student registration and instructor applications were handled via mailed-in packets. Cancellations and waitlist changes required phone calls and file reviews. Locating records to respond to information requests required sorting through paper files and spreadsheets.



Centralizing Databases Strengthens Academy Operations

Recognizing the need for modernization, the Pennsylvania State Fire Academy chose the Acadis Readiness Suite to unify its fragmented systems and digitize critical workflows. The system enables the Academy to centralize its data, streamline student registration, simplify instructor tracking, and improve reporting.

With the help of Acadis, the Academy has made significant time- and effort-saving improvements, including:

- Powering the registration and administration of all resident and on-the-road programs, replacing manual processes with a single digital hub.
- Shortening on-site course hours by enabling students to complete certain pre-coursework remotely.
- Allowing the registrar to manage enrollments, waitlists, and candidate data more efficiently.
- Expediting record retrieval with comprehensive, flexible reporting capabilities.

“Our registrar said Acadis has really given her extra time to get other things done. It’s easier to process each candidate, and it’s all in one place,” the Deputy Fire Commissioner shared.

Amplifying Transparency and Continual Growth

Acadis has empowered the Academy to dramatically improve operational efficiency on- and off-site. By replacing time-consuming manual processes with a powerful, highly configurable, and automated system, the Academy is better equipped to support more students while upholding compliance.

Transparency has also improved. Various constituents across the state can now access real-time training calendars, ensuring they’re always up to date on training availability. Acadis also helps keep ETAs up to date on available local-level instructors by streamlining monthly reports.

“It’s that simple,” said the Deputy Fire Commissioner. “Before, we maintained an Excel spreadsheet, which took a lot of time.”

Looking ahead, the Pennsylvania State Fire Academy is expanding its use of Acadis. The Academy plans to leverage the system’s LMS capabilities and online certification testing. Staff are also working to improve internal workflows and reduce duplicate records.

“I think we’ve only scratched the surface of what Acadis can do,” he shared. “Now, not only are we improving our time management, but also how we communicate across the entire state.”

