

Certification Board Meeting

Friday June 24 2022
Beaumont Texas

I. Meeting called to order

II. Roll Call Attached

III. Acceptance of Minutes from Meetings April 20th minutes Motion to table till July. Seconded by Andy Dexter. Motion passed no negative votes.

IV. Communications

A. Executive Director/Board Tim Rutland, just a reminder to everybody that one of the things we are doing this time in terms of certification stuff is we are offering that hazmat refresher. And Elizabeth Morris and I are going to be doing a class and we're going to be taking everybody quickly but taking everybody through all of the JQRs sections of awareness and operations. So we're hoping we're hoping this might be a step in the right direction to try to help some folks out in terms of improving their test scores. We are of course offering testing at the conference as well.

B. SFFMA Staff No comment

C. TEEX Staff Kevin Creamer, the total number of applications that we receive for the first half of this year is down considerably from previous years. I'm chalking that up to COVID, Growth Zone and many other things. Just FYI they are down and hopefully once the new database comes in its going to make things much faster.

V. Old Business

A. Review Committees

1. Testing – Tim Rutland, update on numbers is seven 700 and some odd numbers in September over 400 since the beginning of the year. Staff has been conducting most of those tests. We are now beginning to utilize some of the cert board members to proctor these online exams. And so, we hope to be able to expand that as we go along perhaps to others who are who are interested in being Proctor's for the process. I'm hoping all we can do is after the dust settles on Conference, we can sit down and really just look at a map at this point. Figure out where we are in this thing. Where we need to consider plugging some holes as far as areas that are underserved right now. I just throw this out as an idea, you know we talked about beginning to utilize cert board members to be proctors. There's nothing that says really that, in my mind, at least, that we would necessarily have to stop at that. If we had a trusted individual which all are aware of around the state who could be a proctor, there's nothing that says we couldn't do that. My original intent is testing centers, college testing centers around the state. TCFP does that now for instants. The downside is that all of these testing centers unless you happen to be a student, already that college they're going to charge a fee and so I'm really trying to avoid pricing someone on something like that.

Brian Scheffer, by no means do all cert board members have to do testing. I feel like you'd have to do this. I know there's people don't want to get into testing. I'm okay with that.

2. NFPA/Skills Updates – Diver operator program, I know y'all are starting that process for validating the driver, operator and instructor JQRs and COVID issue that slowed it down. So, we're going to get started back on time to get some better rocking and rolling and again.

Edwin Baker, I was talking to friends about the meeting and I would like to add one person to that and he's willing to do it. Only two of the three committee have emailed me back.

Tim Rutland, I really have to pursue this thing once we're past conference, we really need to begin working this and get things back. Things over are already loaded, that are already out there on the platform. So, it's just a matter of getting our people assigned to go in and validate them and getting started.

Brian Scheffer, I sit on the NFPA 1001 committee and it's going to be 1010 and 1010 is going to encompass firefighter wildland driver operator program, ARF Rescue is going to be it's going to be a big thing document. It's not going to happen until late 2024 if then. We just got rid of the firefighter support and they are putting the support firefighter back in.

3. Approved Training Providers – Edwin Baker, we have two that have paid their dues. **Texas Wildland Training.** Anybody who is familiar with these people go ahead and chime in anytime. They are with Austin Fire Department. They teach the NWCG class to Austin Fire Department. But whenever they go outside for profit, they're not allowed to use the NWCG label. So, they want to do the SFFMA version which same thing, but can be able to teach for profit. And they're both instructors and they're going to use the 191, 131, 118. I don't see a problem with it.

Motion to accept by Edwin Baker and seconded by Billy Tidwell. Motion approved no negative votes.

Texas Fire and Rescue

Jimmy George, I have to them I went to their website. Website is pretty easy to navigate.

Edwin Baker, Texas Fire and Rescue they actually sell equipment but they also have a Firefighter Academy, officer training, rescue and they can do custom training to meet the department's needs.

Motion to accept by Edwin Baker and seconded by Jimmy George. Motion approved no negative votes.

4. Policy Review – Brian Scheffer, really haven't had the need for any major policy update should have wait until we see what floats to the top. The committee is supposed to help dictate or kind of help with the with the website. You know, make sure how it works.

A. Master Firefighter Applications

D. A. Barnett

Motion to approve RJ Thomas and seconded by UNK. Motion Passed no negative votes.

B. Exam Proctor Credentials Draft

Andy Dexter, this is not set up, there is a link on this. But it did not go out to all today, it's basically kind of understanding that there is an exam proctor draft created. This will be all of the policies associated with online testing how to properly test if there's issues that happened during the test with the proctor has to do in order to attain it. If a person failed to test what they have to do to come back and make a new test when everything's in here, because I'm sure I got a challenge to make it longer. But the reality is there's quite a bit of information inside this program. There are some changes to policies that some of them are written and some of them are not written for discussion. Kevin will post it so all can provide feedback for further discussion. There is a lot of confusion out there about if I fail to pass when can I take an exam again? Now with the failure rates kind of looked at some of the existing models that are out there. But all tests take at least 10 business days for us to make sure that you're eligible, to make sure you have everything, generate the test and have it sitting with whoever the exam proctor is going to be. I wrote in there two weeks for at least 10 business days for that process to happen. Because I don't want somebody to call up and say hey, I want to take a written test tomorrow. We're not going to be that generous. We need to make sure that we're following and documented but for a person who is taking advantage right now. Kevin has recommendations. I don't know if their policies because I don't know if it is written down anywhere that people can reference. In the program packet. It says if it fails three times they're required to wait. I think that's too long. You know, if you fail a test, you may reply or retake that test within 15 days after the last exam. Upon failure that exam the certified coordinator must be notified. If you fail that test three separate times. You will not be allowed to take the test for six months after that third test date and he must have a documentation either by your training coordinator or another provider of a refresher training programs so that way, hopefully, we're setting you up for something that's going to be successful on your next test. And hopefully we can do this right if we can tie it more when they do the refresher program like we're doing in conferences here because they're able to go and test as soon as possible afterwards and kind of coordinating that timeframe. Then they get another three more into 15 days and if they fail the sixth tests, then we repeat that another six months another refresher class, but unlike TCFP, or national registry after you fail a certain amount you have to go take the whole program over.

Billy Tidwell, I think the way he wrote this to me very accessible. It's a pretty standard practice across the board.

C. Reciprocity Program

Brian Scheffer, this came up in my zone. Rick Lasky was the Vice Chief of Louisville for many years, he came from Idaho and he is been a world-renowned speaker

and traveled all the time speaking he still in action with a little fire department in outside Wichita Falls which tells you that they're doing the job. When he tested Commission on Fire Protection. He was just the head of the department as suppression. TCFP didn't accept his firefighter certification. He has a firefighter certification from Illinois but not from Texas. And so TCFP reviewed it and said that the only way you could get one is for him to go back to SFFMA program. What do we do with an individual that can at least prove that they've had all the training and has the certifications in another state or that locale or something like this? Can we as an association provide a certification for that individual without them having to take our test? This is a debate and this is where any, any come up with this little thing? I don't want to open up Pandora's box and create a mass hysteria of people just want something for nothing.

Andy Dexter, we have received, 9 emails that we're maxed out with supporting documentation of his training. None of it will be exactly in NFPA 1001 2021. We'll be missing certain objectives here and there. We have a clause right now. Older training records in our in our program manual now. Certification Board assesses training with proper verification and be all requirements of this program from January of 1975 to present. Because these are old standard participations and all training must be accepted by the fire chief and the certifying coordinator must meet the criteria of the board, either elected by his or her department are appointed by the fire chief of that appointment, or an honorably separated or retired person. All training was needed by the individual and its own representative. In both of these cases, both of them are active participants in their departments. I know that Chief Lasky case applications and background information was submitted to our office and was rejected it wasn't in most current state so he wants to know is there any other reason or any other thing that we can do? My proposal in this program is that we create a reciprocity committee that will review this one off. And their merit has to stand from themselves to be a committee of four members certification board members. Ideally, not any of our own officers that we elect in July. So that way leaves board officer as an alternate appeal process if that person wants to challenge a second time. For this I rewrote with a standard participant, honorary person with me and also put it as an application process to where they would have to submit a certified letter that says why they feel that they should be granted attention and provide it's up to standard provide all the documentation they have achieved throughout your career. I've heard lots of cases, talked to a lot of people that have not been able to help. You know, I went to a fire department a month and a half ago. They wanted to leave me that they want to give me an opportunity to give them a reason to stay. They wanted to leave because their certification has not been processed. I went and talked to them, and we started going through the records, what I found out was there are certifying coordinator had not entered a single training record and then a closet full of training records and nobody entered. When they submit these applications, they're going to get rejected each time. Why because you don't have anything documented on their behalf. We do have a certifying coordinator that are not doing what they're expected to do. So this would be another route for those people that that might not be getting representative they have.

Kevin Creamer, if they have that information in the database, it will show what holes they may need to do. And I tell them, great, you've got 10 objectives out of the entire program that you may have already covered, and it's just wisdom on the objective. If they can demonstrate that knowledge Then you proceed as normal, and there's no problem with it. If you have somebody who's older and they have to do a skill exam, we make the exception and we've done this for years is that they cannot physically do it. So if they're older than them, Oh, that's great. Tell me how you're going to do and we will allow you to do that. There are ways already built into the program. That I don't understand why we have to make exceptions for people who don't want to lose and everybody else

RJ Thomas, I think what Kevin said are right on point here that needs to take a look at is you know you're talking about inhouse, stuff like that. The town I am in used to be a military town, we got people from the military. We had people coming in from many states and I have been a certified firefighter five different states. There's ways and processes within a department and you guys both describe ways to do that. And usually what I did when they came in to department. They usually had some objectives leftover to gain my confidence at that point. There was a provisional period. There was way to do that. But I think the point we're missing is the Rodney Sexton part. If your certification coordinator is not willing to sit down and do that it is not Kevin's job to do it. You know, so where does that person turn to? How does that person get that? Zone coordinator as the second process similar to the master program could be the way to do that. That should not be the primary way but should be an option.

Kevin Creamer, part of this will probably be addressed with the new database. That was that an individual will be able to upload their course completion certificate. That will go to the coordinator and if they said yes, that meets these requirements. If the coordinator doesn't want to do that, then yes, that will automatically go to the zone rep to review it to see why that hasn't been approved.

Clay Deatherage, this guy met all the training criteria required for the certification being offered at that time and through no classes now entering no positivism. The stuff didn't get submitted and should have been and would have been issued a certificate. So that kind of raises the question Do you now require him to meet today's criteria and that for view issued him something that he didn't qualify for? It's just nobody bothered to ever send this stuff in and he should have gotten that certificate. I think that's, that's the issue.

Baldie Perez, I have dealt with that before and totally understanding their situation. But I think it's up to the training coordinator to do that. Once you do that, the situation I was in once I submitted all that training, put it on there and I let them know hey, look, this is what you like we can see on paper you did and you're qualified. Here's what you need. Do you want to continue? And I can tell you the other guy okay, thanks. So, I don't know

if they were just looking for someone like me. Well, let me try this. Maybe they'll give me my stuff. And I'm just in the opinion that we have a program that has to fit all the time. And so if we tend to be one person or one system and accepted just you know, because then I think that may watered down what we have so again, and not being unfair to anybody I think we just need to be and if they have the information, if they have a stuff and it needs to be done, then I think that's where we need to go because if we go backwards, then we're accepting something that we don't know what it was and if anything in my opinion, I think you should be progressing. Then we're accepting something less.

RJ Thomas, as somebody that had to recertified 4 times in 4 states I understand that when you go from one state to another, there are changes. In Kentucky I had to have like 40 hours and strategies and tactics. It was stuff I'd already had but nothing in my paperwork said strategies and tactics. I had to redo that. And I've also had the people that come in, go through the check sheet. You want to give them a list of just objectives they need and you do all that work and then you never see them again, because they were maybe looking for an easy way out. I suppose that can work and sometimes it does. I've done both, that's my job. I'd like to give people credit for stuff they did. In terms of maintaining a standard, if we issue it on this date, we're saying that on this date the person has met today standard. I don't want to get into postdating stuff. There is not that big a difference in most cases. If I was always to get my certification in 1995 and lay that against what we have now then A&O is what I need to get mostly. and then 95 We had a lot about ropes and driver operator stuff like I think it's six one way half dozen, the other. I kind of think that it was really an issue for a certificate coordinator and that we want to make sure that meets to standards on that particular day.

Baldie Perez, I had a call from a department down in my area for the references to our curriculum. I started to look I couldn't find it and then they ok called me back like hey, it's right here like on cake and I don't remember where that was. So then last month, I went to the TAFE conference was going they heard so they're like, Hey, we're the reference materials for our certification program. Oh my god. You know what, I don't know. Somebody found it and told me but I don't remember. So. What I was wondering is there somewhere on our program can we put in and what was told to me by the original person that's found it says it all says the references of current whatever, it doesn't list by edition.

Brian Scheffer, here's the thing. Why we did the current version is because we're now in the NFPA compliance. IFSTA and Jones & Bartlett are changing every time a new edition comes out. So, we would have to change it every time that book comes in, which we can do. It's not terrible. We will get a reference list created.

VII. Announcements

Tim Rutland, demonstration for new training software is offered tonight.

Presentation of plaque to Frankie Marcinkiewicz for his years of service to the Board.

SCDFF Zone 4 has a new Assistant Certification Coordinator Chief Ryan Smith from Taft.

A. Next Meeting:

July 25th College Station

B. Other

X. Adjourn 1 hour 41 minutes

DRAFT

Roll Call

Chairman/Zone 01

Vice-Chairman/Zone 18/EMS Cmtte Liaison

Secretary/Zone 04

Zone 02

Zone 03

Zone 05

Zone 06

Zone 07

Zone 08

Zone 09

Zone 10

Zone 11

Zone 12

Zone 13

Zone 14

Zone 16

Zone 17

TEEX Representative

TFS Representative

Exec Bd Representative

Non-Voting Staff Liaison

Brian Scheffer

Andy Dexter

R. J. Thomas

Edwin Baker

Jimmy George

Ubaldo Perez

Kendall Hunting

Willow Sylestine Online

Patrick Dooley

Brad Hargrove

Michael Albert

Clay Deatherage

William Tidwell

Nicolas Barlow

Brent Allen

Josh Constancio online

Saul Pando

Henry Perry

Harvey Cheshire

Kevin Creamer online