

Commission on Fire Prevention and Control, Certification Division

Awareness and Operations Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction Competencies

October 23, 2008

Progress Report and Suggestions for Training

To date, the Certification Division has completed three (3) practical skills days. All candidates have passed on the first attempts. Additionally, Certification has offered the written examination to thirty-eight (38) candidates. Thirty (30) passed on the first attempt. Two (2) students retested using the combined test and passed. Two (2) students needed to retest on the Awareness portion of the exam and were also successful. Four (4) students will need to retest in Awareness or Operations level separately.

A reminder, under the 2008 edition for the NFPA 472 requirements, **NO REFERENCE MATERIAL** will be utilized during the **WRITTEN** testing process. Reference material will be available and encouraged to be used for testing purposes during the practical skills examination.

In order to best serve the needs of the candidate, training for the Awareness and Operational Level Haz-Mat/WMD Certification should include the following Firefighter I competencies:

1. Awareness and Operations Haz-Mat/WMD including the nine competencies
2. Salvage and Overhaul
3. Hose streams and Appliances
4. Loss Control
5. SCBA/PPE

In some circumstances, the traditional Firefighter I skill set will need to be modified to meet the competencies for Haz-Mat.

Observations and Recommendations of the HM Operations Practical Skills Examination:

1. There appears to be four (4) areas of concern:
 - a. Catch-all deployment
 - i. They simply need to be taught the Firefighter I skill for Catch-all
 - ii. There are AHJ that teach the use of hoseline use for creating a “curb”; if this is the case then they have to be taught the complete way to do this.
 - iii. Keep in mind, we are supplying the hose and there may not be enough to make it go around the perimeter of the catchall. We will not be supplying the reducers or air to fill the hoseline.
 - iv. In real life, if additional equipment is contaminated it may be placed out of service. Rolling the edges on tarps is less expensive then losing hoseline and tarps.
 - v. Catchalls deployment will have to show a closed corner, please refer to the reference material
 - b. Knees in the product

- i. When teaching your candidates to squat over a patient or as they are collect evidence from an area that is below their waist or knees, the candidates have a tendency to place their knees on the ground or in the product. Encourage them to squat on their feet.
- c. Lifting using their legs
 - i. If they are lifting an object from the ground or below their knees have them use their legs and not their backs
- d. SCBA and PPE doffing
 - i. Certification has found that some instructors have shown the traditional manner doffing of the SCBA.
 - ii. Air flow away from the face is assessed during the Haz-Mat certification practical examination.
 - iii. In an effort to reduce the contamination to the routes of entry to the body, the doff switch should not be activated to stop the flow of air from the facepiece.
 - iv. Firefighters A & B complete the final rinse station.
 - v. Firefighter A will step inside a large size plastic trash can liner. Firefighter A will doff the SCBA/PPE. Firefighter B will assist. Firefighter A will loosen the straps and belts and remove the harness from his back protecting the regulator and hoseline. Firefighter B will grasp the harness and maneuver it to face Firefighter A.
 - vi. Firefighter A will remove the helmet. The coat and structural firefighting gloves should be removed by peeling them away from the inside out (similar to the way a child removes their winter coat after playing outside.)
 - vii. With the nitrile or medical gloves still protecting the hands, reach beneath the hood yoke and guide the hood from the head and onto the low pressure regulator line.
 - viii. The suspenders should be removed from the shoulder by backing the elbow back closely through the arm opening. Peel the bunker pants using the gloved hands on the inside of the pants below the bunker boots. (Peel like a banana.)
 - ix. Using the plastic trash can liner as a means of protection, Firefighter A will remove the pants and boots and stepping out and sealing the liner (tying a knot in the top of the bag).
 - x. With the gloved hand loosen the facepiece straps and gentle push the facepiece away from the face without activating the donning switch. Air should continue to flow away from the routes of entry to the body.
 - xi. Finally, remove the inner layer glove by rolling or peeling the glove from the wrist to the fingertip.
 - xii. Step to the medical evaluation station.
 - xiii. When it comes to the final person, he/she will need to use a table, chair, or the ground to 'hold' the bottle and harness as they doff their PPE.