



**OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL
STATEWIDE TRAINING AND EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION**

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Attachment 4

Date: December 19, 2012

To: Ronny J. Coleman, Chairman
c/o State Fire Training
1131 S. Street,
Sacramento, California 95811

From: Ken Wagner, Fire Service Training Specialist

Subject/Agenda Action Item: Evaluating the IAFF Fire Ground Survival Program for Equivalency with the State Fire Training Fire Fighter Survival FSTEP Course

Recommended Actions:

This is information only and does not require action on the part of STEAC

Background Information:

At the October 19, 2012 meeting, STEAC deliberated on the subject of evaluating the IAFF Fire Ground Survival Program for equivalency with the State Fire Training Fire Fighter Survival FSTEP course. The following table depicts the areas of concern identified by the SFT Curriculum Cadre within the IAFF curriculum.

Item	Cadre Concern
Rapid (Head First) Ladder Escape	A directed decision was made that this technique would not be taught in California curriculum due to demonstrated safety concerns.
Emergency Hose Slide	The technique taught in the IAFF curriculum significantly differs from SFT curriculum in that hand placement is different at the point of exit and the IAFF teaches a head first exit where SFT does not.
SCBA Emergencies	The SFT curriculum contains instruction on this topic that is more in-depth than what is presented in the IAFF curriculum.

At the October 19, 2012 STEAC meeting, IAFF representatives agreed to take these three areas of concern back to their development cadre this fall and discuss their interest in modifying their curriculum to more closely align with SFT curriculum. If these modifications were to be made, the SFT cadre expressed confidence that the IAFF Fire Ground Survival course will be equivalent to the SFT Fire Fighter Survival FSTEP curriculum. As a result, participants presenting a certificate of completion for the IAFF Fire Ground Survival course

could be granted equivalency for the Fire Fighter Survival FSTEP curriculum and could use the course to meet prerequisite requirements for the FSTEP Command and Control of the RIC Deployment course.

STEAC endorsed this approach with a motion directing that if the IAFF were to make the aforementioned changes to their curriculum, SFT should move forward with establishing the IAFF Fire Ground Survival course as an equivalent to the Fire Fighter Survival FSTEP course. This would allow participants presenting a certificate of completion for the IAFF Fire Ground Survival course to be granted equivalency for the Fire Fighter Survival FSTEP curriculum and use the course to meet prerequisite requirements for the FSTEP Command and Control of the RIC Deployment course.

IAFF Response

On December 18, 2012 SFT received a communication from Jim Brinkley, Director of Occupational Health and Safety, IAFF. This communication (copy attached) provided the IAFF response to the results of the October 19, 2012 STEAC meeting. A summary of the IAFF response is contained in the following table.

Item	IAFF Response
Rapid (Head First) Ladder Escape	The IAFF FGS instructors will only train California fire fighters in the "Hook2, Grab 4" technique and not the "Rapid (Head First) Ladder Escape.
Emergency Hose Slide	The IAFF FGS Hose Slide technique does not require a head first exit. The IAFF FGS technique requires the fire fighter to exit the structure using the "Window Hang" technique first, and then to transition to the hose for descent to ground level. Having the fire fighter's head out of the window protects the fire fighter's head and the SCBA face piece from the potential high heat (polycarbonate fails at 400 deg F) coming from inside the room. Teaching a fire fighter to return his/her head into a superheated room like the SFT skill prescribes is contradictory to what the skill is designed to do. The IAFF FGS skill will not be changed.
SCBA Emergencies	The IAFF FGS instructors will share the same SCBA Emergencies content found within the SFT curriculum when teaching in California.

Next Steps

SFT appreciates the thoughtful response from the IAFF. However, the IAFF takes exception to the SFT Cadre concern relative to the Emergency Hose Slide item. Staff will meet with the SFT Curriculum Cadre and work with them to analyze the IAFF response, particularly as it relates to the Emergency Hose Slide issue. Only after this analysis is complete can a course of action be established. Unfortunately, due to the holiday season we were not able to conduct this analysis prior to this STEAC meeting.



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS®

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December 18, 2012

Ronny J. Coleman, Chair
Statewide Training and Education Advisory Committee
CALFIRE
Office of the State Fire Marshal
P.O. Box 944246
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460

Dear Mr. Coleman,

The IAFF Fire Ground Survival (FGS) committee met during the IAFF Instructor Development Conference last month to discuss the requirements for the California State Fire Training (SFT) to recognize the IAFF FGS course as equivalent to the California Fire Fighter Survival course.

After considerable discussion and deliberations, the IAFF FGS program developers, Master Instructors and project managers determined that the best course of action to address these concerns is listed in the table below.

Rapid (Head First) Ladder Escape

SFT Cadre Concern - A directed decision was made that this technique would not be taught in the California curriculum due to demonstrated safety concerns.

IAFF Response - The IAFF FGS instructors will only train California fire fighters in the "Hook 2, Grab 4" technique, and not the "Rapid (Head First) Ladder Escape."

Emergency Hose Slide

SFT Cadre Concern - The technique taught in the IAFF curriculum significantly differs from SFT curriculum in that hand placement is different at the point of exit and the IAFF teaches a head first exit where SFT does not.

IAFF Response - The IAFF FGS Hose Slide technique does not require a head first exit. The IAFF FGS technique requires the fire fighter to exit the structure using the "Window Hang" technique first, and then to transition to the hose for descent to ground level. Having the fire fighter's head out of the window protects the fire fighter's head and the SCBA face piece from the potential high heat (polycarbonate fails at 400 deg F) coming from inside the room. Teaching a fire fighter to return his/her head into a superheated room like the SFT skill prescribes is contradictory to what the skill is designed to do. The IAFF FGS skill will not be changed.

SCBA Emergencies

SFT Cadre Concern - The SFT curriculum contains instruction on this topic that is more in-depth than what is presented in the IAFF curriculum.

IAFF Response - The IAFF FGS instructors will share the same SCBA Emergencies content found within the SFT curriculum when teaching in California.

The IAFF is committed to making changes to the FGS program to improve survivability. A complete review of the content is completed annually by subject matter experts to ensure the program reflects the most contemporary information related to fire ground survival. The IAFF responses provided above represent the actions our instructors will take in providing FGS instruction in California to allow for a State Fire Training, Fire Fighter Survival certificate to be granted to California fire fighters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jim Brinkley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Jim Brinkley
Director of Occupational Health and Safety

cc: Lou Paulson, California Professional Firefighters