MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR INDUSTRIAL FIRE BRIGADE TRAINING PROGRAM CERTIFICATION

FORWARD

The issue of Industrial Fire Brigade Certification in Texas has been a major concern of many for the past few years. Due to the complexity of this issue, many have varying opinions of exactly how such a program should be structured, and how to ensure meaningful application to all industrial facilities.

Because of those opinions, and the intent to properly address all concerns of the industrial fire community, it has taken several years to gain agreement on which criteria should be included that would address the proper course of action to develop a standard.

The Texas Industrial Emergency Services Board recognizes that each fire brigade is unique and that the major focus of a certification process must help companies deal with conditions and hazards that are limited to those that exist within its operation. With this standard, the TIFTB has attempted to allow for flexibility so that each facility can structure its training programs to address the needs of its facility, and to achieve a higher level of training for its fire brigade members.

This certification program offers to those facilities that choose to participate, the following benefits:

- It establishes a criteria that all industrial facilities in the state of Texas can use to train members of its Fire Brigade.
- It offers the assurance that all Fire Brigade members have achieved a minimum level of competency.
- It allows all Fire Brigade members to demonstrate their knowledge and ability before being assigned duties that include fire fighting.
- It offers certification through the most respected fire organization in Texas (State Firemen's and Fire Marshals' Association of Texas).

THE PROCESS

The Texas Industrial Emergency Services Board intends for this program to be helpful to all of the industrial fire community - those that seek certification and those that do not. Facilities that apply for certification should only submit applications when they have completed all elements of the training program listed in the attached TIFTB certification program.
We suggest that all facilities use the following guides to determine their program status:

- Define the requirements of what each fire brigade member must be able to do.
- Determine the level of competence of each brigade member before beginning the training for certification.
- For those members that are qualified before training, document their competency level.
- Present training materials to those not qualified.
- Test each member’s competency by having them demonstrate their proficiency by performing each task outlined in the Certification Program.
- Test each member’s proficiency after completing the training.
- Re-test if necessary, until all members have demonstrated at least minimum skill levels.

Once the above steps are completed, the facility has determined that all Fire Brigade members are qualified. The final steps should include:

- Documentation that Fire Brigade members are certified by a qualified physician to perform emergency response duties.
- Documentation of training materials used to qualify members.
- Documentation of trainer’s credentials.
- Documentation of test results.
MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR INDUSTRIAL FIRE BRIGADE TRAINING
AND INDUSTRIAL FIRE BRIGADE TRAINING PROGRAM CERTIFICATION

I. **PURPOSE:**

This criteria is the opinion of the TIFTB as minimum requirements for Fire Brigade Training. The following requirements are intended to provide a standard for Industrial Fire Brigade Member Training, a method for Industrial Fire Brigade Training Program Certification, and to be used as an evaluation tool by all industrial facilities in Texas to determine minimum criteria for designing and developing an Industrial Fire Brigade Training Program.

II. **APPLICATION:**

These requirements cover basic fire brigade training for fire brigades assigned for fire fighting duties beyond the incipient stage. The TIFTB encourages all facility managers to use these requirements to determine if their fire brigade training program needs meet or exceed this criteria.

III. **CERTIFICATION CONDITIONS:**

(A) All Industrial Fire Brigade Members with fire suppression responsibilities should be trained in all topics as listed in this minimum criteria.

(B) All Industrial Fire Brigade Members that are assigned fire suppression duties should be physically capable of performing those duties as outlined in:

1. 1910.156 (b) (2) - “The employer shall assure that employees who are expected to do interior structural fire fighting are physically capable of performing duties which may be assigned to them during emergencies. The employer shall not permit employees with known heart disease, epilepsy, or emphysema, to participate in fire brigade emergency activities unless a physician’s certificate of the employees’ fitness to participate in such activities is provided.”

2. NFPA 600 2-4.5.1, 4.5.2 - “Medical Requirements” - Prior to being accepted for fire brigade membership, employees shall be examined and certified by a qualified physician as being medically and physically fit. The medical and physical fitness requirements shall take into account the risks and the tasks associated with the individuals assigned fire brigade duties.
(C) All Industrial Fire Brigade Members that are assigned fire suppression duties must be provided personal protective clothing and equipment as required to perform the duties.

1910.156 (e) (1.5) - “The employer shall provide at no cost to the employee and assure the use of protective clothing which complies with the requirements of this paragraph.”

NFPA 600, 4.3 - Protective clothing and protective equipment.

NFPA 600, 5.3 - Protective clothing and protective equipment.

Note: The employer must ensure that all protective equipment is properly maintained in a condition that will provide the rated protection when used as designed.

(D) All Industrial Fire Brigade Members must receive training and show proficiency in areas of responsibility before being assigned duties as outlined in (Proficiency Training guidelines listed in IV).

1910.156 (c) - “The employer shall provide training and education for all fire brigade members commensurate with those duties and functions that fire brigade members are expected to perform.”

NFPA 600 2-3.3 - “Fire brigade members shall not perform any duties for which they have not received training and education.”

(E) Each facility that has an industrial fire brigade must have a written fire brigade organizational statement.

1910.156 9 (b) (1) - “The employer shall prepare and maintain a statement of written policy which establishes the existence of a fire brigade.”

NFPA 600 2-4.1 (a) - “Fire brigade management shall be responsible for:

Establishing programs to accomplish the items identified in the fire brigade organizational statement.”

(F) All training that will be used for industrial fire brigade certification must be documented and show the following:

(1) Lesson Plans or Materials presented.

(2) Instructor’s name or name of facility providing training (A&M, Lamar, Reno, etc.).

(3) Date and time of classes

(4) Student’s names and signatures.

(5) Where classes were presented.
(6) Reference material used (i.e. IFSTA, NFPA, etc.)

(7) Signature of a qualified instructor or company representative.

(G) Where fire brigade training is contracted by an outside agency, the fire training coordinator must verify that the material and instructor complies with requirements listed in this document. Training must be accomplished by using a prepared lesson plan and must be approved by a company representative and the training coordinator.

Other employees or fire brigade members can also instruct fire brigade training sessions if they have experience and knowledge in the subject matter, and have been trained in methods of teaching.

The fire brigade training coordinator must oversee all fire brigade training and education programs to ensure quality and consistency of the training provided.

Each training agency must provide a system of testing that provides appropriate documentation of test results of their test methods. All training records must be maintained for a minimum of 5 years and must be available for inspection if requested.

(Instructor Qualifications) - 1910.156 (c) (1) - “…Fire brigade leaders and training instructors shall be provided with training and education which is more comprehensive than that provided to the general membership of the fire brigade.”

NFPA 600 2.-3.6 - A designated fire brigade Training Coordinator shall provide instructions to the fire brigade or shall verify the qualifications of other instructors providing training and education to fire brigade members.

IV. TRAINING PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION:

Each facility shall be responsible for:

• Developing a written fire brigade organizational statement - NFPA 600 2-4.1 (a), 1910.156 (b) (1).

• Evaluating the effectiveness of the industrial fire brigade training program - NFPA 600 2-3.8.

• A written procedure for implementation of an incident command system - 1910.156 (b) (1), NFPA 600 -2.2.1.

• Developing written standard operating procedures for site specific conditions and hazards - NFPA 600 -2-2.2.1. 1910.156 (c) (4).

• Determining baseline levels of proficiency, skills and knowledge of all fire brigade members, NFPA 600 2-3.14.2. (Each facility will be responsible for determining proficiency levels of the training provided).
• Developing testing methods to ensure baseline proficiency, skills, and knowledge are obtained. NFPA 600 2-1.1 (g).

• Documenting test results.

V. INCIDENT COMMAND:

(A) Training must be provided in the facility’s incident command system and each fire brigade member must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of each function listed in the incident command system. NFPA 600 2-2.1.

(B) Each fire brigade member must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of their duties and responsibilities as listed in the incident command system.

VI. FACILITY SPECIFIC INFORMATION:

(A) Training must be provided and each fire brigade member must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of those conditions and hazards that may be unique to the facility. NFPA 600 2-1.1 (h).

(B) Training must be provided and each fire brigade member must demonstrate knowledge of the facility’s emergency alarm system, emergency communication system, and emergency response techniques used by the facility. NFPA 600 2-4.7.

VII. CHEMISTRY OF FIRE AND FIRE BEHAVIOR:

Training must be provided and each fire brigade member must demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how a fire starts, how fires are extinguished, and how fire behaves under conditions that may be present in the facility. NFPA 600 2-3.10.

VIII. PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT:

(A) Training must be provided to address protective equipment as defined I 1910.156 (2). Training must be designed to cover the type of equipment used in the facility.

(B) Each fire brigade member must demonstrate and understand how to select protective equipment, understand the protection provided by each type of equipment, how to maintain and care for the protective equipment. NFPA 600, 2-3.2.

IX. FIRE HOSES AND NOZZLES:

(A) Where applicable training must be provided to explain:
• Basic reasons for selecting and using various sizes of attack or supply hoses.

• How to use fire hoses in offensive and defensive attack.

• Basic hose handling techniques.

• Basic hose nozzles and appliances.

• Basic nozzle flow characteristics.

(B) Each fire brigade member must demonstrate and understand how to select and use fire hose nozzles and appliances properly.

X. SELF-CONTAINED BREATHING APPARATUS (SCBA):

(A) Training must be provided to explain:

• How to don and doff an SCBA properly.

• The hazards of wearing an SCBA.

• How to maintain and care for an SCBA.

(B) Each fire brigade member must demonstrate the ability to function in their assigned duties wearing SCBA without risk to his/her self or to other team members. NFPA 600 4-3.2, NFPA 600 5-3.1 (f) (g).

XI. FIRE EXTINGUISHMENT:

(A) Where applicable, training must be provided to explain:

• Proper techniques using water spray to extinguish fires.

• Proper techniques using fire fighting foam to extinguish fires.

• Proper techniques using fixed water spray systems and fixed fire fighting foam apparatus to extinguish fires.

(B) Each fire brigade member must understand and demonstrate proficiency on how to properly apply water and use fire fighting foam to extinguish fires. NFPA 600, 2-3.2.

XII. HANDS-ON FIRE FIGHTING:

(A) Hands-on fire fighting must be provided to:
• Ensure that fire brigade members are aware of the hazards of industrial fire fighting.

• Ensure that each fire brigade member is aware of the protection and limitations of protective equipment.

• Ensure that each fire brigade member is aware of the effect of water spray and other extinguishing agents on different types of fires that might occur in the facility.

• Ensure that each fire brigade member is aware of the importance of teamwork.

(B) Each fire brigade member must demonstrate the ability to function in their assigned duties during live fire training. NFPA 600 (Definition, Training).

XIII. **REFRESHER TRAINING:**

The subject matter presented should be used as a building-block to improve the skills of all fire brigade members. Once mastered, this material does not have to be reviewed unless a fire brigade member is removed from active participation on the team for more than 12 consecutive months. In such cases, retraining and re-testing must be done as deemed necessary.