



**DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION
OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL
STATE FIRE TRAINING**

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Date: October 13, 2023

To: Statewide Training and Education Advisory Committee
State Board of Fire Services

From: Brandon Erickson, Staff Services Manager I

SUBJECT/AGENDA ACTION ITEM:

Incident Safety Awareness for Hired Vendors Course Diplomas

Recommended Actions:

Motion to Approve - Consent

Background Information:

State Fire Training (SFT) provides the Incident Safety Awareness for Hired Vendors (ISAHV) course for hired vendors working with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) or the United States Forest Service (USFS) who plan to engage in wildland fire suppression and other incident support activities. Upon completion of the course, students are provided with Interagency Emergency Equipment Operator Cards that are valid for one year, which allows them to participate in these incidents.

Analysis/Summary of Issue:

SFT issues electronic diplomas for all SFT courses except for ISAHV. SFT mails physical Interagency Emergency Equipment Operator Cards to the instructors of the ISAHV course in advance of the course date and the use of these physical cards creates certain challenges. The cards require staff time to prepare, mail, track, and receive unused cards. Additionally, vendors who lose their cards face paying a \$100 duplicate card fee. There have also been multiple cases where these cards have been counterfeited or forged and presented during an incident.

In July 2023, SFT launched a new course verification database to allow CAL FIRE and USFS personnel to verify the date a vendor completed their last ISAHV course and to determine an active or expired card status. The database does not replace the requirement of hired equipment operators to present the physical Interagency Emergency

Equipment Operator Cards when requested at an incident. Instead, this database is designed to help incident personnel verify ISAHV validity and status.

Beginning January 1, 2024, SFT will cease mailing out the physical cards to instructors and/or host agencies and instead transition to using digital course diplomas, which aligns the diploma issuance process for all other SFT courses. Students may log in to the SFT User Portal (Acadis) and print their course completion diploma at any time. Shifting to usage of the digital diplomas will eliminate the cost and staff time to mail physical cards.

SFT will post an Information Bulletin that discusses the ISAHV card issuance changes and will send an E-News to all ISAHV instructors before January 1, 2024.

Potential Agency Impacts:

CAL FIRE and USFS agencies utilizing the operator cards to verify the qualification of hired vendors (suppliers) to work at incidents will now use the course completion diplomas instead of the operator cards, as well as optionally look up and/or verify these diplomas using the online database. The ISAHV Course Verification Database may be printed for offline use to bring to an incident.

Agencies and instructors holding the ISAHV courses will no longer have to receive, track, and return equipment operator cards.