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

From: Andrew Henning, Assistant Deputy Director

SUBJECT/AGENDA ACTION ITEM:
National Accreditation Expansion

Recommended Actions:
Information/Discussion

Background Information:

IN 2016, State Fire Training (SFT) was accredited by Pro Board and International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC). SFT is accredited to the following levels: Fire Fighter 1, Fire Fighter 2, HazMat Awareness, HazMat Operations, and Wildland Fire Fighter 1. In October 2021, STEAC directed SFT staff to research and make recommendations on expanding the IFSAC and Pro Board accreditation of other California Fire Service Training and Education System (CFSTES) certification levels.

Analysis/Summary of Issue:

Per the guidance of STEAC, SFT evaluated the Company Officer, Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator Pump, Instructor 1, and Instructor 2 CFSTES tracks.

Certification History:

In 2014, the Company Officer Certification replaced the legacy SFT Fire Officer certification. Fire Officer retired in December 2016. We have data that demonstrates a steady increase in the number of Certifications since implementation.

The Driver/Operator Pump Certification track replaced the legacy SFT Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator I. The legacy courses can be used to meet the requirements of the new certification track, and therefore did not have a major retirement when SFT transitioned to the NFPA Professional Qualifications.

In 2014, Instructor 1 and Instructor 2 replaced the legacy SFT Training Instructor track. Training Instructor retired in December 2017. All new Registered Instructors were required to become a Certified Instructor 1 and Instructor 2 in January 2019. All new Registered Skill Evaluators were required to become a Certified Instructor 1 beginning July 2020. The changes to the registration requirements contributed to the increase in Certifications.

The table below shows the amount of Certifications issued for each level over the past four fiscal years.

Certification Issuance per Fiscal Year

| Track | FY2017 | FY2018 | FY2019 | FY2020 |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Company Officer | 11 | 45 | 76 | 99 |
| D/O Pump | 16 | 41 | 60 | 60 |
| Instructor 1 | 37 | 77 | 188 | 365 |
| Instructor 2 | 10 | 24 | 91 | 141 |

NFPA Assessment Types:

SFT must evaluate candidates using the following assessment methodology from NFPA 1000. Every NFPA job performance requirement (JPR) must be met with at least one of the following:

- Portfolio Assessment Methodology
 - An assessment methodology used to evaluate compliance with the JPRs or objectives of the appropriate standard by evaluating documentation of the candidate’s experience, training, and education.
- Process Assessment Methodology
 - Process Assessment Methodology is used to evaluate a candidate’s ability to use mental activity to perform a cognitive skill. An evaluator cannot directly observe this mental process. The trained evaluator grades the student in real-time, using identified scoring criteria such as a rubric which may facilitate inter-rater reliability by allowing the evaluator to differentiate consistently between different degrees of candidate performance. There may be more than one acceptable outcome.
- Product/Project Assessment Methodology
 - Product assessment methodology is used to evaluate a candidate’s ability to perform a cognitive skill that cannot be directly observed but is evaluated on how an individual completes the task outcome. An agency gives the student an assignment that requires the application of knowledge to yield a product. A trained evaluator scores this product after the student submits it. The product is graded using identified scoring criteria such as a rubric.
- Psychomotor Assessment Methodology
 - Psychomotor (skills) assessment methodology is used to evaluate a candidate’s ability to perform physical tasks using a real-time skills performance evaluation. Candidates are required to correctly perform the physical task/skill identified by the critical components of the JPR and are evaluated on their directly observed performance. Correct performance

outcome of the skill is normally indicated as part of the yes/no or pass/fail scoring checklist

- Cognitive Assessment Methodology
 - Cognitive written (knowledge) assessment methodology is used to evaluate a candidate's subject matter knowledge using a written test in which the candidate is required to provide specific answers to specific questions related to the JPRs of the standard/level to which the candidate is seeking certification. These responses are then securely scored in relation to the answer that has been determined to be correct through the local validation process.

Company Officer Certification

SFT's Company Officer is a combination of NFPA Fire Officer 1, Fire Officer 2, and Wildland Fire Officer 1 professional qualification levels.

Fire Officer 1 Testing Requirements from Other States

| State | Cognitive | Evaluation |
|----------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| Washington | 100 Questions | Psychomotor |
| Alabama | 100 Questions | Portfolio |
| Tennessee | 100 Questions | Project/Product |
| Illinois | 100 Questions | Psychomotor, Process, and Product |

Fire Officer 2 Testing Requirements from Other States

| State | Cognitive | Evaluation |
|----------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| Washington | 100 Questions | Psychomotor |
| Alabama | 50 Questions | Portfolio |
| Tennessee | 100 Questions | Project/Product |
| Illinois | 100 Questions | Psychomotor, Process, and Product |

Wildland Fire Officer 1

There are no Pro Board or IFSAC certifying agencies in North America that issue Wildland Fire Officer 1.

Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator Pump Apparatus Certification

SFT's Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator Pump Apparatus is NFPA's Apparatus Equipped with Fire Pump Professional Qualification levels. To obtain this certification, the candidate must also meet the general requirements of Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator.

Driver Operator Testing Requirements from Other States

| State | Cognitive | Evaluation |
|----------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Washington | 50 Questions | Psychomotor |
| Alabama* | N/A | N/A |
| Tennessee | 50 Questions | Psychomotor |
| Illinois | N/A | Psychomotor |

*Tested with Pumper

Pumper Testing Requirements from Other States

| State | Cognitive | Evaluation |
|----------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Washington | 50 Questions | Psychomotor |
| Alabama | 40 Questions | Skill |
| Tennessee | 50 Questions | Psychomotor |
| Illinois | 75 Questions | Psychomotor |

Instructor 1 Certification

The SFT Instructor 1 is based on NFPA's Fire and Emergency Services Instructor I Professional Qualifications.

Fire and Emergency Services Instructor I Testing Requirements from Other States

| State | Cognitive | Evaluation |
|----------------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Washington | 75 Questions | Psychomotor |
| Alabama | 100 Questions | Product/Project |
| Tennessee | 100 Questions | Psychomotor, Product |
| Illinois | 50 Questions | Psychomotor, Process |

Instructor 2 Certification

SFT's Instructor 2 is based on NFPA's Fire and Emergency Services Instructor II professional qualification.

Fire and Emergency Services Instructor II Testing Requirements from Other States

| State | Cognitive | Evaluation |
|----------------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Washington | 75 Questions | Portfolio |
| Alabama | 75 Questions | Project |
| Tennessee | 100 Questions | Product/Project |
| Illinois | 50 Questions | Psychomotor, Product |

Considerations:

The State Certification Examination could be delivered almost identically to the existing Fire Fighter 1 and 2 certification examination:

- Cognitive exams could be delivered electronically through Acadis. Exams would be hosted at ARTPs and ALAs.
- Portfolio, Project, Product/Project, and Psychomotor Assessment Methodologies would be evaluated by the ARTP and ALA using an SFT provided rubric/skill sheet(s).

The following is the workload to seek additional levels:

1. Form a cadre to determine the assessment methodology and create skill sheets or grading rubrics. This would be a one-week in-person cadre for each level.
2. Form a working group to perform local validation of cognitive test bank questions. This work would be done virtually, and the timeframe would vary per level.
3. Write policies and procedures for new assessment methodologies.
4. Seek STEAC/SBFS approval for the new levels
5. Seek IFSAC and Pro Board approval for the new level.
6. Implement new nationally accredited Certifications and State Certification Exams.

SFT requests input from STEAC on the following before implementing any additional levels:

1. Should the State Certification Exam replace the Certification Task Book?
2. Should the state certification exams be required for certification?
 - a. Option 1: Phase in exams similar to Fire Fighter 1 (i.e., over several years).
 - b. Option 2: Keep certification exams optional for an initial phase-in and reevaluate in 3-5 years.
3. SFT currently validates the cognitive exam questions to IFSTA and Jones and Bartlett textbooks for Fire Fighter 1 and 2. Validation of test questions to two independent books is time-consuming. Should SFT validate only one textbook for the new level(s)?

Recommendations

SFT Staff recommends that only one level of accreditation is implemented. Once successfully implemented, SFT can seek additional level(s). The following are the three potential options to expand national accreditation to other SFT certifications:

Option 1: Seek national accreditation for Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator Pump Apparatus Certification

Option 2: Seek national accreditation for Instructor 1 and Instructor 2 Certification

Option 2: Seek national accreditation for Company Officer Certification