

Fire Investigator (NFPA Fire Investigator)

Certification Task Book (2014)



California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Office of the State Fire Marshal
State Fire Training

Overview

Authority

This certification task book includes the certification training standards set forth in the Fire Investigator Certification Training Standards Guide (2017) which is based on NFPA 1033: Standard for Fire Investigator Professional Qualifications (2014).

Revised: February 2022

Published by: State Fire Training, PO Box 944246, Sacramento, CA 94244-2460

Cover photo courtesy of unknown.

Purpose

The State Fire Training certification task book is a performance-based document that identifies the minimum requirements necessary to perform the duties of that certification. Completion of a certification task book verifies that the candidate has the required experience, holds the required position, and has demonstrated the job performance requirements to obtain that certification.

Assumptions

With the exception of the Fire Fighter 1 and 2 certifications, a candidate may begin the task book initiation process upon completion of all required education components (courses).

Each job performance requirement (JPR) shall be evaluated after the candidate's fire chief initiates the task book.

An evaluator may verify satisfactory execution of a job performance requirement (JPR) through the following methods:

- First-hand observation
- Review of documentation that verifies prior satisfactory execution

State Fire Training task books do not count towards the NWCG task book limit. There is no limit to the number of State Fire Training task books a candidate may pursue at one time if the candidate meets the initiation requirements of each.

It is the candidate's responsibility to routinely check the State Fire Training website for updates to an initiated task book. Any State Fire Training issued update or addendum is required for task book completion.

A candidate must complete a task book within five years its initiation date. Otherwise, a candidate must initiate a new task books using the certification's current published version.

Roles and Responsibilities

Candidate

The candidate is the individual pursuing certification.

Initiation

The candidate shall:

1. Complete all **Initiation Requirements**.
 - Please print or type.
2. Obtain their fire chief's signature as approval to open the task book.
 - A candidate may not obtain evaluation signatures prior to the fire chief's initiation approval date.

Completion

The candidate shall:

1. Complete all **Job Performance Requirements**.
 - Ensure that an evaluator initials, signs, and dates each task to verify completion.
2. Complete all **Completion Requirements**.
3. Sign and date the candidate verification statement under **Review and Approval** with a handwritten signature.
4. Obtain their fire chief's handwritten (not stamped) signature on the fire chief verification section.
5. Create and retain a physical or high-resolution digital copy of the completed task book

Submission

The candidate shall:

1. Submit a copy (physical or digital) of the completed task book and any supporting documentation to State Fire Training.
 - See Submission and Review below.

A candidate should not submit a task book until he or she has completed all requirements and obtained all signatures. State Fire Training will reject and return an incomplete task book.

Evaluator

An evaluator is any individual who verifies that the candidate can satisfactorily execute a job performance requirement (JPR).

An evaluator may verify satisfactory execution through the following methods:

- First-hand observation
- Review of documentation that verifies prior satisfactory execution

A qualified evaluator is designated by the candidate's fire chief and holds an equivalent or higher-level certification. If no such evaluator is present, the fire chief shall designate an individual with more experience than the candidate and a demonstrated ability to execute the job performance requirements.

A task book evaluator may be, but is not required to be, a registered skills evaluator who oversees a State Fire Training certification exam.

A certification task book may have more than one evaluator.

All evaluators shall:

1. Complete a block on the **Signature Verification** page with a handwritten signature.
2. Review and understand the candidate's certification task book requirements and responsibilities.
3. Verify the candidate's successful completion of one or more job performance requirements through observation or review.
 - Do not evaluate any job performance requirement (JPR) until after the candidate's fire chief initiates the task book.
 - Sign all appropriate lines in the certification task book with a handwritten signature or approved digital signature (e.g. Docusign or Adobe Sign) to record demonstrated performance of tasks.

Fire Chief

The fire chief is the individual who initiates and then reviews and confirms the completion of a candidate's certification task book.

A fire chief may identify an authorized designee already on file with State Fire Training to fulfill any task book responsibilities assigned to the fire chief. (See *State Fire Training Procedures Manual*, 4.2.2: Authorized Signatories.)

Initiation

The fire chief shall:

1. Review and understand the candidate's certification task book requirements and responsibilities.
2. Verify that the candidate has met all **Initiation Requirements** prior to initiating the candidate's task book.

3. Open the candidate's task book by signing the **Fire Chief Approval** verification statement with a handwritten (not stamped) signature.
4. Designate qualified evaluators.

Completion

The fire chief shall:

1. Confirm that the candidate has obtained the appropriate signatures to verify successful completion of each job performance requirement.
 - Ensure that all **Job Performance Requirements** were evaluated after the initiation date.
2. Confirm that the candidate meets the **Completion Requirements**.
3. Sign and date the Fire Chief verification statement under **Review and Approval** with a handwritten signature.
 - If signing as an authorized designee, verify that your signature is on file with State Fire Training.

Submission and Review

A candidate should not submit a task book until he or she has completed all requirements and obtained all signatures. State Fire Training will reject and return an incomplete task book.

To submit a completed task book, please send the following to the address below:

- A copy of the completed task book (candidate may retain the original)
- All supporting documentation
- A completed SFT Fee Schedule
- Payment

State Fire Training
Attn: Certification
PO Box 944246
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460

State Fire Training reviews all submitted task books.

- If the task book is complete, State Fire Training will authorize the task book and retain a digital copy of the authorized task book in the candidate's State Fire Training file.
- If the task book is incomplete, State Fire Training will return the task book with a notification indicating what needs to be completed prior to resubmission.

Completion of this certification task book is one step in the certification process. Please refer to the *State Fire Training Procedures Manual* for the complete list of qualifications required for certification.

Initiation Requirements

The following requirements must be completed prior to initiating this task book.

Candidate Information

Name: _____

SFT ID Number: _____

Fire Agency: _____

Prerequisites

The candidate meets the following prerequisites. *Include only non-OSFM documentation to validate prerequisite requirements when you submit your task book.*

- Basic Electricity (CFITrainer.net)
- Ethics and the Fire Investigator (CFITrainer.net)
- Introduction to Evidence (CFITrainer.net)
- Motive, Means, and Opportunity: Determining Responsibility in an Arson Case (CFITrainer.net)
- Interview and Interrogation course #31445 (40 hours) (POST)
- PC 832 Arrest #80102 (40 hours) (POST). *The PC832 Arrest (40-hour) course must be completed within the last 3 years, prior to initiation of the Task Book.*
 - a. *Can be older than 3 years if currently employed as a Peace Officer. List agency, start, and end date below

Agency	Start Date	End Date

Education

The candidate has completed the following course(s).

- Fire Investigation 1A: Basic Fire Investigation
- Fire Investigation 1B: Evidence and Documentation
- Fire Investigation 1C: Preparation for Legal Proceedings

Fire Chief Approval

Candidate's Fire Chief (please print): _____

I, the undersigned, am the person authorized to verify the candidate's task book initiation requirements and to initiate State Fire Training task books. I hereby certify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California, that the completion of all requirements to open the task book documented herein are true in every respect. I understand that misstatements, omissions of material facts, or falsification of information or documents may be cause for rejection.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature Verification

The following individuals have the authority to verify portions of this certification task book using the signature recorded below.

Please print except for the Signature line where a handwritten signature is required. Please add additional signature pages as needed.

Name: _____
Job Title: _____
Organization: _____
Signature: _____

Name: _____
Job Title: _____
Organization: _____
Signature: _____

Name: _____
Job Title: _____
Organization: _____
Signature: _____

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Organization: _____
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Job Title: _____
Organization: _____
Signature: _____

Name: _____
Job Title: _____
Organization: _____
Signature: _____

Job Performance Requirements

The candidate must complete each job performance requirement (JPR) in accordance with the standards of the authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) or the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), whichever is more restrictive.

All JPRs must be completed within a California fire agency or Accredited Regional Training Program (ARTP).

For JPRs that are not part of a candidate's regular work assignment or are a rare event, the evaluator may develop a scenario or interview that supports the required task and evaluate the candidate to the stated standard.

Each JPR shall be evaluated after the candidate's fire chief initiates the task book.

Wildland Fire Investigation (FI-210 course completion is required prior to the completion of this JPR)

1. Investigate a wildland fire ensuring wildland fire investigation methods are used, evidence is collected and documented, and the laws, regulations, and related court procedures associated with administrative, civil, and criminal litigation processes are followed (OSFM) (CTS 7-1)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

Scene Examination

2. Secure the fire ground, given marking devices, sufficient personnel, and special tools and equipment, so that unauthorized persons can recognize the perimeters of the investigative scene and are kept from restricted areas and all evidence or potential evidence is protected from damage or destruction. (NFPA 4.2.1 / OSFM) (CTS 1-1)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

3. Conduct an exterior survey, given standard equipment and tools, so that evidence is identified and preserved, fire damage is interpreted, hazards are identified to avoid injuries, accessibility to the property is determined, and all potential means of ingress and egress are discovered. (NFPA 4.2.2 / OSFM) (CTS 1-2)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

4. Conduct an interior survey, given standard equipment and tools, so that areas of potential evidentiary value requiring further examination are identified and preserved, the evidentiary value of contents is determined, and hazards are identified in order to avoid injuries. (NFPA 4.2.3 / OSFM) (CTS 1-3)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

5. Interpret fire patterns, given standard equipment and tools and some structural or content remains, so that each individual pattern is evaluated with respect to the burning characteristics of the material involved and in context and relationship with all patterns observed and the mechanisms of heat transfer that led to the formation of the pattern. (NFPA 4.2.4 / OSFM) (CTS 1-4)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

6. Interpret and analyze fire patterns, given standard equipment and tools and some structural or content remains, so that fire development is determined, methods and effects of suppression are evaluated, false origin area patterns are recognized, and all areas of origin are correctly identified. (NFPA 4.2.5 / OSFM) (CTS 1-5)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

7. Examine and remove fire debris, given standard equipment and tools, so that all debris is checked for fire cause evidence, potential ignition source(s) is identified, and evidence is preserved without investigator-inflicted damage or contamination. (NFPA 4.2.6 / OSFM) (CTS 1-6)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

8. Reconstruct the area of origin, given standard and, if needed, special equipment and tools as well as sufficient personnel, so that all protected areas and fire patterns are identified and correlated to contents or structural remains, items potentially critical to cause determination and photo documentation are returned to their prefire location, and the area(s) or point(s) of origin is discovered. (NFPA 4.2.7 / OSFM) (CTS 1-7)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

9. Inspect the performance of building systems, including detection, suppression, HVAC, utilities, and building compartmentation, given standard and special equipment and tools, so that a determination can be made as to the need for expert resources, an operating system's impact on fire growth and spread is considered in identifying origin areas, defeated and/or failed systems are identified, and the system's potential as a fire cause is recognized. (NFPA 4.2.8 / OSFM) (CTS 1-8)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

10. Discriminate the effects of explosions from other types of damage, given standard equipment and tools, so that an explosion is identified and its evidence is preserved. (NFPA 4.2.9) (CTS 1-9)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

Scene Documentation

11. Diagram the scene, given standard tools and equipment, so that the scene is accurately represented and evidence, pertinent contents, significant patterns, and area(s) or point(s) of origin are identified. (NFPA 4.3.1 / OSFM) (CTS 2-1)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

12. Photographically document the scene, given standard tools and equipment, so that the scene is accurately depicted and the photographs support scene findings. (NFPA 4.3.2 / OSFM) (CTS 2-2)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

13. Construct investigative notes, given a fire scene, available documents (e.g., prefire plans and inspection reports), and interview information, so that the notes are accurate, provide further documentation of the scene, and represent complete documentation of the scene findings. (NFPA 4.3.3 / OSFM) (CTS 2-3)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

14. Utilize proper procedures for managing victims and fatalities, given a protocol and appropriate personnel, so that all evidence is discovered and preserved and the protocol procedures are followed. (NFPA 4.4.1 / OSFM) (CTS 3-1)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

15. Locate, document, collect, label, package, and store evidence, given standard or special tools and equipment and evidence collection materials, so that it is properly identified, preserved, collected, packaged, and stored for use in testing, legal, or other proceedings and examinations, ensuring cross contamination and investigator-inflicted damage to evidentiary items is avoided and the chain of custody is established. (NFPA 4.4.2 / OSFM) (CTS 3-2)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

16. Select evidence for analysis, given all information from the investigation, so that items for analysis support specific investigation needs. (NFPA 4.4.3 / OSFM) (CTS 3-3)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

17. Maintain a chain of custody, given standard investigative tools, marking tools, and evidence tags or logs, so that written documentation exists for each piece of evidence and evidence is secured. (NFPA 4.4.4 / OSFM) (CTS3-4)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

18. Dispose of evidence, given jurisdictional or agency regulations and file information, so that the disposal is timely, safely conducted, and in compliance with jurisdictional or agency requirements. (NFPA 4.4.5 / OSFM) (CTS 3-5)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

Interview

19. Develop an interview plan, given no special tools or equipment, so that the plan reflects a strategy to further determine the fire cause and affix responsibility and includes a relevant questioning strategy for each individual to be interviewed that promotes the efficient use of the investigator's time. (NFPA 4.5.1 / OSFM) (CTS 4-1)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

20. Conduct interviews, given incident information, so that pertinent information is obtained, follow-up questions are asked, responses to all questions are elicited, and the response to each question is documented accurately. (NFPA 4.5.2 / OSFM) (CTS 4-2)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

21. Evaluate interview information, given interview transcripts or notes and incident data, so that all interview data is individually analyzed and correlated with all other interviews, corroborative and conflictive information is documented, and new leads are developed. (NFPA 4.5.3) (CTS 4-3)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

Post Incident Investigation

22. Gather reports and records, given no special tools, equipment, or materials, so that all gathered documents are applicable to the investigation, complete, and authentic; the chain of custody is maintained; and the material is admissible in a legal proceeding. (NFPA 4.6.1 / OSFM) (CTS 5-1)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

23. Evaluate the investigative file, given all available file information, so that areas for further investigation are identified, the relationship between gathered documents and information is interpreted, and corroborative evidence and information discrepancies are discovered. (NFPA 4.6.2) (CTS 5-2)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

24. Coordinate expert resources, given the investigative file, reports, and documents, so that the expert's competencies are matched to the specific investigation needs, financial expenditures are justified, and utilization clearly furthers the investigative goals of determining cause or affixing responsibility. (NFPA / OSFM) (CTS 5-3)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

25. Establish evidence as to motive and/or opportunity, given an incendiary fire, so that the evidence is supported by documentation and meets the evidentiary requirements of the jurisdiction. (NFPA 4.6.4 / OSFM) (CTS 5-4)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

26. Formulate an opinion concerning origin, cause, or responsibility for the fire, given all investigative findings, so that the opinion regarding origin, cause, or responsibility for a fire is supported by the data, facts, records, reports, documents, and evidence. (NFPA 4.6.5) (CTS 5-5)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

Presentation

27. Prepare a written report, given investigative findings, documentation, and a specific audience, so that the report accurately reflects the investigative findings, is concise, expresses the investigator's opinion, contains facts and data that the investigator relies on in rendering an opinion, contains the reasoning of the investigator by which each opinion was reached, and meets the needs or requirements of the intended audience(s). (NFPA 4.7.1 / OSFM) (CTS 6-1)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

28. Express investigative findings verbally, given investigative findings, notes, a time allotment, and a specific audience, so that the information is accurate, the presentation is completed within the allotted time, and the presentation includes only need-to-know information for the intended audience. (NFPA 4.7.2) (CTS 6-2)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

29. Testify during a legal proceeding, given investigative findings, contents of reports, and consultation with legal counsel, so that all pertinent investigative information and evidence are presented clearly and accurately and the investigator's demeanor and attire are appropriate to the proceedings. (NFPA 4.7.3) (CTS 6-3)

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

Successful completion of one (1) of the following three (3) classes can meet this JPR (#29):

- CCAI course - Expert Witness Testimony

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

- IAAI course - Expert Witness Courtroom Testimony

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

- NFA course – Interview Interrogation Techniques and Courtroom Testimony or Fire Investigation: Case Preparation and Testimony

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date Verified: _____

Completion Requirements

The following requirements must be completed prior to submitting this task book.

Experience

The candidate meets the following experience requirements.

- Have a minimum of one year full-time paid or two years’ volunteer or part-time paid experience in a California fire department as a fire fighter with responsibility for origin cause determination while on duty **or** have a minimum of one year full-time paid or two years’ volunteer or part-time paid experience in a California law enforcement agency as a fire investigator for origin and cause determination

- Investigate 20 fires, 10 must be structure fires, as the primary investigator and develop complete fire investigation reports. **No investigations shall be accepted prior to the completion of Fire Investigation 1A (2017).**

#	Type of Fire	Incident/Report #	Date	Location	Evaluator Verification
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					

15					
16					
17					
18					
19					
20					

Position

The candidate meets the qualifications for this level of certification. The position requirement is met when the applicant fulfills the role of the specific duties as defined by the Fire Chief.

Supporting Documentation

The candidate meets the following supporting documentation requirements.

- FI-210 Wildland Fire Origin and Cause Determination (NWCG, CAL FIRE) (36 hours)

Include a copy of any supporting documents to validate supporting documentation requirements when you submit your task book.

Updates

The candidate has completed and enclosed all updates to this certification task book released by State Fire Training since its initial publication.

Number of enclosed updates: _____

Completion Timeframe

The candidate has completed all requirements documented in this certification task book within five years of its initiation date.

Initiation Date (see Fire Chief signature under **Initiation Requirements**): _____

Review and Approval

Candidate

Candidate (please print): _____

I, the undersigned, am the person applying for Fire Investigator certification. I hereby certify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California, that the completion of all requirements documented herein is true in every respect. I understand that misstatements, omissions of material facts, or falsification of information or documents may be cause for rejection or revocation.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Fire Chief

Candidate's Fire Chief (please print): _____

I, the undersigned, am the person authorized to verify the candidate's qualifications for Fire Investigator certification. I hereby certify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California, that the completion of all requirements documented herein are true in every respect. I understand that misstatements, omissions of material facts, or falsification of information or documents may be cause for rejection.

Signature: _____ Date: _____