



International Association of Arson Investigators

Fire Investigation Technician (IAAI-FIT)

Program Manual/Study Guide

**International Association of Arson Investigators
Program Manual
Fire Investigation Technician Professional Designation**

Program Description

The International Association of Arson Investigators, Fire Investigation Technician program (IAAI-FIT) is administered by the IAAI and is designed to verify an applicants level of fundamental knowledge as measured against various core job performance requirement (JPR) of established professional qualifications standards related to fire investigation. This measurement is not all inclusive of the incorporated professional standards sited but lays the foundation for measuring the holder's fundamental understanding of how to perform specific tasks related to fire scene investigation at an acceptable level.

Portions of the following professional qualifications standards core JPRs were considered when developing this professional designation:

NFPA 1021, Standard for Fire Officers Professional Qualifications, 2009 edition
Section 4.5 – Inspection and Investigation (Fire Officer I requirements)
Section 5.5 – Inspection and Investigation (Fire Officer II requirements)

NFPA 1033, Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigators, 2009 edition
Section 4.1 - General
Section 4.2 – Scene Examination
Section 4.3 – Documenting the Scene
Section 4.4 – Evidence Collection and Preservation
Section 4.5 – Interviews

NFPA 1037, Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Marshal, 2007 edition
Section 5.8 – Investigation

This program was designed at the direction of the Board of Directors of the IAAI and is in accordance with the objectives outlined in section 2 (D) of the IAAI constitution and bylaws related to the establishment of high professional standards of conduct among members.

It is the intent of this program to encourage continued educational and professional development through the recognition of an individual's accomplishment in reaching core abilities and competencies related to fire investigation.

Program Oversight

The IAAI-FIT program will be administered by the IAAI staff based on the policies and directives of the IAAI Board of Directors. The staff will measure an application against the program requirements as established by the IAAI Training and Education Committee and approved by the IAAI Board of Directors. Additionally, IAAI staff will facilitate and coordinate the administration of the comprehensive program examination to applicants that are deemed to have met the minimum established program requirements and will provide the appropriate credentials to those successfully challenging the examination. The comprehensive examination database will be maintained by the IAAI- Training and Education Committee with the assistance of necessary subject matter experts.

Application Fees

The application fees are determined by the Board of Directors who will set the initial application fee and renewal fee for IAAI members and non members. Application fees are not subject to refund. If an application is rejected based on lack of experience or training, the application will be held in abeyance until further documentation is submitted. If no further documentation is submitted within six months of request by the IAAI office, the application will be rejected and the individual will be required to reapply and remit a new application fee. If an application is rejected as a result of an individual failing to successfully challenge the comprehensive examination, they will be required to reapply and remit a new application fee.

Program Requirements

Applicants for this professional designation must provide documentation of meeting minimum program requirements including work experience; and training and education. Additionally, applicants must achieve a passing score on the comprehensive examination as established by the IAAI. An applicant does not have to be a member of the IAAI or any chapter to apply for this professional designation. The requirements of each area are outlined below.

Experience:

The applicant for this professional designation must have 18 months of general experience in a fire investigation related industry.

General experience is defined as practical experience which would allow an individual to develop fundamental knowledge and abilities related to fire scene investigation without the specific assignment of specialized duties or requirements. This general experience can usually be obtained through ancillary duties related to job responsibilities of Fire Officers and Suppression personnel, Insurance Adjusters and Investigators, Law Enforcement Investigators and Crime Scene Technicians and other fields that are directly involved with the investigation and documentation of fire events.

The applicant shall provide adequate documentation to support this experience such as employment records or a letter of certification from an employer.

Training and Education:

The applicant for this professional designation must document completion of a minimum of 44 hours of tested training. This minimum number of hours is a combination of several required training courses and a number of training hours generally related to the fire investigation profession. While it is not required that these general training hours be on any specific topic, it should be recognized that the training should be in such a nature as to provide the applicant with a sufficient knowledge base to successfully challenge the comprehensive exam that is a part of this program.

Required Training:

CFITrainer.net – Ethics Module (3 hours)

CFITrainer.net – Scientific Method Module (3 hours)

CFITrainer.net – Documenting the Event Module (4 hours)

CFITrainer.net – Fire and Explosives Investigations: Utilizing NFPA 1033 and 921 (4 hours)

General Training:

30 hours of tested training related to fire scene investigation

Substitutions or Alternatives:

Completion of a comprehensive fundamental fire investigation course consisting of at least 40 hours of training can be substituted for part of the required training and the entire general training requirement. All applicants will still be required to complete the CFITrainer.net Ethics Module (3 hours) and CFITrainer.net Fire and Explosives Investigations: Utilizing NFPA 1033 and 921 (4 hours). An example of a course that would meet this requirement would be the National Fire Academy Fire Investigation Course. Other courses submitted for consideration should include a comprehensive syllabus or training agenda for evaluation. All course substitutions will be considered for approval by the IAAI Training and Education Committee or their designee and will be submitted to the IAAI Board of Directors for ratification.

The applicant shall provide adequate documentation to support the completion of the required and general training hours through the submission of transcripts or training certificates issued by the training provider(s). Certificates and/or transcripts should clearly indicate that the course material was tested.

Comprehensive Examination:

Applicants that submit proper documentation to support their experience; and training and education will be scheduled for a comprehensive examination. This examination will be based on the core job performance requirements outlined above and will be developed from readily available authoritative text and treatises related to fire investigation. Applicants must achieve a minimum score of 75% to be deemed to have successfully challenged the exam. Applicants that do not meet the minimum score on their first test will be given one opportunity to remediate. If an applicant does not meet the minimum established score on the remedial examination, their application will be rejected. They will be allowed to reapply for this professional designation no sooner than six months from the date of the remedial exam and must submit a new application and appropriate application fees. A current list of text is contained in appendix A.

The test bank is developed and maintained by the IAAI Training and Education Committee. This test bank contains enough questions to provide for remedial examination, if necessary, where no question from the original exam will appear on subsequent examinations given to the same applicant.

Applicants challenging the comprehensive examination must obtain a score of 75% to pass this examination. An applicant that fails to achieve a passing score on their first attempt will be provided one opportunity to remediate. The remedial exam will cover the same subject matter but, will not contain the same questions as the first examination.

Renewal:

All holders of this professional designation will be required to renew their application every three years based on the date of initial approval or renewal. It is the holder's responsibility to remember their expiration date and to submit the required documentation in a timely fashion. Applicants applying for renewal of this professional designation must provide documentation of continued meeting of minimum program requirements, including an additional 18 months of general work experience during the preceding three years; and 48 hours of tested training and education accumulated during the preceding three years, as established by the IAAI Training and Education Committee and approved by the IAAI Board of Directors. Renewal applicants will not be required to re-challenge the comprehensive exam. If an individual allows this professional designation to lapse or expire, they must reapply for this program. Requests for exceptions based on extenuating circumstances must be submitted in writing for consideration by the IAAI Training and Education Committee who will make a recommendation to the by the Board of Directors for final action.

Applicants submitting a renewal application shall provide adequate documentation to support continued work experience and training and education requirement. Required training consists of 16 hours of tested training per year and a course transcript or certificate of training will be accepted as documentation.

Appeals:

Appeals regarding the rejection of an application or regarding any portion or question of the comprehensive examination should be directed, in writing, to the IAAI Training and Education Committee within 30 days. The IAAI Training and Education Committee will investigate any question presented and provide a written response to the applicant within a reasonable time. If the issue is not resolved to the satisfaction of the applicant, they can then appeal to the Board of Directors under the guidelines established under the Ethical Practices and Grievances Committee Standard Operating Procedures.

Appendix A

Recommended Reference Text for IAAI Fire Investigation Technician Exam

NFPA 921, 2008 Edition, Chapters 3,4,5,6,11,12,13,14,15,16,17 & 18

NFPA, (2008) *NFPA 921 Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations, 2008 Edition.*
Quincy, MA: NFPA

Kirk's Fire Investigation, 6th Edition, Chapters 2,3,4,5,6,7,14 (as it relates to evidence) & 17

DeHaan, J. D. (2007) *Kirk's Fire Investigation, 6th Edition.*
Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall

Forensic Fire Scene Reconstruction, Chapters 2, 3 & 4

Icove, D. J., & DeHaan, J. D. (2004) *Forensic Fire Scene Reconstruction*
Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall