



BC Fire Training Officers Association

HOT Weekend and
Conference Course
Descriptions and
Facilitator Bios



May 9 - May 14
Campbell River, BC



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JIBC AERIAL STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Friday, May 8 until AND Sunday, May 10
(2.5-days (Non-Accredited))

Course Description:

Through classroom instruction, demonstrations and hands-on training, this exciting course is designed to equip officers and operators with tactical and strategic knowledge relating to the use of aerial apparatus. The when, why, where and how will be explored through the following list of topics:

Positioning; Safety considerations; Communications; Water supply priorities; Strategies and tactics; Rescue operations and Elevated master stream operations. An inter-active mix of classroom discussion, video, tabletop challenge scenarios, along with practical water supply, elevated master stream & rescue exercises will ensure that participants leave with ?tactical tools in their tool box? for use at major incidents. This course is a must have for officers and operators of aerial apparatus. Prerequisite: Applicable class drivers licence (class 1, 3 or 5), with air brake endorsement.



WATER AT WORK

Saturday, May 9 AND Sunday, May 10

(2 day)

Course Description:

Water at Work is an engine company, focused training program built around the realities of modern fire attack and the measurable performance of water on the fireground. This class emphasizes the effective deployment and operation of handlines, specialty nozzles, and portable ground monitors, reinforcing the engine company's responsibility to deliver adequate flow, effective streams, and repeatable results at the point of attack. Students will break down the engine company attack package, from hose and nozzle selection to deployment methods and hose management, based on design intent, operating ranges, and system performance, not tradition or preference. The course builds strong foundational skills in line deployment and advancement, then expands into more complex environments, including low-rise and high-rise operations, where understanding flow capability, friction loss, and appliance impact is critical to delivering effective water to the fire.

Instruction is built on data, experience and concepts presented in the Elkhart Brass Brass Tacks Hard Facts series, focusing on observable outcomes and fact-based engine company decision-making.

Topics Will Include:

- Engine company attack packages built around the required fire flow
- Handline deployment, advancement, and hose management for consistent water delivery
- Specialty nozzles evaluated by design intent and performance characteristics
- Portable ground monitors as engine company force multipliers
- Low-rise and high-rise fire attack emphasizing performance
- Coordinating flow, pressure, staffing, and positioning to achieve measurable fire control

This course is designed for firefighters and officers seeking to move beyond rules of thumb and develop a clear, performance-based understanding of how water, nozzles, and streams control fire across a wide range of fireground environments.

Instructor Bio:

Colby Dodd Bio:

Colby Dodd is the owner of Northern HOT and a member of the Elkhart Brass instructional family. He has spent over a decade travelling the North American fire service, studying engine and truck company operations and best practices. A passionate, INTO THE JOB firefighter and published author with Fire Engineering, Colby delivers practical, performance-based training, backed by recognized studies and proven fire service strategies and tactics.

Jerry Herbst Bio:

Jerry is a 46-year veteran of the Fire Service and is a New York State certified Training Officer. He has been with Elkhart Brass since 2006 and is currently the Director of Municipal Markets and Training for Elkhart Brass. He travels Worldwide in support of Elkhart's field force and National account partners, providing subject matter expertise on the evaluation, development and implementation of equipment solutions for effective fire attack packages. Jerry has been published and referenced in industry-leading media and is active in instruction and support at many National Hands-on Training events.

Joey Cherpin Bio:

As a mission-oriented problem solver, Joey serves the Town of Edson, Alberta, as the Deputy Fire Chief, and owns and Operates Prairie Dog Fire Training Ltd. With fourteen years of experience across different departments, no experiences are wasted in his endless pursuit of "better".

AIRCRAFT AWARENESS FOR STRUCTURAL FIREFIGHTERS

**Saturday, May 9 OR Sunday, May 10
(1 day)**

Course Description:

The Aircraft Awareness for Structural Firefighters course is designed for personnel who may respond to airport and aircraft incidents but are not Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) trained. The program explains different parts of an airport and what firefighters can expect to occur there. It also explains basics of what is under the skin of the aircraft or helicopter, touching on structure, engine and fuel types, and systems understanding. Firefighter safety, access, rescue, and fire suppression considerations are emphasized. Critical systems are examined in greater detail, as well as actions to follow once the emergency is mitigated to preserve evidence for investigation. Firefighters are then given the opportunity to put their new knowledge to work with hands on scenarios using an actual crashed aircraft.

<https://www.airawaretraining.ca/>

Instructor Bio:

Warren Ruiters

Warren is a Pro Board certified firefighter, fire officer, incident safety officer and fire service instructor. He has 10 years experience as a paid on call firefighter and has responded to aircraft incidents as a firefighter and incident commander. He has been a pilot since 1996 and has flown multiple aircraft types from small bush planes to large airliners.

He has been teaching the Aircraft Awareness for Structural Firefighters course across Vancouver Island since 2019.

His goal is to help emergency crews build confidence responding to aircraft incidents.

Jorden has over 7 years experience as a firefighter, including responding to small aircraft emergencies. As Air Aware's patient, she brings the classroom components to life and provides learning support during scenarios. Her goal is for firefighters to feel comfortable with the training prop and enjoy learning new skills with their teammates.

SWIFT WATER RESCUE

Saturday, May 9 OR Sunday, May 10
(1 day)

Course Description:

This one day clinic will bring the participants into the swiftwater environment giving them some hands-on experience in. Site assessment, scene management , patient access and support. In the afternoon we will combine our session with the rope rescue clinic and do some water rope interface.

Equipment needed.

Dry suit, rescue PFD, water rescue helmet

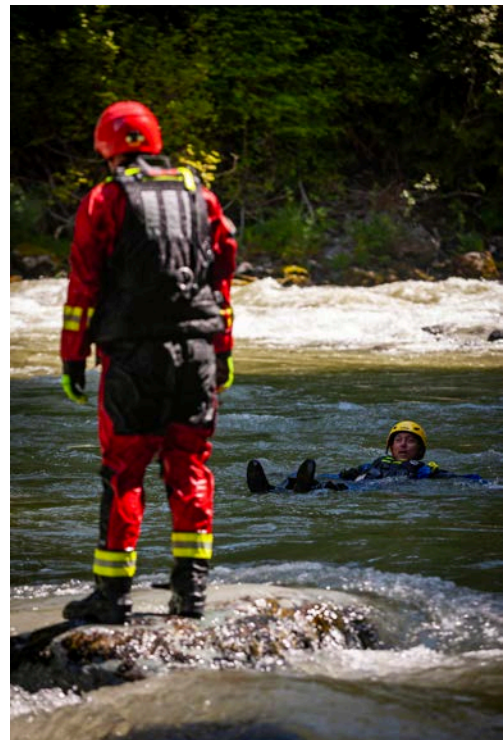
PPE will be available to participants that don't have.

10-12 students per session

Duration 8-10 hrs

Instructor Bio: :

Craig Gerrard has been in the technical rescue world for over two decades specializing in swift water rescue. Craig is the Rescue Curriculum Director for Raven RSM , with strong dedication to ensuring that the students/ clients we serve have the latest insights and knowledge in water rescue.



ROPE RESCUE

Saturday, May 9 OR Sunday, May 10

(1 day)

Course Description:

NFPA 1006-Low to Steep Rope Rescue -1 day/8 hours This course introduces students to embankment rescue and provides the foundation skills for students who would like to move into the rope rescue world. This course is designed to meet the job performance requirements found in NFPA 1006 Chapter 5, 2021 Edition. The course includes: NFPA Standards Ropes (knots, bends and hitches) Equipment familiarization Anchoring and rigging systems Patient packaging Simple mechanical advantage systems Low to steep embankment rescue scenarios The course consists of both classroom and field instruction. Students will be given a letter of participation in Rope Rescue Awareness and Low to Steep. This course is in conformance with NFPA 1006 & 1670 and meets and exceeds all WorkSafeBC Standards for Steep Slope Rescue

Instructor Bio:

John Dennis is presently a Founding Director of Dynamic Rescue Systems and serves as a consultant & Instructor. As a past owner of Dynamic Rescue, he was the Chief of Operations and responsible for all the company's training and standby operations. He continues to play a key role in the continued development of strategic relationships, ensuring flexibility in response to an increasingly demanding marketplace. Prior to Dynamic Rescue, John was the Assistant Chief of Operations for Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services and was involved in the development of most of the VFRS technical rescue programs in use today.. One of John's additional roles included representing the VFRS as Acting Task Force Leader or Operations Chief for Canada Task Force One. John presently sits on NFPA 1006, 2500, and NFPA 350 .

Ryan McMurray is a 20-year Firefighter / Captain with the District of North Vancouver Fire Rescue Services. He lives in Port Moody with wife and two sons. Ryan joined Dynamic Rescue Group in 2018, providing rope & water-based instructional training and consultation for Dynamics' Swiftwater Rescue, Still Water Rescue, Water & amp; Boat Safety, and Mud Rescue programs. He has taught Technical Rescue for his Fire Department for 15-years being an active contributor to the District Fire / Rescue Technical Rescue Instructor Group. "I enjoy collaboration and forward progress. Teaching and program development has brought the greatest satisfaction to my personal and professional career".



AUTO EXTRICATION SKILLS

Saturday, May 9 OR Sunday, May 10

(1 day)

Course Description:

This hands-on auto extrication course focuses on safe, effective patient access and removal using proven fundamentals. You'll build skills through repetition and realistic scenarios. The course covers vehicle stabilization, tool operations, glass management, and extrication techniques, with specific attention to hybrid and electric vehicle considerations.

Training Topics:

- Crew briefing and scene organization
- Scene size-up and hazard mitigation
- Fuel source and vehicle identification
- 360 size-up including inner and outer assessments
- Vehicle stabilization (on wheels, on side, on roof)
- Vehicle lifting using lift bags
- Pedestrian struck scenarios
- On wheels, side, and roof
- Glass management
- First responder entry and responsibilities
- Door removal
- Side removal
- Roof fold and full roof removal
- Dash displacement techniques (dash lift, dash roll, dash pull)
- Seat removal
- Steering wheel and pedal entrapment

Full Scenarios

- Vehicle on its side with patient removal
- Vehicle on its roof with patient removal

Training Outcome

- You leave with stronger fundamentals, better scene control, and increased confidence using your tools in high-stress environments.

Instructor Bio: :

Chris Chambers is an experienced rescue training instructor specializing in auto extrication, heavy rescue operations, and lifting and stabilizing. Chris is a Captain with the Oyster River Fire Department, where he has served as a volunteer since 2014. His operational background shapes every course and keeps the training practical and realistic. He is the owner and lead instructor at Eight Arm Fire Rescue Training and the lead instructor for KGC Fire Rescue. Chris is known for a relaxed, relatable teaching style that creates a focused learning environment. Crews can train hard, ask questions, and build skills without unnecessary pressure or complexity.

Training Approach

Chris believes effective rescue work is built through simple, repeatable training. His courses focus on:

- Mastering the tools already available within the organization
- Repetition to build muscle memory and confidence
- Crew and patient safety
- Decision-making that holds up under real-world stress

Advanced techniques are introduced only when they add clear operational value.

Areas of Instruction

- Auto extrication
- Lifting and stabilizing
- Heavy rescue operations
- Complex rescue scenarios
- Alternative fuel and electric vehicle considerations
- Equipment-specific operations

MASTERING THE EDGE

Saturday, May 9 OR Sunday, May 10

(1 day)

Course Description:

Artificial High Directionals for Rope Rescue, Ronin Rescue

This one-day workshop is designed to introduce Artificial High Directional (AHD) devices, including the Arizona Vortex, Eyolf Pythagoras, or SMC Terradaptor. Participants will be exposed to a variety of possible configurations with these devices, including equilateral tripod, easel leg tripod, bipod, A frame, and monopod configurations. The focus of the workshop will be practical applications of an AHD for mitigating low edge transitions, confined space rescue, and elevating tracklines. Pros and cons of the differing configurations as well as guying and rigging techniques will be covered. The objective at the end of the workshop is to give participants the confidence and skills necessary to securely and efficiently use an Artificial High Directional device to facilitate rescue.

Going “on rope” is not a requirement for participation in this workshop.

Personal Equipment:

- Helmet
- Gloves
- Environmentally suitable clothing, this will be an outdoor class
- Hydration
- Notebook

Harnesses, PPE, and rescue equipment will be provided. You may use your own suitable harness and PPE

Instructor Bio::

Kevin Ristau is the Chief Instructor for Ronin Safety & Rescue Inc., which is a leading provider of Rope Rescue and Confined Space Rescue services and training in Canada. Ronin provides Rope Rescue, Tower Rescue, and Confined Space Rescue Instruction to NFPA and WSBC/CSABC THARRP standards. Ronin is also an EMCR Wildland SAR Rope Rescue Provider. Kevin has been an instructor in Rope Rescue, Confined Space Rescue, Fall Protection, and Search and Rescue since Ronin’s inception over fifteen years ago. He has regularly attended and presented at the International Technical Rescue Symposium.

Kevin is a Captain in the Surrey Fire Service, assigned to the Technical Rescue Team where he has been an instructor since 2009. Surrey Fire Services TRT responds to High Angle, Confined Space, Trench, and Water incidents. Previously he was a member of the Hazardous Materials Response Team and a Hazmat instructor, including taking part in the Canadian Advanced CBRNE program. Kevin also volunteers with Coquitlam Search and Rescue, where he serves as a Rope Rescue Team Leader, Organized Avalanche Response Team Leader, Swiftwater Rescue Technician, and Helicopter Longline and Hoist Technician.



PARATECH WORKSHOP

Saturday AM OR Saturday PM
(2 x ½ day sessions)

Course Description:

This half day workshop will provide a foundational understanding of Paratech struts and their application in various stabilization and lifting techniques. Learn the principals of Paratech struts and how to use the same equipment in various applications such as vehicle stabilization, structural stabilization, and bi-pods/tri-pods. PFS is the only training company in BC accredited by Paratech to deliver training on their equipment.

Instructor Bio::

Eric Grootendorst

As the director of PFS, Eric has delivered heavy rescue courses including structural collapse and trench rescue around western Canada and the Yukon. Eric spent 17 years with Vancouver Fire Special Operations and Canada Task Force 1 HUSAR. For 5 years Eric oversaw the operations and training of CANTF1 as the Captain of Operations. Eric started instructing technical rescue in 2011 for the JIBC and worked for several schools and companies before starting PFS in 2021. Eric (and PFS) now focus on delivering heavy rescue and USAR courses including structural collapse, trench rescue, heavy lift/rescue, and incident management. PFS works with Paratech to deliver accredited training such as Paratech Universities around Western Canada. Eric now calls the Okanagan home where he serves as the Assistant Chief of Training for the Kelowna Fire Department.

LNG LIVE FIRE

Saturday AM or Saturday PM

(2 x ½ day sessions)

Course Description:

Is LNG being used or transported in your area, or just interested in what LNG actually is? Come find out what to do if called to an LNG Tanker MVI. Event is all outdoors, with a Tabletop demo followed by two live LNG fire training scenarios.

Instructor Bios :

Tony Goncalves, LNG Advisor, FortisBC

Ray Kroll, JIBC Instructor, FortisBC LNG SCA Manager (retired)



PROFESSIONAL RESPONDER INSTRUCTOR RECERTIFICATION

Sunday, May 10

1 Day

Course Description:

The Canadian Red Cross Professional Responder Instructor Recertification course is designed for current Professional Responder Instructors, including those teaching First Responder and Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) programs, who wish to maintain their certification. This 6-hour course reviews updates to program content, reinforces instructional techniques, and provides hands-on practice in teaching and assessment skills. Participants also have the opportunity to share experiences and strategies with other instructors, ensuring their knowledge and teaching practices remain current with Canadian Red Cross standards. Successful completion of the recertification maintains the instructor's qualification for three years and requires that participants have an active Professional Responder Instructor certification and recent teaching experience in the relevant disciplines.

Instructor Bio::

Jenn Dawkins brings extensive experience and a deep commitment to firefighter training and education to the BC Fire Training Officers Conference. She has 28 years of fire service experience beginning as a Volunteer in Maple Ridge BC and currently serving as a Captain in the Vancouver Fire Rescue Services. Jenn has worked in several portfolios within the VFRS training division, including the Officer Development Program, Heavy Rescue and the EMS division. She holds Fire Officer 3 and 4 certifications, a certificate in Emergency Management and holds Executive Chief Fire Officer (ECFO) Aspire accreditation with the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs.

As a sessional instructor at the Justice Institute of British Columbia (JIBC), Jenn teaches several Fire Officer courses, as well as Fire Service Instructor 1 and 2, sharing her expertise with firefighters across the province and Canada. Her instructional experience also extends through her work with the Canadian Red Cross, where she serves as an Instructor Trainer, leading First Responder and Emergency Medical Responder Instructor courses.

Jenn's teaching is enhanced by her experience with the Resilient Minds program, as well as her role as an international instructor for Fire Rescue International Training Association (FRITA). She also serves as President of Fire Service Women British Columbia and is a founding director of Camp Ignite, a program dedicated to inspiring young women to explore firefighting careers.

Known for her engaging and thoughtful approach, Jenn is excited to share her knowledge and insights with her peers at this year's conference, fostering a collaborative environment for all training officers.

BIG BOX FIRES - BIG PROBLEMS

Tuesday AM OR Tuesday PM

(Two half days)

Course Description:

Did you know that, statistically speaking, we are 4X more likely to be killed in a commercial fire than in a residential fire? Have you heard that 41% of all maydays are called in commercial structures, yet only about 15% of our fires occur in these buildings? Were you aware that very few departments have a commercial fire SOP/SOG even though lack of policies or failure to follow existing policies is a reoccurring theme of FF LOOD? Did you realize that the underlying cause of the majority of LOOD is firefighters taking residential tactics, strategies, and mentality into a commercial building?

Big Box, Big Problem will examine the following:

- Classifications of commercial buildings
- The difference between residential and commercial buildings
- Developing and refining large commercial situational awareness
- Tactical considerations for operating in large commercial buildings
- A review of several near misses and LODDs in commercial buildings

The content for this class comes from not only my own personal experience, but also input from several fire service professionals, authors, and instructors from across the United States. My goal is to ensure that the students fully understand the dangers of operating on these high-consequence-low frequency fires and adjust their tactics accordingly.

Instructor Bio::

Clark Lamping is a 28-year veteran and a 17 year Captain and with the Clark County (NV) Fire Department. In his career, he has spent 17 years working on Las Vegas Blvd. He currently holds a Master's degree in Crisis and Emergency Management and a Bachelors degree in psychology- both from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, (UNLV). He is a rescue squad officer with Nevada Task Force 1 with multiple deployments. He is a classroom and a HOT instructor for several conferences in the US, Canada, and Europe. He is the host of the Bill Gustin Engine Company Operations Humpday Hangout of the Fire Engineering website and sits on the advisory board for FDIC.

CONFINED SPACE ROCOGNITION FOR THE FIRST DUE COMPANY

Tuesday AM OR Wednesday AM
(Two half days)

Course Description:

This course provides firefighters with the knowledge and decision-making skills required for the initial response to confined space incidents. Emphasis is placed on scene size-up, hazard recognition, and responder safety during the critical early stages of an event. Students will review confined space definitions, common hazards (atmospheric, mechanical, engulfment, and configuration), and applicable regulations and standards.

Firefighters will learn to identify when an incident involves a confined space, establish scene control, prevent additional victim and responder entry, and initiate appropriate isolation, monitoring, and ventilation strategies. The course reinforces the fire department's role in non-entry operations, coordination with technical rescue resources, and integration with site personnel and other responding agencies.

Through classroom discussion and scenario-based examples, students will develop the ability to make safe, informed decisions that prioritize life safety, reduce risk, and ensure an effective transition to specialized confined space rescue teams when required.

Instructor Bio::

John Kenyon – Dynamic Rescue Group of Companies

Retired from the Port Coquitlam Fire and Emergency Services after 32 years of service, 12 of which as a Chief Officer, and with over 20 years in program and instructional development in the technical rescue disciplines John brings substantial experience in the understanding of emergency operations and how to achieve the ability to deploy.

As co-owner of Dynamic Rescue Systems Inc, a high angle and confined space rescue training and service provider, John instructs to industry, fire service, mining and municipal agencies and continues to work with companies and municipalities in development of their confined space and technical rescue programs.

John has been involved with numerous fire service training manuals, IFSTA Search and Rescue, IFSTA Essentials V, and most recently, a technical committee member on the “CSA Z-1006, “Standard for the Management of Work in Confined Spaces”.

A charismatic instructor, John brings his many years of operational experience to ensure that the fire departments he trains are prepared and deployable in the event of an incident in their community. Many fire departments and rescue teams are using these proven techniques already and continue to do so.



RAIL 101

Tuesday AM OR Thursday AM
(Two half days)

Course Description:

Railway 101 is an essential awareness course for any first responder who has a railway in their community. This course will discuss railway networks, safety around tracks, Hazardous Materials transported by rail, railway vessels specifically tank cars and railway response assets/methodology.

Instructor Bio::

Evan Foley, BSc, is a highly skilled hazardous materials specialist and emergency management professional with a strong foundation in chemical sciences. After earning his Bachelor of Science in Chemistry from the University of the Fraser Valley, Evan began his career in 2013 with an emergency hazmat services team, where he gained extensive hands-on experience responding to industrial incidents involving all nine classes of Dangerous Goods across North America.

In January 2023, Evan transitioned to his current role as the Emergency Management and Hazmat Officer for British Columbia with Canadian Pacific Kansas City (CPKC) Railway. In this position, he provides expert guidance and on-scene support during incidents involving Dangerous Goods, collaborates with external agencies, and plays a key role in enhancing rail safety and emergency preparedness across the province. Evan also leads training for contractor partners and First Responders in rail emergency response, while advancing corporate initiatives focused on risk reduction and operational resilience.



INCIDENT ACTION PLANNING FOR MODERN FIRES

Tuesday AM & Wednesday AM
(One half day)



Course Description:

Strategies & Tactics for modern building fires

Modern fire environments pose unprecedented challenges, driven by factors such as engineered lightweight construction, synthetic fuel loads, elevated heat release rates, and increasingly toxic combustion byproducts. These factors contribute to firegrounds that are significantly more hazardous to both firefighters and civilians.

To navigate these risks effectively, today's fire officer needs to determine strategic goals and tactical objectives using "intellectual aggression" and advanced risk management principals.

The core priorities remain unchanged: life safety, incident stabilization and fire control.

Using command boards and tactical frameworks, participants will engage in scenario-based action planning exercises to develop IAPs with appropriate strategies, deployment sequences and tactics.

Relevant standards and regulations will be discussed, including WorkSafe BC, NFPA, ULC, NIST, and the British Columbia Structure Firefighter Minimum Training Standards.

Additional topics include: fire dynamics, flow path management, smoke reading, ventilation, toxicity and occupant survivability.

Intended Audience:

- Experienced firefighters, company officers, safety officers, and incident commanders seeking to enhance their understanding of fireground incident action planning and strategies and tactics.

Instructor Bio:

Steve Wright has dedicated over 36 years to the fire service, continually advancing his expertise and leadership. After retiring as Deputy Fire Chief from Port Coquitlam Fire & Emergency Services, he joined the B.C. Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General – Office of the Fire Commissioner, serving as a Fire Services Advisor until his retirement in 2025.

Since 2008, Steve has been the principal consultant at Wright & Associates, an emergency services and public safety firm operating across Canada, North and South America, and the Middle East. Throughout his career, Steve has contributed to the broader fire service as a researcher, author, and consultant. His work spans training delivery, program coordination, instructional design, and curriculum development.

He has collaborated with numerous organizations, including:

- VIERA
- Champions Fire College
- B.C. Wildfire Service
- First Nations' Emergency Services Society (FNESS)
- FireWorks Consulting
- Justice Institute of British Columbia (JIBC)

Steve holds a Fire Officer Certificate from the JIBC and a Diploma in Fire Service Leadership and Public Administration. He is a Certified Canadian Fire Investigator (CCFI-C) and has earned both the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) and Executive Chief Fire Officer (ECFO) designations from the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs.

INCIDENT ACTION PLANNING FOR MODERN FIRES

Tuesday AM & Wednesday AM
(One half day)

Continued Bios:

Instructor Bio:

Scott Philip brings over four decades of dedicated service to the fire industry. He served with Delta Fire & Rescue Services, retiring at the rank of Captain and Acting Battalion Chief. During his tenure, he also held the role of Acting Training Officer within the Delta Fire/Rescue Training Division and led the development of the department's Hazardous Materials Program as its Lead Instructor.

Since 2005, Scott has instructed for a wide range of organizations across Canada, including VIERA, the Justice Institute of British Columbia, Transport Canada, the Capital Regional District Hazmat Team, Ronin Rescue, and various private contracting and consulting firms. As a recognized Subject Matter Expert, Scott contributed to numerous provincial and federal emergency response exercises, including preparations for the 2010 Olympic Games.

Scott has played a key role in curriculum development and instruction for Fire Officer Emergency Scene Management and Incident Safety Officer programs, delivering training to fire departments nationwide.

Scott presented previously at the BCFTOA Conference in 2019. His instructional expertise spans multiple areas including:

- Hazmat Technician and Operations
- CBRNE Basic Level Course Conductor
- First Responder Instruction
- "Train the Trainer" for Alternate Fuel Vehicles
- BC Ferries LNG Practical Training Instructor and Safety Officer



DARE TO COMMAND

Tuesday AM OR Thursday AM
(Two half days)

Course Description:

Designed for junior officers and those aspiring to step into leadership roles, this immersive program strengthens your confidence and competence in incident command. Through a blend of tabletop scenarios and dynamic virtual simulations, participants will work through multiple incident types to practice, refine, and apply command strategies in a realistic, supportive learning environment.

This session emphasizes the development of rational, adaptable decision-makers who can assess and manage risk effectively, select and implement appropriate strategies and tactics, and—most importantly—clearly articulate the why behind their decisions. By the end of the program, you will leave with enhanced situational awareness, strengthened command presence, and a deeper understanding of the principles that guide sound operational leadership.

Instructor Bios::

Katherine Lamb

Dr Katherine Lamb is a respected authority on the training and assessment of Incident Command and crisis decision-making. Katherine worked as an accomplished research academic before joining the UK Fire Service in 2004.

In 2015, Katherine developed Effective Command, a behavioural marking system for recording incident command competence, which is used throughout the UK. Following a Keynote presentation at the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs AGM in 2022, the O AFC deemed Effective Command the preferred tool for incident command training in Ontario. Katherine is currently working with over 60 FDs in Ontario, Manitoba, Quebec & Alberta regarding its roll out.

Debra Rogers

Debra is an Acting Captain and Fire Investigator with the Campbell River Fire Rescue. She started her fire service career as a fire dispatcher at CRFD in 2009 and transitioned to firefighter in 2017 at the age of 47, becoming the first professional female in the CRFD suppression division.

Debra has served roles in her Union Local and proudly worked with the BCPFFA Women's Advisory Committee to bring forth important recommendations. She currently serves as the Project Manager for Fire Service Women BC and formerly served on the Board of Directors with Camp Ignite as the Communications & Correspondence Coordinator from 2019-2021 after volunteering starting in 2018.

THE NEW GENERATION OF THE RECRUIT

Tuesday PM OR Wednesday AM
(Two half days)

Course Description:

Need Description

Instructor Bio

Derek is a Captain/Paramedic with a large lower mainland fire department. His career began with the Chemainus Fire Department as a junior firefighter at 16 years old which began his passion for fire-based pre-hospital care. As the owner of Firemedix along with his partner Katrina, they assist over 100 fire departments with his EMA licensing approved First Responder and EMR program and is the official First Responder trainer for the Vancouver Canucks. Derek and Firemedix created his own NFPA 1001 program that includes FF1/FF2/Hazmat Awareness and ops. Since 2016 Firemedix has help 242 men and women achieve that dream. Firemedix truly stands by the statement “Training by Firefighters for Firefighters!”

THE AI ADVANTAGE: BOOSTING FIRE SERVICE TRAINING PROGRAMS

Tuesday PM
(One half day)

Course Description:

This session gives training officers a practical, no-nonsense introduction to using Artificial Intelligence to plan and produce high-quality fire service training. Participants will learn what AI and large language models are, how they can support lesson planning, scenario design, skills checklists, and PowerPoint development, and how to write effective prompts that respect context, policy, and audience. We will walk through live demonstrations that show how AI can align training with Office of the Fire Commissioner requirements and department SOGs while saving significant preparation time. Benefits, risks, and governance considerations will be addressed directly, with clear guidance on how to use AI responsibly in a fire service environment. Attendees will leave with practical tools, example prompts, and the confidence to use AI as a force multiplier for their existing expertise, not a replacement for it.

Instructor Bio::

Ryan Sinden is a long-serving firefighter and paramedic with broad experience across emergency services in British Columbia. He has spent nearly two decades in the fire service and ambulance service, responding on the front lines while also taking on instructional and leadership responsibilities. His background includes service as a clinical educator with BC Emergency Health Services, where he supported paramedics in developing clinical competence and confidence in an evolving pre-hospital environment. Ryan also teaches at the Justice Institute of British Columbia, helping develop the next generation of emergency responders through applied education grounded in operational realities.

Alongside his primary roles, Ryan has worked extensively as a technical rescue instructor in disciplines such as rope rescue, confined space, and other specialized environments, supporting both fire departments and private industry teams. He is passionate about practical training that connects policy, human factors, and hands-on skill development so that responders can perform at their best when it matters. Ryan approaches instruction with a strong belief in lifelong learning, aiming to share useful tools he employs in his own teaching. His goal in this session is simple: help training officers save time, strengthen their programs, align with existing guidelines and standards, and use emerging tools like AI in a way that is responsible, effective, and firmly rooted in the culture of the fire service.

LITHIUM BATTERY AWARENESS

Tuesday PM OR Thursday AM
(Two Half Days)

Course Description:

Lithium-Ion Batteries are prevalent in today's world and the fire service is being faced with many challenging situations caused by these batteries . This class will offer awareness to the potential dangers fire fighters are exposed to when dealing with these events , how to handle batteries -post event and how the chemical make up of the batteries could affect fire fighter health and PPE .

Instructor Bio:

Assistant Training Officer Bryan Nykilchuk

Assistant Training Officer -Kelowna Fire Department . 20 years on the floor , leaving the floor as a lieutenant and moving into the training branch as an assistant training officer in March of 2025.Married for 23 years and have a 21 year old son .

FROM SLIDES TO SKILLS: CREATING AND DELIVERING EFFECTIVE PRESENTATIONS FOR FIRE SERVICE TRAINING

Wednesday AM

Course Description:

This session guides Fire Training Officers and Instructors through the complete process of building and delivering impactful presentations. Learn how to structure content, design slides for clarity and engagement, and choose the right presentation platforms and tools. Gain practical techniques for delivering your material with confidence, keeping learners engaged, and ensuring your message is understood and retained. Walk away ready to create presentations that are both professional and operationally effective

Instructor Bio:

Jenn Dawkins brings extensive experience and a deep commitment to firefighter training and education to the BC Fire Training Officers Conference. She has 28 years of fire service experience beginning as a Volunteer in Maple Ridge BC and currently serving as a Captain in the Vancouver Fire Rescue Services. Jenn has worked in several portfolios within the VFRS training division, including the Officer Development Program, Heavy Rescue and the EMS division. She holds Fire Officer 3 and 4 certifications, a certificate in Emergency Management and holds Executive Chief Fire Officer (ECFO) Aspire accreditation with the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs.

As a sessional instructor at the Justice Institute of British Columbia (JIBC), Jenn teaches several Fire Officer courses, as well as Fire Service Instructor 1 and 2, sharing her expertise with firefighters across the province and Canada. Her instructional experience also extends through her work with the Canadian Red Cross, where she serves as an Instructor Trainer, leading First Responder and Emergency Medical Responder Instructor courses.

Jenn's teaching is enhanced by her experience with the Resilient Minds program, as well as her role as an international instructor for Fire Rescue International Training Association (FRITA). She also serves as President of Fire Service Women British Columbia and is a founding director of Camp Ignite, a program dedicated to inspiring young women to explore firefighting careers.

Known for her engaging and thoughtful approach, Jenn is excited to share her knowledge and insights with her peers at this year's conference, fostering a collaborative environment for all training officers.

SO YOU'RE THE NEW TRAINING OFFICER

Wednesday PM
(One half day)

Course Description:

This introductory course is designed to support newly appointed Fire Training Officers as they transition into their role and responsibilities. The program provides a practical overview of the Training Officer function within British Columbia fire departments, with emphasis on governance, compliance, and effective program development. Participants will review applicable provincial legislation, relevant NFPA standards, and best practices for training documentation and record keeping. The course also addresses training needs analysis, scheduling, and coordination within volunteer, composite, and career departments. Emphasis is placed on developing an organized, sustainable approach to training, equipping new Training Officers with essential tools, resources, and strategies to confidently manage training programs and support operational readiness.

Instructor Bio:

Dan Golob is a senior fire service leader with over three decades of experience in municipal and volunteer fire departments across British Columbia. He has served in progressive roles including Fire Chief, Deputy Chief, and Fire Training Officer, with extensive responsibility for firefighter development, operational readiness, and organizational leadership. Dan has led training programs for volunteer, composite, and career departments, with a strong focus on competency-based training, policy alignment, and officer development. His experience bridges frontline operations and administration, providing new Training Officers with practical, real-world guidance on building effective, compliant, and sustainable training programs.

Drew Sinclair began his fire service in 2003 as a volunteer, advancing as an Officer and Training Officer and in 2009 becoming Regional Deputy Chief and Fire Chief and was responsible for the implementation of Regional Training Programs to meet Provincial Standards. Developing and delivering programs and lessons based on risk assessment, community requirement, compliance and capability, core skills & requisite knowledge, operational service, contingency and progression to volunteer and composite departments as well as instructing for the COTR Fire Academy since 2016. Drew has been involved with the BCFTOA since 2010 as a Zone Rep and now as Association Secretary and also served as a Paramedic with BCEHS from 2005-2016.



COGNITIVE PRINING AND RAPID ASSESSMENT

Tuesday PM OR Wednesday PM
(Two half days)

Course Description:

Using the tenants of Deliberate Practice, attendees will leave with an understanding of how to create training systems built to increase cognitive function and competency under duress. An example model featuring skills for making Rapid Assessments of Residential Structure Layouts will be used in real time, providing a attendees with a practical skill to bring back to their organization, while serving as a template on how to integrate the framework of Deliberate Practice for other topics.

Instructor Bio::

Gareth Lockhart has spent over 15 years in the fire service as a firefighter and company level officer. He has graduate level education in Disaster and Emergency Management, with complementary academics in Local Government Leadership and Fire Officer. His passions lay in Fire Ground Operations, where he serves as his department's committee chair. When not involved in Fire Service related ventures, Gareth devotes his time to his two children and wife, often exploring various parts of the Province and engaged in youth sports

DEEP DIVE LEARNINGS FROM LA AND MAUI WILDFIRES

Wednesday AM OR Wednesday PM
(Two half days)

Course Description:

The 2025 LA wildfires and the 2023 Lahaina Fire resulted in major urban conflagrations and unprecedented losses. UL Research Institutes' Fire Safety Research Institute independent analyses identified critical aspects of the prevention, preparedness and response systems that should be addressed by geographical areas prone to wind-driven wildfire with a nearby built environment. This course will also touch on the latest research and training opportunities in wildland urban interface fire suppression and prevention.

Instructor Bios:

Derek Alkonis is a Senior Research Program Manager with Fire Safety Research Institute (FSRI), at UL Research Institutes. He manages the implementation of organizational initiatives related to firefighter health and safety and spearheads efforts in addressing wildland urban interface fire challenges, a priority expansion area for FSRI research. Prior to joining FSRI, Derek served 31 years with the Los Angeles County Fire Department, most recently as Assistant Fire Chief of the Air and Wildland Division. During his tenure with LACoFD, he responded to WUI fires throughout the state during the busiest wildfire seasons in California's recorded history. As LACoFD's Director of Training, he developed and implemented innovative programs supporting fire ground tactics, survival, and fire fighter health. Derek was FSRI's Maui Wildfire Comprehensive Review and Analysis Team Leader and is currently leading the Southern California Fires Comprehensive Review and Analysis Team. Derek earned a bachelor's degree from the University of California San Diego where he also played on the baseball team.

Elizabeth Pickett has been a Co-Executive Director at Hawai'i Wildfire Management Organization since 2008, leads wildfire mitigation efforts in Hawai'i and the Pacific. She emphasizes collaboration, coordination, and inclusivity for wildfire readiness. Additionally, she serves as Vice President of the Big Island Wildfire Coordinating Group and co-founded the Pacific Fire Exchange project. Elizabeth holds a Master of Environmental Science from Yale and a Bachelor's Degree from UC Berkeley. Beyond work, she enjoys kitesurfing, painting, and family time with her son, Laith.

PROVINCIAL TRAINING APPROACH

Tuesday AM OR Wednesday AM
(Two half days)

Course Description:

Please join the Fire & Safety Division (FSD) in this informative presentation on how best to maximize and stretch your training dollars scheduling ProBoard & IFSAC accredited and certified training for your department members. The presentation focuses on our “provincial approach” strategy in delivering professional training throughout all BCFTOA Zones.

The following topics will be covered:

- Vision Statement
- Overview of Fire & Safety Division
- Partnerships & Provider Agreements
- Burn Building Recognition & Sign Off Process to deliver FSD courses.
- Cost Savings-Tuition vs Contract Training- (cohorts)
- JIBC Instructor cadre (local instructors per zone)
- Mobile Live Fire Trailer and the delivery of firefighting training

At the end of the session, participants will be better informed on the ways to access JIBC training while knowing how best to maximize the training budget for their department.

TRAINING OFFICER FOR DEFENSE

Wednesday PM

(1 x ½ day)

Course Description:

The important role of our Training Officers in ensuring sound command and control with effective strategies and tactics.

The number of lawsuits involving fire departments is dramatically increasing each year. No longer are we seen as the hardworking civil servant firefighters who are assumed to have “done their best” to manage/mitigate someone else’s bad day. It wasn’t that long ago that our efforts and actions were never questioned but today we are expected to prove that we have met or exceeded the duty of care that is expected by the public -- and their insurance companies. While the public may be reluctant to criticize us, rest assured there is no hesitation from insurers when there is money on the table.

When a community, and its fire department, is sued for essentially not doing the job well enough, the defense often rests on our actions; thus, the nature of our training and how that training provided is evidenced on the scene. Civil, and potentially criminal liability, could also affect senior officers, incident commanders and training officers.

Based on recent legal actions across Canada, this presentation will focus on how the standard of care relates to training standards and what lawyers look for when they attempt to sue, or to defend, our fireground activities.

While everyone says they understand Emergency Incident Management, this presentation will frame our Incident Action Plans (IAPs) and Command processes against a framework of their vulnerabilities. We will focus on the mandate of Training Officers and their fiduciary-like responsibilities to ensure their members are prepared to exercise and demonstrate a reasonable standard of care in managing and mitigating fire-involved structures.

Instructor Bios

Wayne has 46 years experience in the fire service, retired from Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services after a 31-year career serving in fire suppression as Lieutenant, Captain, and Battalion Chief. He also worked extensively with Vancouver Fire’s training division as an Instructor, Training Officer, and Division Chief.

Based on his work in both roles he has extensive experience in fire rescue emergency operations, specialty teams, training and development, facilitation, and project creation and management.

He is passionate about building superior expertise amongst the fire service as a whole and fire officers/command officers in particular; a hands-on fire and rescue practitioner, an experienced trainer and facilitator, he pursues his goals with energy and determination.

Wayne has participated in many fire service reviews and master plans for both career and volunteer/POC departments, along with those for several regional districts. In addition to these fire service reviews, he is also often retained to assist in the legal defence of numerous fire departments in regard to lawsuits filed arising out of actions taken at specific incidents; thus, gaining significant insight into the nature of the fire officer and team leaders actual actions taken on the fire ground, and the issues brought forward challenging these actions.

With this insight, and many years of experience, he has developed numerous in-house Firefighter and Fire Officer Development seminars and programs for various career and volunteer/POC fire departments throughout the province, enhancing the skills of officers and firefighters in municipal and rural areas with customized, locally delivered training and education. These seminars and programs are designed to meet the requirements of the BC Structural Firefighters Training Standard, along with those of other associated NFPA Standards, and where required, for Pro Board accredited certification processes as well.

The focus of these programs and seminars is on the understanding and application of the ICS as an effective incident management process; it’s various functions/roles, the integration of risk management, fire behaviour, strategic & tactical knowledge, along with appropriate decision-making for effective tactical operations, thus ensuring we deliver a reasonable standard of care.

In addition to the many career and POC/volunteer departments throughout BC, Wayne and his team of a dozen experienced fire officers have developed and delivered emergency incident management and strategies & tactics training.

ADVANCED FIREGROUND SAFETY

Thursday AM
(One half day)

Course Description:

Firefighter Exposure Management

This advanced program provides fire service professionals with the critical knowledge and operational skills required to assess and manage complex fireground safety challenges.

Emphasis is placed on understanding the toxicological hazards of modern fire environments, evaluating occupant survivability, and mitigating firefighter exposure risks.

Participants will learn to integrate air monitoring techniques, interpret gas detection data and apply evidence-based strategies for on-scene decontamination and post-incident exposure reduction. Through interactive discussions and case studies this program reinforces critical decision making principals that prioritize both civilian and firefighter life safety in increasingly hazardous environments.

By the end of this program participants will be able to:

- Identify and analyze toxicological threats encountered on the fireground.
- Assess occupant survivability using fire behavior and environmental data.
- Implement firefighter exposure reduction protocols and decontamination procedures.
- Apply advanced, intellectual risk management strategies to improve operational safety and health outcomes.

Intended Audience:

Experienced firefighters, company officers, safety officers, and incident commanders seeking to elevate their expertise in fireground health and safety management.

Instructor Bio:

Please see Incident Action Planning for Modern Fires for Bios on page 16 & 17 for Steve Wright and Scott Philip.