

CFFT News is here

Welcome to this the first issue of what it is intended will be a regular newsletter that will support and strengthen communication between all members of the CFFT user group and other interested parties.

It is our intention that these will be used to inform you of current and new initiatives within the compartment firefighting field, and their respective progress.

We envisage the newsletter will be an opportunity for interested parties to share good practise, ideas and development within the CFFT arena; this will help us all to achieve safe, effective and consistent standards of compartment firefighting training.

CFFT organisational chart

Below is the structure of the group and it is intended that this will be reflected via a CFFT webpage directly linked to the CFOA website. I am currently working on achieving that, have sought and had agreed initial permission to use that site and will report its progress at the next main group meeting in October. In brief the Strategy Group will communicate with the CFOA HR Director and FRS Vocational Standards Group as well as providing an essential link to the other groups by overseeing development and implementation of CFFT Group work programmes and other necessary work.

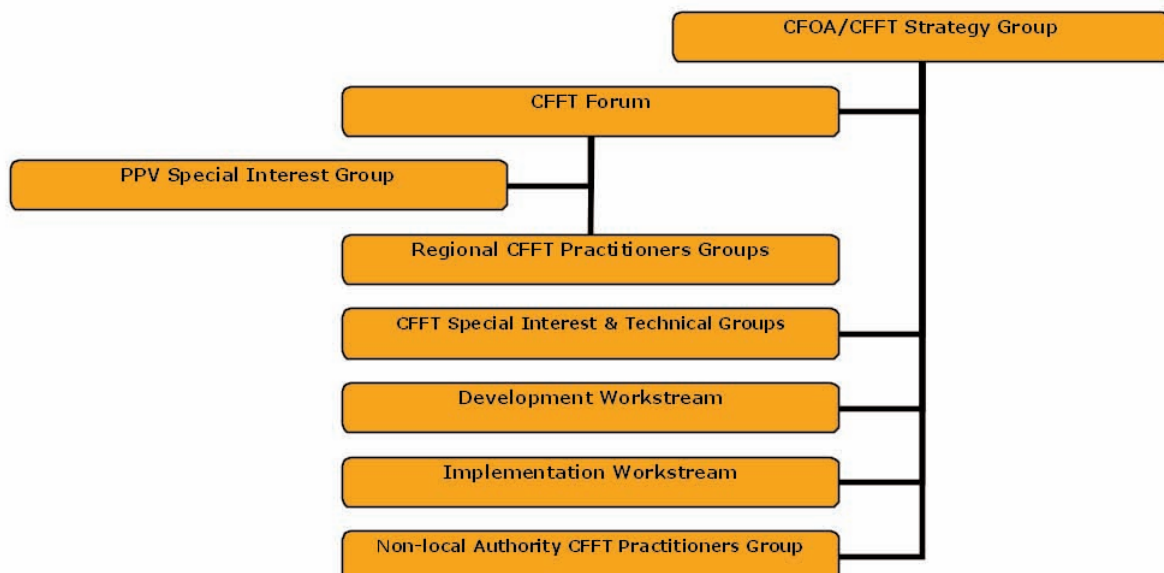
Current Workstreams

Compartment Fire Behaviour Trainer BTEC Level 3 Award

'In order to equip firefighters with the knowledge and skills necessary to deal with compartment fires safely and effectively, it is essential that they engage in realistic training, involving 'live' fires.

The live fire training environment is inherently hazardous and a key control in the management of risk to students in this environment is trainer competence. A strong business case therefore exists to establish a formal, accredited course for compartment firefighting trainers. The BTEC qualification is intended to meet this need'.

Following a huge amount of work from a task and finish group led by John Taylor and Paul Cross, Edexcel are about to issue the final approval document that will enable training providers to offer this qualification. In addition practitioners will be able to achieve recognition of their knowledge and understanding in the subjects. ▶



This is a big step forward in ensuring that compartment fire-fighting training is delivered to a safe and consistent standard which supports the Groups overall objective.

Structure

Unit 1: This unit provides the knowledge and understanding necessary for a Compartment Fire Fighting Trainer (CFFT) to deliver theoretical training covering the fundamentals of Fire Behaviour and the development of a fire within a compartment.

Unit 2: The aim of this unit is to enable learners to apply their knowledge and understanding of compartment fire behaviour to practical firefighting procedures, so they are familiar with them when they are teaching others.

Unit 3: The aim of this optional specialist unit (PPV) is to enable Compartment Fire Fighting Trainers to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills to underpin firefighting procedures. It will support a safer working environment for Firefighters during the various stages of fire development, which may be encountered upon the incident ground.

Further information available from: stephen.richards@london-fire.gov.uk

Fire Service Manual Volume 4 – Guidance & Compliance Framework for Compartment Fire Behaviour Training

It has now been recognised and accepted for some time that whilst the Manual remains a useful reference document, in order to reflect changes and developments within the field of CFFT and the Fire Service in general, that the contents require review and updating.

It has also been acknowledged during this review that the structure of the existing Manual should be evaluated to ensure that it satisfies the requirements of users from a strategic and training delivery perspective and recognises the importance of implementing effective Monitoring, Audit & Review processes.

Our vision is that the new document will establish a standard for Compartment Fire Fighting Training providers to ensure safe facilities and systems of work, in order to provide some control to the high risk nature of the training environment, whilst allowing sufficient flexibility for training to be designed to meet identified organisational needs.

Much of this work has already been done, a progress report will be provided to the CFFT Group meeting in October '07. It is hoped that shortly after this the consultation process can begin. In the meantime if you have any comments regarding the document please forward them to lee.drawbridge@london-fire.gov.uk

Health Monitoring Policy

Work on the above subject is nearing conclusion. Recently the recommendations of the task and finish group led by John Sherrington was circulated via the Group Secretary to all user group members for consultation. Feedback for the working

group should be directed to John as soon as possible, as it is hoped that the document will be approved at the October user group meeting.

Contact: john.sherrington@essex-fire.gov.uk

Regional report

It is intended that this section will be used to report on regional group meetings. I will request a report from a different region for each newsletter issue.

To start us off I am pleased to welcome Barry Alderslade who recently hosted an inaugural meeting for a group of practitioners and interested parties representing the South East Region. Barry a Station Manager at Gatwick Airport Fire Service kindly provided the following report and will be attending the main group meeting in October.

SE Region Hot Fire Working Group – 29th June 2007

Hosted by BAA Gatwick Airport Fire Service

Attendees: West Sussex, East Sussex, Hampshire, London Surrey & Kent FRS, Gatwick BAA AFS, Mike Barnsley Longlyf Timber Co, Graham Leney Transitional Fire.

Update on guidance & compliance framework document

by Lee Drawbridge LFB

Some of group felt that document guidance should be more prescriptive. Lee explained reasons why it was felt that this would not help some practitioners.

National standard health monitoring proposal was regarded generally as being a step in the right direction.

Mike Barnsley of Longlyf Timber delivered a very good presentation on the benefits of using recycled timber products for RFT work, many of the reasons were surrounding Environmental impact of continual logging practises in other parts of the World. Main advantage of the recycled pellets shown was they contain none of the glues and resins found in Stirling board and other timbers commonly used in RFT environments. The result is a cheap, clean, efficient burn, this type of fuel is being used in Schools and other businesses to generate heat and hot water in solid fuel burners. There was some thought from the group that this type of burn may not produce the conditions necessary to simulate Flashover etc. Further tests would have to be carried out to confirm results.

CFFT student refresher training

Frequency was discussed, the group felt that with no laid down recommendation for student refresher work a proposal should be asked of the main group to consider this as most present felt that direction from that group would have more impact for practitioners to refer to.

FBTI refresher training

Much the same as above, East Sussex rule of thumb is all FBT Instructors must attend at least two out of four annual FBT meetings to avail themselves of current and new practises etc. ►

Fire Behaviour Training Facilities – Graham Leney of Transitional Fire gave a presentation on his company's FBT rigs.

He spoke about the limitations of LPG rigs, this resulted in some discussion and it was concluded that LPG has a place in RFT but should always be supported with some form of carbonaceous training.

Graham spoke about an alternative smoke scrubber system for application where emissions are a particular issue. He hoped this would be available by the end of this year.

Grahams input included a tour of the multi trainer FBT facilities at Gatwick that he built based on a design by Devon FRS, Transitional Fire and Gatwick. The group felt that this type of unit lent itself to further developing training, particularly PPV.

New developments include a 'hot door' which will simulate some Backdraught signs and symptoms.

It was suggested that some FBT rig manufacturers be invited to represent the industry on the main user group forum, this would ensure products were being developed to meet the needs of the users.

Graham also talked about maintaining RFT rigs and stated that scheduled maintenance and inspections should be factored into any training targets.

CFFT/BTEC Award

Steve Richards gave brief update on progress of this qualification and informed group that they could get further information either from him or the Edexcel website.

Accident reporting/trends/red skin events

It was obvious that most service providers have different policies covering what and how events are reported.

Hampshire do not report red skin events, others keep a red skin event book which is separate from normal safety event reporting systems. Cooling buckets were discussed and agreed a very definite aid to rapid cooling. Main problem seemed to be ill fitting PPE. What was clear that was what constituted a reportable safety event was very confusing between service providers.

Instructor/Student Health Monitoring

Again there were apparent differences between practitioner groups. East Sussex demonstrated new telemetry equipment that monitors stats of students i.e. pulse and temperature. Many of the attendees wanted further information on this system.

It was mentioned that best temperature monitoring equipment available for students/trainers without having internally fitted probes was tympanic ear thermometers.

It was felt that with more 'third party' training occurring and lowering of fitness levels generally more robust health monitoring was required.

Level of Instructor PPE

Ice vests were talked about and it was generally felt that these offered little or no real benefit.

Some in attendance felt that Instructors should be afforded better protection than students, others felt that Instructors should be able to feel what the students are and act accordingly.

Some discussion was had with regard additional layering of under garments for training events, again some felt that this would not be available for operational calls and did not allow accurate experiential learning.

Tactical Ventilation

Gary Lovejoy spoke about Tac Vent training, this was well received, however it was generally felt that this particular equipment and tactic is not very well used in some Fire Rescue Services due to lack of training particularly for offensive mode practise.

CFFT award may raise awareness of this training tactic?

AOB

Kent FRS showed group French made 'Leader' firefighting branches which they stated operate very well, even under high pressures!

Generally the group felt that RFT should be more standardised, and that this could be better achieved if it was approached via Region rather than individual services.

Specialist Article

This section is intended to be made available for anyone working either directly in or support of CFFT practitioners, and will cover a range of subjects including tactics, equipment, support service information and articles of special interest.

Please contact me stephen.richards@london-fire.gov.uk for further information.

Smoke Burns – get your copy now

John Taylor – Specialist Advisor to the CFFT Forum has recently completed writing a book called 'Smoke Burns', which explains why and how smoke burns, the importance of controlling 'air flows' at fires and new search and rescue SOPs relating to these theories.

To reserve your copy of the book visit: www.smokeburns.com

This independent website also enables fire-fighters to apply their 'size-up' and deployment skills on actual case histories.

Please feel free to contact JohnTaylor@smokeburns.com for further information.