

Texas Commission on Fire Protection

Overview and Update



Texas Fire Marshals' Conference
October, 2014

Tim Rutland

MISSION

Protect the lives and property of the citizens of Texas from fire, and promote the safety of those serving in fire protection.

TCFP Authority

- Statutory Authority:
Chapter 419, Texas Government Code
- Rules found in:
Title 37, Part 13, Texas Administrative Code



- Standards Manual
- Curriculum Manual
- Curriculum Skills
- Texas Gov't Code Chapter 419 (PDF)

Home - commission news and notes

[September 10, 2014](#)

Notice to individual certificate holders

The commission recently mailed [postcard reminders](#) to all individuals *who maintain their own certifications* regarding the renewal period for 2015. Commission certificates expire on October 31 each year. However, if you **recently** applied for and received your initial certification, your certificate may not expire until October 2015.

To check your certificate's expiration date:

- Login to [iFido](#)
- Click the "My status" tab
- Click on "My current status"

If you have any questions about when your certificate expires, please call the commission's certification section at (512) 936-3829.

[August 12, 2014](#)

Update on ISO certification

It has come to our attention that the reference book listed in the commission's Incident Safety Officer curriculum (*Certification Curriculum Manual, [Chapter 10](#)*), *Fire Department Incident Safety Officer*, 2nd ed., 2007, by David Dodson, is no longer being printed and is available only in very limited quantities. If your training facility intends to submit a course approval request for Incident Safety Officer, please note the limited availability of this required reference.

COMMISSION: Appointed by Governor

419.004, Texas Gov't Code

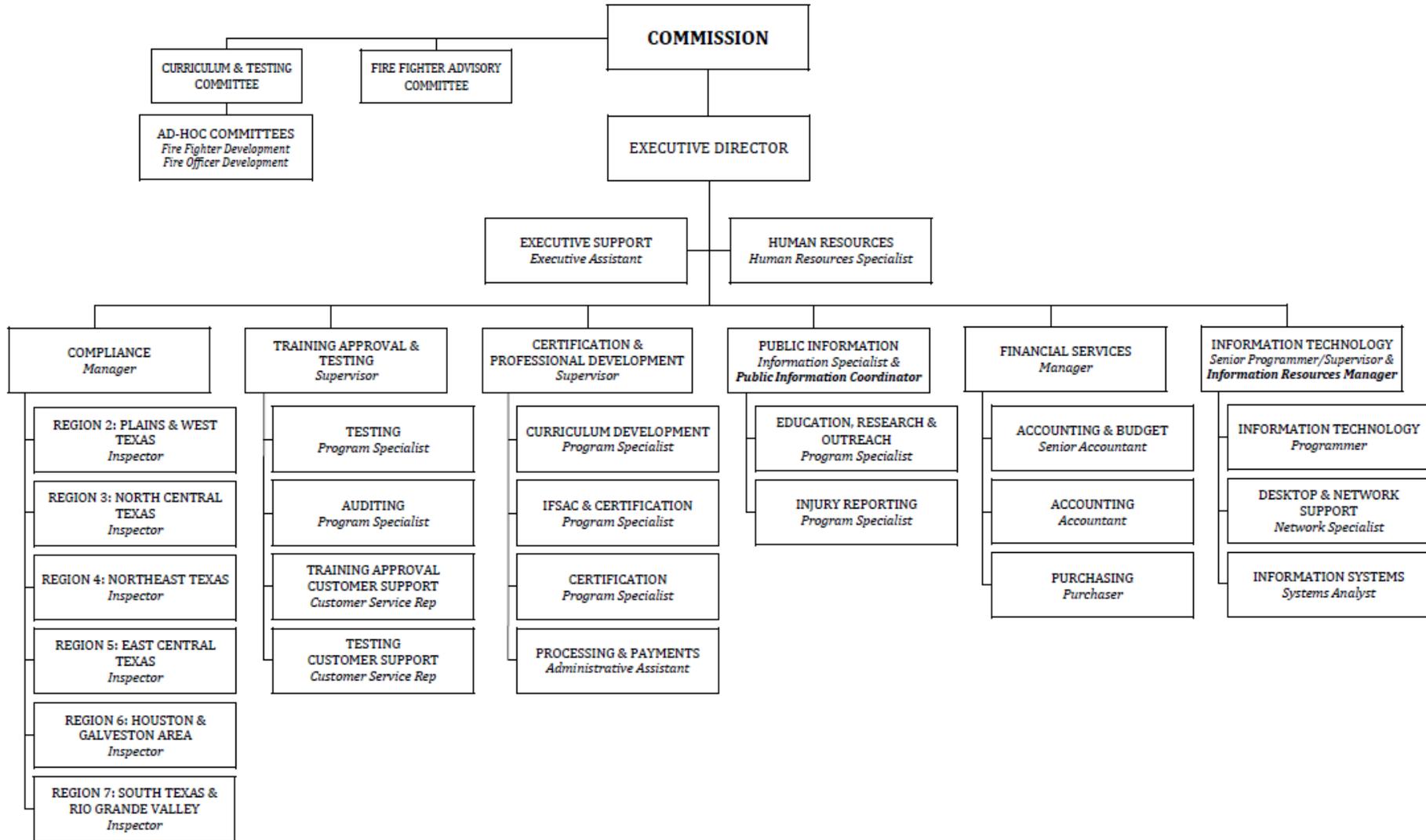
- 2 Chief Officers – TFCA
- 2 Firefighters – TSAFF
- 2 Volunteer Firefighters – SFFMA
- 1 certified F P Engineer
- 1 certified Arson Investigator or Inspector
- 1 Fire Instructor from inst. of higher ed
- 4 Public Members – not affiliated

FF Advisory Committee

419.023, Texas Gov't Code

- Appointed by Commissioners – 9 members
- Six active or retired fire protection personnel
- Three TCFP-certified instructors
- One member must be volunteer ff or chief
- Responsible reviewing/commenting on rule adoptions, amendments, changes, etc
- Review and comment required prior to adoption by commissioners

Texas Commission on Fire Protection



What we do.....

GOALS

● **Two major goals:**

- Provide educational materials and assistance to the fire service and public
- Develop and enforce statewide fire service standards

Education & Assistance.....

- ◎ Ernest A Emerson Library
 - 2,000 audio visual resources
 - 2,400 print resources
 - A/V resources can be checked out
 - Print resources available at library
 - Resources available to ANYONE

Education & Assistance.....

Curriculum and Testing Committee

- ⦿ Currently 10 members
- ⦿ Charged with creation and upkeep of all curricula & tests developed
- ⦿ Appoints ad hoc committees for specific disciplines
 - Current/recent committees:
 - Structural FP
 - Investigator
 - Hazmat
 - Head of Department

Education & Assistance.....

- ◎ Approved (certified) Training Providers
 - About 250 throughout the state
 - May be:
 - Fire departments
 - Fire marshals' offices
 - Community colleges (with a few high schools)
 - Government agencies
 - Private businesses
 - Onsite provider, distance provider, or both
 - Certified in many disciplines, or only a few

Enforce Statewide FS Standards.....

- ◎ Develop credentials/requirements for personnel
 - Certifications – 14 disciplines, 39 levels
 - Continuing education
- ◎ Perform inspections of regulated entities
 - Fire departments – city and county
 - Fire marshal offices
 - Other municipal departments
 - ESD's
 - Law enforcement offices
 - Training facilities

Rule Adoption Process

- Where do recommendations come from??
- Additions, revisions, deletions drafted by staff
- Presented to Advisory Committee
 - May be revised in meeting
- Presented to Commissioners, 1st time
 - May be accepted as is, revised, tabled, refused, sent back, etc.
- Published for Comment (website or Tex Register)
- Presented to Commissioners, 2nd time
 - Revised if necessary, tabled, refused, adopted
- Effective 20 days following receipt at Texas Register

*Questions about what
we do?*

UPDATES.....

What the # \$ @ % have the you guys been doing for the past year?

Annual Injury Report

- ◎ Forwarded to State Fire Marshal
- ◎ Interesting findings:
 - 4,051 reported injuries
 - EMS operations had the most: 1,116
 - Over 38% of injuries from non-emergency activities: station duties, fire prevention, wellness/fitness, skills training
 - 956 lost-time injuries, total of 28,643 calendar days

TEEX ProBoard

TEEX ProBoard

- ⦿ A long road to get here
- ⦿ Rules adopted in January Comm. meeting
 - Effective March 2, 2014
- ⦿ TEEX ProBoard ONLY!
- ⦿ Followed a review of TEEX program
- ⦿ TEEX subject to reviews

TEEX ProBoard, cont'd.

- ◎ No TCFP exam required for:
 - Basic Structure (must incl. FFI, FFII, Aw, Ops)
 - Basic ARFF
 - Driver/Operator: Pumper
 - Fire Officer I, II, III, IV
 - Basic Inspector (must include Insp1, Insp2, PE)
 - Instructor I, II, III
 - Hazmat Technician
 - Hazmat Incident Commander

TEEX ProBoard, cont'd

- ⦿ Must be the listed edition of NFPA standard or later
- ⦿ TEEX certificate must display:
 - ProBoard
 - TCFP course approval number
 - That exam was conducted in English
 - Any special accommodations provided

Head of Department Certification

Head of Department

- ◎ New rule proposal timeline/status
 - Ad hoc committee selected last year
 - Advisory Committee: June 26th – approved, forwarded
 - Commission: Aug 7th – publish, but have Adv. Comm. address particular items again
 - Advisory Committee: Sept 25th, discussed, clarified, recommended without changes
 - Commission: Oct 16th, rejected, “return to ad hoc committee”

HOD, cont'd

⦿ Main issues:

• For initial appointees:

- Years of experience requirement in current language
- New – Requirement for recent experience

• For higher levels:

- Are levels really needed?
- New – Education requirement for various levels

Head of Department, cont'd.

PROPOSED 449.5:

- (a) Applicants for Intermediate Head of a Suppression Fire Department Certification must complete the following requirements:
- (1) have a minimum of two years of experience in a full time head of a suppression fire department position; and
 - (2) hold, as a prerequisite, Basic Head of a Suppression Fire Department Certification through the commission; and
 - (3) hold Fire Officer II certification through the commission; and
 - (4) document completion of the National Incident Management System courses 300 and 400; and
 - (5) complete training listed in one of the following options:
("FIRE SCIENCE" COLLEGE CREDIT, A/B LIST COURSES, ETC)

HOD, cont'd

PROPOSED 449.205

- (a) Applicants for Intermediate Head of a Prevention Only Fire Department Certification must complete the following requirements:
- (1) have a minimum of two years of experience in a full time head of a prevention only fire department position; and
 - (2) hold, as a prerequisite, a Basic Head of a Prevention Only Fire Department Certification through the commission; and
 - (3) hold Fire Officer II certification through the commission; and
 - (4) document completion of National Incident Management System 300 and 400; and
 - (5) complete training listed in one of the following options:
("FIRE SCIENCE" COLLEGE CREDIT, A/B LIST COURSES, ETC)

HOD, Cont'd

- ⦿ The current rules remain in effect
- ⦿ Ad hoc committee meeting again
- ⦿ Written, oral commentary taken under advisement

QUESTIONS?

Fire Inspector Certification

- Now accepting SFFMA Inspector certification as approved training
- Must include I, II, and PE

**Fire Inspector,
the Continuing Saga**

Example scenario #1

- ⦿ An engine co. is doing a pre-fire survey
 - They gained permission from the owner and made an appointment
 - Familiarity with occupancy
 - Establish database for department

 - Discovers obvious hazard during the survey
 - *Make property owner aware of hazard*
 - *Advise that it needs to be corrected*

 - **IS THIS OK?**

Fire inspector certification requirements revisited

It recently came to our attention that there may still be some confusion about fire inspector certification requirements. It is important for our agency to apply the current statutes correctly and appropriately; however, it is equally important that fire departments throughout the state understand our approach so that they can operate as freely as they see fit, within the state's guidelines.

With that said I wanted to touch on a couple items that help you understand the fire inspector certification requirements.

Chapter 419.909 of the Texas Government Code states, in part, *"Only an individual certified by the commission as a fire inspector may conduct a fire safety inspection required by a state or local law, rule, regulation, or ordinance."*

It is TCFP's position that this statute does not limit the ability of fire departments to conduct pre-fire planning activities (sometimes called pre-fire surveys, fire company surveys, etc.).

If, in the course of conducting a pre-fire planning activity, fire department personnel come upon an obvious safety hazard or code violation, what should those personnel do?

TCFP's position is that the appropriate response is to make the situation known to the property owner and inform them of the need to correct the hazard. A person does not need to hold inspector certification to take this kind of action. Fire department personnel should coordinate with their local fire prevention authorities regarding the situation for follow-up purposes.

Example scenario #2

- ◎ Engine co. doing a pre-fire survey
 - Does usual drawings, diagrams, collection of info for pre-fire planning purposes
 - *In addition, they complete a form that lists some basic observations to be made:*
 - Exits/egress, exit lights, date of last extinguisher service, FD connections, electrical system, etc.
 - Gathers information on form: yes/no, dates, distances, etc.
 - Leave some room for comments from the officer
 - Are there items on the form for which there is specific code language?

What to do with the form.....

- ⦿ “This is not a compliance inspection”
(maybe a good disclaimer to have on the form??)
- ⦿ “I’ve gathered this information during our pre-fire survey”
(maybe let the owner know before you begin??)
- ⦿ “Here’s a copy for you; I am forwarding a copy to the Fire Prevention office”
- ⦿ Have Fire Prevention do any follow-up as needed

Requirement for Inspector

- ⦿ Appointed to fire code enforcement duties? Must be certified within one year of appointment (must have completed requirements for certification to be appointed) 429.201, TAC
- ⦿ Assigned to that duty? Must be shown as appointed in TCFP database 421.9(c), TAC
- ⦿ Inspection required by state/local law, rule, reg, etc?
Inspector required 419.909, TGC

Thoughts?

.....*moving on*.....

The Study

- Quick description
- Information gathering completed
- Assessment in process
- Findings, recommendations pending
- Recommendations available by legislative session

What does the future hold?

- *Upcoming legislative session*
- *Continued development of FIDO*
- *Online testing???????????*
- *Continued development of audit program*
- *New certifications??*
- *Courage to be Safe*

***THANK YOU FOR YOUR INPUT &
SUPPORT!!!***

Contact & Websites

- ◎ Texas Commission on Fire Protection
 - <http://www.tcfp.texas.gov/>
- ◎ TCFP on Facebook
 - <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Texas-Commission-on-Fire-Protection/178213491471>
- ◎ *Avoid Injury!* A blog from TCFP
 - <http://www.tcfpblog.blogspot.com/>
- ◎ Library
 - http://www.tcfp.texas.gov/library/library_overview.asp