



Certification Renewal

Company Officers are responsible to maintain their certification and initiate renewal. The procedures for certification renewal are being developed, utilizing the following guiding principles:

- Continuous employment as a Company Officer/firefighter in a municipal fire department in Ontario
- Documented ongoing training
- Proof of demonstrated competence to the current standard



Simulations Guide

The purpose of this document, which was released in November 1999, is to provide Ontario Fire Service personnel who are responsible for the training and/or evaluation of firefighters, with guidelines for the creation of safe, effective, standardized, simulated exercises.

This document complements and relates specifically to:

- The practical skills tests of the *Ontario Firefighter Curriculum*
- The Ontario Certification Programs' *Job Experience Requirement Performance Checklists*; completion of these documents is necessary to meet the job experience requirement that consists of demonstrating on-the-job-skills
- Office of the Fire Marshal/Ontario Fire College courses with a practical component, for example, *Fire Cause Determination, Company Officer Diploma Program, Ontario Fire College Volunteer Firefighting Modules and Pumper Operations*

The Guide is posted on and available for downloading from our web site:

<http://www.gov.on.ca/OFM>

For further information or if you are unable to access our web site, please contact the OFM Certification Office at **416-325-3142**.



Fee for Certification

There is a nominal fee of fifty dollars (\$50.00) for certification. The fee has been waived for those certifying through the 'Window of Opportunity.'



Certification Council Members

Members are representative of the Ontario Fire Service. For a list of current members, consult the OFM or OAFC web sites.



For Further Information

Note: There are five brochures on The Professionalization Process for the Ontario Fire Service – Ontario Professional Standards Setting Body, Endorsement, Ontario Firefighter Certification Program, Ontario Fire Prevention Officer Certification Program, and Ontario Company Officer Certification Program.

Regarding certification programs, please contact the OFM Certification Office at
..... **416-325-3142**

Regarding PSSB, please contact the PSSB Secretary at the Office of the Fire Marshal, 1495 Muskoka Road North, Gravenhurst, ON P1P 1W5
..... **1-800-565-0613 ext. 9693**

Regarding endorsement, please contact the Endorsement Review Board Office at
..... **1-800-774-6651**

For current information regarding the PSSB, Firefighter, Fire Prevention Officer and Company Officer Certification Programs and endorsement, visit the following web sites:

- OFM <http://www.gov.on.ca/OFM>
- OAFC <http://www.OAFC.on.ca>
- MFSIA..... <http://www.mfsia.org>
- OMFPOA <http://www.omfpoa.com>



Ontario Company Officer Certification Program

The Professionalization Process for the Ontario Fire Service

- Authority
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- Certification Requirements
- Certification Renewal
- Simulations Guide

Ministry of Public Safety and Security
Office of the Fire Marshal
Certification Office
Place Nouveau Building
7th Floor 5775 Yonge Street
North York, Ontario
M2M 4J1
Ph: 416-325-3142
May 2003





Authority

The Office of the Ontario Fire Marshal certifies Ontario Company Officers to the Ontario Company Officer Standards. The Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 (FPPA), clause 9 (2) (d), provides authority to the Office of the Fire Marshal for training and evaluation of firefighters.



History

In 1988, 'Paradigm for Progress,' a Task Force Report to the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs, recommended that the Professional Standards Setting Body (PSSB) be created with the mandate to develop a training, educational and certification system for the Ontario Fire Service.

The PSSB, under the auspices of the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs (OAFC) and the Office of the Fire Marshal (OFM,) has developed and published nine Ontario Fire Services Standards.



The Professionalization Process

- Job Performance Standards
- Certification
- Endorsement Review Board
- Educational/Training Career Plan



Professional Standards Setting Body

The PSSB is a partnership between the OAFC and the OFM, and includes membership from all major fire service stakeholders.

The mandate of the Professional Standards Setting Body is to:

- Set performance standards for all levels within the Ontario Fire Service
- Meet on a regular basis to deliberate issues and take appropriate actions to develop, maintain, implement and promote fire service performance standards
- Operationalize the standards process model contained in the OAFC Task Force Report 'Paradigm for Progress'
- Support the professionalization process for the Ontario Fire Service



Standardized Curricula

The endorsed *Pre-Service Firefighter Education and Training Program*, developed by the OAFC and the OFM, is being introduced in community colleges across the province in partnership with fire departments.

The endorsed, standardized *Firefighter Curriculum* has been developed by the OFM and OFC. The Certificate of Achievement is the academic requirement for the *Ontario Firefighter Certification Program*.

Successful completion of the *Fire Prevention Officer Diploma Program*, developed by the OFM and delivered by the OFC, meets the academic requirement for the *Ontario Fire Prevention Officer Certification Program*.

The *Company Officer Diploma Program* was developed by the OFM and is delivered by the Ontario Fire College. Candidates who successfully complete the program meet the academic requirement for certification through the regular route.



Certification Council

In 1996, the Certification Council held its first meeting. The Council includes membership from fire service stakeholders, OFM personnel and independent persons appointed by the Fire Marshal. For a list of current members, consult the OFM web site, certification questions and answers.

The mandate of the Certification Council is to develop and recommend policies and procedures required for an ongoing, voluntary certification program.



Purpose of Certification

Certification formally acknowledges that an experienced Company Officer in Ontario meets the recognized job performance standards, and educational/training and job experience requirements as approved by the Office of the Fire Marshal and agreed to by the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs.

Certification is not a means of determining who shall participate in the practice or profession of firefighting and its related activities. A lack of certification is only an indication that the individual has not applied for or completed the requirements of certification.



Term of Certification

The initial Company Officer certificate is valid for five (5) years from the date of issuance.



Benefits of Certification

There are a number of benefits to Company Officer certification.

- Certification recognizes Company Officers as professionals with specialized skills and an ability to provide quality, competent service.
- Certification provides Company Officers with opportunities to evaluate and document their performance, and compare their skills to each competency and the overall standard.
- Certification acknowledges a Company Officer's commitment to ongoing training and life-long learning.
- Certification provides a concrete training path to follow.
- Certification will support the credibility of Company Officers in the completion of their regular and special activities such as, dealing with litigation.
- Highly motivated people will continue to be attracted to the fire service because of the certification program.



Certification Requirements

Certification is a voluntary process and is based on a candidate's ability to:

- Meet established educational/training qualifications
- Provide proof of current employment in a fire department in Ontario
- Meet job experience requirements
- Demonstrate competencies to standards

Candidates are required to submit their educational/training and job experience portfolios with required documentation to the OFM Certification Office at the time of application for certification.



Certification through the Regular Route

Company Officers employed after May 1, 2003 when the *Ontario Company Officer Certification Program* was introduced are eligible to certify through the regular route.

To meet the academic requirement, a candidate is required to successfully complete the *Company Officer Diploma Program* at the Ontario Fire College.

To meet the job experience requirement, a candidate must be a member of a municipal fire department in Ontario and have a minimum of three years in the Company Officer role.

To demonstrate competencies to standards, a candidate must complete the *Job Experience Requirement Performance Checklist*.



Window of Opportunity

Company Officers employed in a municipal fire department in Ontario as of April 30, 2003 when the *Company Officer Certification Program* was introduced are eligible to certify through the 'Window of Opportunity.' The three-year 'window' exists from May 1, 2003 to May 1, 2006.

In the 'Window of Opportunity,' Company Officers have options for achieving academic equivalency.

For those Company Officers that qualify, the OFC will offer *Company Officer Update Courses* to enable candidates to meet the academic requirement. During the 'Window of Opportunity,' these courses will be offered only to members of fire departments that have declared for certification. The course addresses the gap in learning outcomes between the old program and the current *Company Officer Diploma Program*.

Options exist to qualify for entry into the *Update Course*, such as successful completion of the previous *Fire Protection Technology Diploma Program*, successful completion of a challenge exam, or determination of equivalent education/training and job experience.

Graduates of the *Update Course* will receive a Certificate of Equivalency, representing the completion of the academic component of certification.

To demonstrate competency to standards, a candidate must complete the *Job Experience Requirement Performance Checklist* within the three-year period.