

INTERNATIONAL FIRE SERVICE ACCREDITATION CONGRESS



# Bylaws and Constitution

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## **Certificate Assembly Board of Governors and Certificate Assembly**

*Assembly of Fire Service Certifying Entities*

**Articles 10, 11, and 12**

24th Edition

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Complete document includes Bylaws and Constitution of the IFSAC Certificate Assembly Board of Governors (Article 10), Bylaws and Constitution of the IFSAC Certificate Assembly (Article 11), and Administrative Policies of the IFSAC Certificate Assembly (Article 12).

**Attention:** The most recent amendments approved by members of the IFSAC Certificate Assembly are indicated by a vertical line next to the paragraph where the amendment has been made. The date these amendments were approved and in effect is indicated by the month and year shown on the cover page and in the footer section of these bylaws.

# **ARTICLE 10**

## **Bylaws and Constitution of the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress Certificate Assembly Board of Governors**

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## **ARTICLE 10.1 ENACTMENT**

10.1.1 This Article Number 10 shall be the Constitution of the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress Certificate Assembly Board of Governors.

## **ARTICLE 10.2 RELATIONSHIP**

10.2.1 Within the scope of defined responsibility, the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress Certificate Assembly Board of Governors, in pursuit of its objectives, will work in unison with the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress and the Administrative Office, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma.

## **ARTICLE 10.3 NAME**

10.3.1 The International Fire Service Accreditation Congress Certificate Assembly Board of Governors shall hereafter be referred to as the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors (or CABOG) or Board.

## **ARTICLE 10.4 MISSION STATEMENT AND FUNCTIONS**

Mission Statement: To plan and administer a high quality, uniformly delivered accreditation for systems which certify public and private fire and emergency services personnel to levels of competency according to various standards adopted by the Certificate Assembly, or Certificate Assembly Board of Governors. This accreditation system shall be international in scope. This will be accomplished by carrying out policies and procedures as established by the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress Certificate Assembly through the most efficient use of the resources available toward the professional development of the fire service.

10.4.1 The functions of the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors are to:

- a) Provide suggested policy statements and administrative guidelines to the Certificate Assembly for approval.
- b) Encourage the professional development of the fire and emergency services internationally.
- c) Clarify policy established by the Certificate Assembly.
- d) Review appeals.
- e) Meet semi-annually; immediately prior to the Certificate Assembly meeting.
- f) Establish a forum and dialogue between accredited entities that will encourage reciprocity between these entities.
- g) Ensure certification is done on a valid and credible basis.
- h) Act upon all accreditation applications.
- i) Carry out policies established by the Certificate Assembly.

- j) Apply, where no acceptable standard exists, National Fire Protection Association Professional Qualifications Standards as benchmark standards against which to evaluate and accept or reject other standards.

## **ARTICLE 10.5      CERTIFICATE ASSEMBLY BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

10.5.1 The Certificate Assembly Board of Governors shall consist of twelve (12) members:

- a) Eleven (11) members are elected from Certificate Assembly represented entities during the Spring Meeting.
  - i. A member's entity shall be a voting member of IFSAC before the member is eligible for election to the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors or be appointed by the chairperson of the Board.
  - ii. To ensure representation on the Board remains balanced and uniform, no more than one entity representative shall serve on the Board at any given time.
- b) One (1) member elected from the general public during the Spring Meeting.
  - i. The public board member will not receive remuneration for their services. However, Administration may reimburse the public member for reasonable expenses for their attendance at meetings of the Board.
  - ii. The public board member shall:
    - (a) not be a member of the profession for which candidates are being prepared;
    - (b) not be associated with any entity seeking accreditation, program(s) being evaluated, and/or organization that is eligible for membership;
    - (c) have an understanding of accreditation;
    - (d) have the desire to serve as a consumer advocate;
    - (e) have the willingness to represent and protect the public interest; and
    - (f) be involved in the accreditation process for fairness and reasonable action.
- c) Board members will serve a three (3) year term.
- d) The chairperson shall appoint two (2) persons from the Certificate Assembly and one (1) person from the Administration as election officials.
- e) The Certificate Assembly shall have the ballots destroyed upon completion of elections.

10.5.2 A member may withdraw from the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors by sending to the Administrative Office a written letter of resignation.

10.5.3 In the event that a vacancy occurs on the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors, the replacement process shall be:

- a) The chairperson of the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors will appoint a replacement from a member entity to serve until the next spring meeting of the Certificate Assembly. The Certificate Assembly must elect a new board member at its next spring meeting after a vacancy occurs.
  - b) If a vacancy occurs for the public board member position then the position will be filled in accordance with the election procedure outlined in 10.5.1 (b).
- 10.5.4 Members of the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors shall serve until replaced.
- 10.5.5 When the status of a board member changes, including changing employment, organizational representation, or funding source, the board member must notify the Board. The change in status of the applicant including any change in classification or circumstances shall be considered by the Board when reviewing the appointment. If the board member no longer represents the original entity, termination of board membership will be automatic.
- 10.5.6 The appointment of a member of the Board of Governors may be terminated for cause by a majority vote of the Certificate Assembly. A request for a letter ballot, for the removal of a board member, requires the support of at least six (6) members of the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors.
- 10.5.7 The chairperson and the vice-chairperson of the Board shall be elected by the Certificate Assembly for a three (3) year term. The chairperson and vice-chairperson shall be elected from the sitting Board members.
- 10.5.7.1 In the event of a temporary absence or inability of the chairperson to exercise his office, the vice-chairperson shall perform the chairperson's duties as the acting chairperson until such time as the chairperson resumes his duties.
  - 10.5.7.2 In the event of a permanent vacancy of the chairperson, the vice-chairperson of the board shall perform the duties of the chairperson with all the rights, privileges and powers until the next regular meeting, during which the Certificate Assembly will elect a chairperson.
  - 10.5.7.3 In the event of a permanent vacancy of the vice-chairperson, the chairperson shall appoint a member of the Board to perform the duties of vice-chairperson until the next regular meeting, during which the Certificate Assembly will elect a vice-chairperson.
- 10.5.8 Members of the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors shall not receive any remuneration for their services; however, the Administrative Office may reimburse the reasonable expenses of board members for their attendance at meetings of the Board in the event of extenuating circumstances or for special meetings. Extenuating circumstances shall be determined by electronic means or conference call among the Council of Governors, the chairs of the Degree and Certificate Assembly, and Administration. Input shall also be sought from the Finance Committee regarding the decision of extenuating circumstances.

- 10.5.9 A meeting of the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors shall be held during the meeting of the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress. Ninety (90) days prior to the meeting, written notice of the meeting shall be sent to each member. Sixty (60) days prior to the meeting, notice of the agenda shall be published in sufficient detail to enable members to form a reasoned judgment. Agenda items may be provided to the Administrative Office between notification of the meeting (90 days) and the printing of the agenda.
- 10.5.10 The Certificate Assembly Board of Governors shall keep minutes of the proceedings of its meetings in which shall be recorded all actions taken by the Board. Preparation of the minutes shall be the responsibility of the Administrative Office and shall be submitted to the members of the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors within sixty (60) days of the meeting. Minutes will be considered for approval by the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors at its next meeting and shall be distributed to the Congress within sixty (60) days of approval by the Board.
- 10.5.11 The Certificate Assembly Board of Governors shall act upon all initial and reaccreditation site visit reports. Decisions on accreditation status are the sole responsibility of the CABOG subject to the appeal process. These items shall be acted upon at the Board's next meeting. It shall take a majority vote of the Board to accredit or reaccredit an entity.
- 10.5.12 The Board may accredit certification levels conditionally upon completion of further steps or clarification of existing items by the entity, and may utilize the site team members to determine that the conditions have been met prior to implementation of the accreditation.
- 10.5.13 The Certificate Assembly Board of Governors may prescribe rules and regulations consistent with the bylaws of the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors relating to the management and operation of the activities within the provenance of the Certificate Assembly as they deem expedient, provided that such rules and regulations shall have force and effect only until the next meeting of the Certificate Assembly when such changes are placed before the members for decision.
- 10.5.14 The Certificate Assembly Board of Governors, may, in any regular meeting or regularly called special meeting, for the purpose of discussing certain matters privately, adopt a motion to enter into executive session; provided that, in any such motion proposing an executive session, the general nature of the discussion to be held and a limitation as to the time permitted for the discussion shall be specified. Upon the adoption of any such motion, all persons not members of the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors, the parliamentarian or a member of the Committee on Rules who is not a member of the Board of Governors, or individuals requested by the chairperson of the CABOG by name shall excuse themselves from the room. And provided further, that
- 10.5.14.1 No binding action shall be taken while in any such executive session except for matters related to 10.5.14.5 (2).

- 10.5.14.2 No topic(s) other than that (those) specified in the original motion authorizing the executive session shall be discussed.
  - 10.5.14.3 The time limit specified in the original motion authorizing the executive session shall not be exceeded.
  - 10.5.14.4 No minutes shall be kept and no recordings shall be made of any discussion occurring in an executive session.
  - 10.5.14.5 Matters discussed in executive session shall be limited to 1) consideration of nominations for awards to be made, and 2) allegations or complaints of wrongdoing in office of elected officers, member organizations, agents, or employees.
  - 10.5.14.6 Any action(s) resulting from or out of any discussion held in executive session shall be taken immediately upon the return of the CABOG to regular session. The only exception would be matters related to 10.5.14.5 (2).
- 10.5.15 The Certificate Assembly Board of Governors shall be allowed to have online or conference call discussions between regularly scheduled meetings. These discussions will be for planning and discussion purposes only and shall not be used to conduct regular business where a decision is made and/or a vote is to be taken.

## **ARTICLE 10.6      AMENDMENTS**

- 10.6.1 Amendments to these bylaws must be proposed in writing and submitted to the Administrative Office at least sixty (60) days prior to a regular or special Certificate Assembly meeting.
- 10.6.2 Properly proposed amendments to these bylaws shall be balloted at Certificate Assembly meetings. They shall require a two-thirds majority vote of the voting entity members present and voting.
- 10.6.3 Any amendments to these bylaws passed by the Certificate Assembly shall take effect immediately upon completion of the meeting at which they are approved unless otherwise specified.



# **ARTICLE 11**

## **Bylaws and Constitution of the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress Certificate Assembly**

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## **ARTICLE 11.1 ENACTMENT**

11.1.1 This Article Number 11 shall be the Constitution of the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress Certificate Assembly.

## **ARTICLE 11.2 GENERAL**

11.2.1 The purpose of the Certificate Assembly is to provide a self-governed system which accredits public fire service certification programs. Neither the Certificate Assembly nor the Board of Governors shall be allowed to certify nor be the standards-making body for the standard(s) for which accreditation is granted. This does not preclude individuals from participating in the NFPA standards-making process by serving on committees.

11.2.2 The International Fire Service Accreditation Congress Certificate Assembly, in pursuit of its objectives, shall conduct such operations as its members shall from time to time deem necessary.

11.2.3 There shall be no remuneration for members of the Certificate Assembly.

## **ARTICLE 11.3 NAME**

11.3.1 This Certificate Assembly shall be known as the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress Certificate Assembly hereafter referred to as the Certificate Assembly.

## **ARTICLE 11.4 MEMBERSHIP**

11.4.1 Evidence of empowerment shall be furnished for evaluation prior to the approval of an application for membership to participate as a voting or non-voting entity. Applications for membership and evidence of empowerment will be reviewed by the Certificate Assembly, together with a recommendation from its board of governors; the Certificate Assembly shall determine the membership status of any applicant. Evidence of empowerment must be shown by one (1) of the following:

- a) Show evidence of a legal act, legislation, resolution, or statute from a state, provincial, territorial, or federal government agency authorizing that entity to certify the professional competence of fire service personnel.
- b) Show significant evidence of support for their accreditation as a certifying entity from within their constituency.
- c) Show evidence of the existence of law broad enough in scope as to encompass certifying activities of the organization seeking accreditation.

11.4.2 It is the intent of the Certificate Assembly that only one voting entity shall represent any state, provincial, territorial, or federal government agency to ensure representation in the Certificate Assembly remains balanced and uniform. Membership, however, shall allow participation in the activity of the Certificate Assembly based upon four (4) classifications of membership. These are Voting Entity, Non-Voting Entity, Corresponding Member Entity, and Non-Voting

Organizational Entity, defined as:

- a) Voting Entity shall include those entities whose application for membership and evidence of empowerment have been approved for voting membership by the Certificate Assembly. Voting members shall have a right to a voice and vote on all questions. All members shall be members in good standing. A voting entity must designate the voting representative in writing to IFSAC Administration. The voting representative's name shall be held on record and listed in the IFSAC Handbook membership directory.
- b) Non-Voting Entity shall include those entities that may cover a smaller geographical area and/or have received delegated authority to certify to different levels of certification, each of which are not handled by the empowered voting entity. It may also include those who were empowered according to Article 12.2.10 prior to the membership of their state, provincial, territorial, or federal government agency. Non-voting entity members shall have a right to a voice on all questions, but shall not vote on issues. Non-voting entity members shall be members in good standing.
- c) Non-Voting Organizational Membership shall include a single representative from any national or international organization, whose membership consists primarily of individuals eligible for certification under any standard IFSAC may accredit to, or whose organization is responsible for the development of standards that may be used for certification as accredited by IFSAC. The organization shall indicate in its application the individual who will represent the organization. Non-voting organizational members shall have a right to a voice on all questions, but shall not vote on issues. Non-voting organizational members shall be members in good standing.
- d) Corresponding Membership shall include any organization or entity who wishes to receive IFSAC mailings until such time as they are ready to apply for membership under one of the categories specified in this article. Corresponding members shall have a right to a voice on all questions, but shall not vote on issues. Corresponding members shall be members in good standing.
- e) Change in membership status shall be considered in the event that the Certificate Assembly is in receipt of a valid application for membership from a state, provincial, territorial, or federal government agency that supersedes the entity currently acting in this capacity. The change of status from voting entity to non-voting entity shall take place only when the superseding entity has received their accreditation status as defined by the applicable IFSAC bylaws, policies and procedures, and is actively providing certification services. See also 12.2.10 of these bylaws.
- f) Any other changes in membership status shall require the submission of a new application for membership.

11.4.3 An entity may withdraw from the Certificate Assembly by sending to the

Administrative Office a written letter of resignation.

#### 11.4.4 Mentoring Program

All new members to the IFSAC Certificate Assembly will be assigned a mentor. The goals of the mentoring program are to:

- a) Accelerate the new member's understanding of IFSAC.
- b) Provide new IFSAC members with information to enhance their IFSAC meeting experience.
- c) Provide guidance relating to the procedures and processes used in IFSAC.
- d) Provide ongoing advice and support to facilitate the new member's progression through accreditation.
- e) Provide a source of help and advice on all aspects of the member's role in IFSAC.
- f) Support the transfer of knowledge acquired through training seminars into application leading to accreditation.

### **ARTICLE 11.5 MEETINGS**

- 11.5.1 A meeting of the Certificate Assembly shall be held during the semi-annual meeting of the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress. Agenda items may be provided to the Administrative Office between notification of the meeting (90 days) and printing of the agenda (60 days).
- 11.5.2 A voting entity member may appoint as proxy a member of the voting entity's staff or a voting entity member of the Certificate Assembly. Such proxy, shall be valid only for the meeting for which it is given, must be in writing, and must be deposited with the Administrative Office prior to the commencement of the meeting.
- 11.5.3 At meetings of the Certificate Assembly, a quorum shall consist of more than thirty percent (30%) of the existing voting entity members including proxies.
- 11.5.4 At meetings of the Certificate Assembly, every question shall be determined by a simple majority vote of its voting entity members present and proxy votes unless otherwise specifically provided for by these bylaws.
- 11.5.5 Certificate Assembly voting entity members are responsible for ensuring that the business and activities of the Certificate Assembly are conducted in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws and are appropriate for furthering the objectives stated therein. Certificate Assembly voting entity members shall have full membership rights including the right to be elected to the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors.

## **ARTICLE 11.6 MISSION STATEMENT AND FUNCTIONS**

Mission Statement: To measure the level of professionalism of public and private fire services internationally through the accreditation of those entities who administer standardized written and/or manipulative examinations or other approved means of alternative evaluation of the required knowledge and skills to meet nationally and internationally recognized professional qualification standards.

11.6.1 The functions of the Certificate Assembly are to:

- a) Consider policy statements and operational guidelines as submitted by the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors or Certificate Assembly members.
- b) Inform members of fire services regarding the system of accreditation.
- c) Develop and promote an awareness among state, provincial, territorial, and federal governments, and those served by the certifying entity regarding the accreditation system.
- d) Identify and provide accreditation services to a single entity in each state, province, territory, and federal government agency which requests said services.
- e) Apply, to every extent possible, nationally recognized standards of professional competence for fire and emergency services personnel and other standards as adopted by the CABOG, in both the career and volunteer fire service as a foundation for both certification and international accreditation.
- f) Utilize all evaluating systems available to ensure certification is completed on a valid and credible basis.
- g) Ensure nondiscriminatory certification processes.
- h) Seek recognition from agencies who evaluate, accredit, recognize, or approve accrediting bodies.

## **ARTICLE 11.7 RULES AND REGULATIONS**

11.7.1 The Certificate Assembly shall review and adopt or revoke any interim rules and regulations which have been prescribed by the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors under Article 10.5.13 of these bylaws.

11.7.2 Rules and regulations are prepared to clarify and amplify the provisions of the Bylaws and Constitution of the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors in order to provide guidance for the effective administration of the Certificate Assembly.

11.7.3 The Certificate Assembly shall elect board members at its spring meeting as described in Article 10.5.

11.7.4 The chairperson of the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors shall preside over meetings of the Certificate Assembly.

- 11.7.4.1 In the absence of the chairperson of the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors, the vice-chairperson shall preside over meetings of the Certificate Assembly.
- 11.7.5 The chairperson shall preserve order and conduct impartially the business during meetings, taking no part in debates while presiding, and shall decide all points of order, subject to an appeal to the meeting assembled by any member of the Certificate Assembly.
- 11.7.6 Upon an appeal of a decision of the chairperson, the chair may state reasons for the decision and shall then put the question as follows: "Shall the decision of the chair be sustained?" and the vote shall be taken without debate.
- 11.7.7 A two-thirds vote of voting entity members present and voting shall be necessary to reverse a decision of the chairperson.
- 11.7.8 Every member, when speaking or offering a motion, shall respectfully address the chairperson. No member shall speak twice on any question, except to answer a question asked of that member, or until every other member has had an opportunity to speak to the question under discussion.
- 11.7.9 When speaking, members shall confine themselves to the question under discussion and shall avoid all personalities or indecorous language, and all motions shall be placed in writing if so requested.
- 11.7.10 A member called to order shall withhold further comment(s) until the point of order in question has been decided, following which decision the member shall again be entitled to the floor.
- 11.7.11 An amendment to an amendment shall be in order but further amendments shall not be entertained.
- 11.7.12 A motion for the previous question shall always be in order, except when a member is in possession of the floor, and must be put without debate. The motion, if supported by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting, shall be declared carried and no further discussion or amendment shall be in order until the main motion has been decided.
- 11.7.13 A motion to adjourn shall always be in order except when a member is in possession of the floor or when it has been decided that a vote be now taken. A motion to adjourn is not debatable, but a motion to adjourn to a given time is debatable.
- 11.7.14 Any question coming before a meeting for which no provision has been made in these bylaws shall be decided according to *ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER, NEWLY REVISED* or its successors.

## **ARTICLE 11.8      AMENDMENTS**

- 11.8.1 Amendments to these bylaws must be proposed in writing and submitted to the Administrative Office at least sixty (60) days prior to a regular or special

Certificate Assembly meeting.

- 11.8.2 Properly proposed amendments to these Bylaws shall be balloted at Certificate Assembly meetings. They shall require a vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting for adoption.
- 11.8.3 Any amendments to these bylaws passed by the Certificate Assembly shall take effect immediately upon completion of the meeting at which they are approved unless otherwise specified.

**ARTICLE 11.9 REVISION AND AMENDMENTS TO THE CRITERIA FOR CERTIFICATE ACCREDITATION**

- 11.9.1 The Criteria for Certificate Accreditation may be revised or amended upon a majority vote of the Certificate Assembly delegates.
- 11.9.2 Proposals to amend or revise the accreditation criteria may be offered and discussed fully at any regular or special meeting of the Certificate Assembly.

**ARTICLE 11.10 COMMITTEES**

11.10.1 Committees may be established by the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors or the chairperson of the Board. The term “committee” shall include panels, task forces, and so forth. Each committee shall have a clearly defined function or specific charge. The appointment of committees shall be reported at the meeting of the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors or the Certificate Assembly next following the appointment and committees shall report at subsequent meetings of the Board or Assembly as appropriate. Any such committee shall disband at the completion of its charge or at the conclusion of the term of office of the Certificate Assembly Board chairperson in whose term it was appointed, unless the committee is continued by action of the Board of Governors. Normally, in making appointments to committees, recommendations shall be sought from members of the Certificate Assembly and the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors. At least one-third of the members of committees formed under authorization of this article must be voting members of the Certificate Assembly.

11.10.2 Standing Committees

a) Standards Review Committee

The Standards Review Committee shall be a standing committee of the Certificate Assembly. This committee shall be composed of four members. The chair of the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors shall appoint a member of the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors who shall chair the Standards Review Committee and shall be a voting member thereof. Additionally, the chair of the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors shall appoint three other members of the Standards Review Committee. Initially, one of these members shall be appointed for a term of one year, one member for a term of two years, and one member for a term of three years. Subsequent appointments shall be for a term of three years.

The Standards Review Committee has established procedures for the review and acceptance of standards (refer to “Accrediting to Standards Other than NFPA...” contained in the *Handbook*). The committee shall use this document to review and recommend action on standards. The Standards Review Committee shall report their recommendation to the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors for final approval of the standard.

b) Committee on Site Teams

The Committee on Site Teams shall be a standing committee of the Certificate Assembly. This committee shall be composed of seven members from accredited entities. The chair of the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors shall appoint a member from a voting member who shall chair the Committee on Site Teams and shall be a voting member thereof. Additionally, the chair of the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors shall appoint six other members of the Committee on Site Teams. The chair of the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors shall replace any committee member whose entity loses accredited status. Initially, two of these members shall be appointed for a term of one year, two members for a term of two years, and two members for a term of three years. Subsequent appointments shall be for a term of three years.

The Committee on Site Teams shall develop and maintain for distribution to its members, sections within the IFSAC Handbook that detail policies and procedures of the Certificate Assembly relating to the accreditation of certifying entities. Revisions or amendments to the Criteria for Certificate Accreditation shall be in accordance with Article 11.9.

The Committee on Site Teams shall develop a site visit checklist and a training program for site team members to ensure consistent evaluations. The Committee on Site Teams is responsible for developing training programs for site visit teams and any other training regarding the accreditation process for the Certificate Assembly. The Committee on Site Teams shall work with the Training and Mentoring committee in coordinating the delivery of Certificate Assembly training.

After development of procedures for review, the committee shall maintain a list of approved site team visitors and site team leaders from which IFSAC Administration shall select site team members for all initial and reaccreditation site team visits conducted by the Certificate Assembly. The Committee on Site Teams shall report to the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors at its meetings.



# **ARTICLE 12**

## **Administrative Policies of the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress Certificate Assembly**

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## **ARTICLE 12.1      DEFINITIONS**

- 12.1.1 Accredit: To give official authorization to or approval of; to provide with credentials; to recognize or vouch for as conforming to a standard.
- 12.1.2 Accreditation: Verification that the accredited entity meets the objectives in the bylaws and administrative policies of the Certificate Assembly.
- 12.1.3 Accredited Entity: An entity that has public fire service certification systems accredited by the Certificate Assembly.
- 12.1.4 Administration: Oklahoma State University will maintain an administrative office on the campus in Stillwater, Oklahoma. The manager of the Congress and necessary staff will conduct the day-to-day business of the Certificate Assembly and maintain appropriate records.
- 12.1.5 Application for Membership: Completion and submission of a form supplied by the Administrative Office, together with such other materials as these bylaws may require.
- 12.1.6 Local Jurisdiction: An entity within a state, province, territory, or federal agency having jurisdiction over and legally responsible for the delivery of fire services.
- 12.1.7 Voting Entity: Those entities that have been approved for membership in a voting capacity by the Certificate Assembly in accordance with the provisions of 11.4.1 of these bylaws.
- 12.1.8 Non-Voting Entity: Those entities that have been approved for non-voting membership by the Certificate Assembly in accordance with the provisions of 11.4.1 of these bylaws.
- 12.1.9 Non-Voting Organizational Membership: A single representative from any national or international organization, whose membership consists primarily of individuals eligible for certification under any standard IFSAC may accredit to, or whose organization is responsible for the development of standards that may be used for certification as accredited by IFSAC.
- 12.1.10 Corresponding Member: Any organization or entity who wishes to receive IFSAC mailings and have the opportunity to attend meetings until such time as they are ready to apply for membership under one of the other membership types.

## **ARTICLE 12.2 ACCREDITATION**

12.2.1 Within five (5) years from the date of election to membership, each entity shall be accredited for at least one (1) level of certification. If at the completion of the five (5) year period, an entity does not have at least one (1) level accredited, an assessment shall be reviewed and the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors will evaluate the progress of that entity every six (6) months, recommending status as a voting member to the Certificate Assembly.

12.2.2 The Certificate Assembly shall establish and publish Criteria for Certificate Accreditation containing at least the following:

- a) Items to be reviewed, documented, or evaluated prior to accreditation.
- b) Minimum criteria for evaluated items.
- c) Documentation to be completed by an entity seeking accreditation before and/or during the site visit.

The Criteria for Certificate Accreditation shall be the process and standard used by site teams for review and evaluation of entity applications for accreditation, and shall form the basis for site team training programs.

12.2.3 Applications for certificate accreditation shall be submitted along with appropriate documentation, including evidence of empowerment in accordance with Article 11.4.1, and a completed self-study document, to the Administrative Office. The Administrative Office will conduct an initial review for compliance with the Criteria for Certificate Accreditation and inform the applicant of its findings. Applicants will then authorize the scheduling of a site visit.

12.2.4 The site team shall examine all aspects of the applicant certification system in relation to the Criteria for Certificate Accreditation. Within thirty (30) days of the completion of the examination, the site team shall prepare and submit to the Administrative Office a consensus report that includes at least:

- a) Evaluation documentation as provided for in the Criteria for Certificate Accreditation.
- b) A narrative report of findings.
- c) A recommendation to:
  - 1. Accredite certification levels applied for.
  - 2. Accredite only certain levels.
  - 3. Accredite levels conditionally upon further action by the applicant.
  - 4. Deny accreditation.
  - 5. Any combination of these actions deemed appropriate by the site team.
- d) Any voluntary recommendations that are in order for the applicant, but not required for accreditation.

- 12.2.5 A recommendation by the site team for conditional accreditation shall include specific details as to what condition(s) must be met prior to granting of accreditation, and how completion of the conditions will be measured.
- a) Documentation of completion of conditional accreditation items submitted by the entity must be reviewed by all members of the site team within thirty (30) days of submission.
  - b) Within thirty (30) days of review of the documentation of completion of conditional accreditation items, the site team leader shall submit through the Administrative Office a final report to the chairperson of the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors containing a recommendation to grant or deny accreditation.
- 12.2.6 Upon receipt of a site team report, the chairperson of the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors shall cause the report to be distributed to the members of the Board of Governors and shall place consideration of the report on the agenda of the next Board of Governors meeting.
- 12.2.7 Accredited entities may add certification levels to their certificate accreditation status by submitting, on a form provided by the Administrative Office, an application and such other materials as may be necessary to demonstrate compliance with the Criteria for Certificate Accreditation.
- 12.2.7.1 The Administrative Office shall be responsible for arranging the administrative review of the application and supporting documentation with a trained site team member. The site team member will provide the Administrative Office with a report stating that the entity has met the criteria for the additional levels sought, and/or detailing the deficiencies found in the application. The Administrative Office shall promptly notify the applicant entity, in writing, of (1) any additional levels that have been accredited and/or (2) any deficiencies needing further clarification.
  - 12.2.7.2 The entity requesting an administrative review for a certification level in which a purchased or testing service test bank is used must request specific permission from the copyright holder for the test bank to release the test bank for administrative review. A separate release must be obtained for each instance of submission of such test banks. The original test bank will be returned to the applicant entity by registered mail upon completion of the administrative review.
  - 12.2.7.3 Any test bank submitted for review shall be reviewed in a secure setting and in such a manner that the test bank shall not be duplicated nor the rights of the holder of the copyright violated in any way.
- 12.2.8 Should the scope of the certifying entities change, the Administrative Office of the Certificate Assembly shall be notified. At any time during the accreditation process, the certifying entity shall be allowed to withdraw some or all of its programs from the accreditation process.

- 12.2.9 In states, provinces, territories, and federal jurisdictions where no interest is shown to participate in the Certificate Assembly by those entities, local jurisdictions may apply. It is clearly understood that at such time as the state, province, territory, or federal government agency does make application and is accredited and providing certification services, the local jurisdiction will no longer be recognized as a voting member of the Certificate Assembly and shall no longer have accredited authority to issue certificates unless such authority is delegated to it by the superseding entity.
- 12.2.9.1 In those cases described in 12.2.9 where more than one local jurisdiction (college, etc.) applies for membership, it is the intent of the Certificate Assembly that only one voting representative shall represent the state, province, or territory.
- 12.2.9.2 Representation on the Certificate Assembly can be determined in one of the following ways:
- 12.2.9.2.1 All entities within the jurisdiction wishing a vote must form a coalition and select one individual from the coalition to represent all entities with the coalition.
- 12.2.9.2.2 All entities within the state, province, or territory will be admitted into the Assembly as non-voting members in accordance with 11.4.2 (b).
- 12.2.10 Any entity presently active and accredited under the *Procedures and Criteria for Accreditation and Certification of the National Board for Fire Service Professional Qualifications (NBFSPQ)* may continue accreditation under the jurisdiction of the Certificate Assembly.
- 12.2.10.1 A site visit, as soon as is practical, to the previously accredited entity shall be required to evaluate current system procedures.
- 12.2.10.2 The continuation of certificate accreditation will only apply to those fire service levels originally authorized by the NBFSPQ prior to February 1991.

### **ARTICLE 12.3 REACCREDITATION**

- 12.3.1 Reaccreditation shall be required on a five (5) year basis. The five (5) year period shall begin at the time of the initial certificate accreditation received by the entity.
- 12.3.1.1 Failure to attain accreditation prior to the Board of Governors meeting following the due date of a reaccreditation site visit or any granted extensions will result in loss of ability to issue seals.
- 12.3.1.2 In order to regain the ability to issue seals the entity shall successfully complete the requirements for reaccreditation.
- 12.3.2 Extension of reaccreditation will be considered by the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors upon request by the entity.

- 12.3.2.1 An entity may be granted an extension of reaccreditation by the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors upon showing of circumstances that hindered or prevented the entity's ability to prepare for the reaccreditation visit.
- 12.3.2.2 An entity may be granted an extension of reaccreditation by the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors until the following Board meeting. A second extension of accreditation may be granted by the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors upon showing of a good faith effort to prepare for the reaccreditation visit. No extension, or combination of extensions, of the accreditation may exceed one (1) year from the due date of the reaccreditation site visit.
- 12.3.2.3 Failure to attain reaccreditation prior to the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors meeting following the approved extension of accreditation will result in loss of accreditation status.
- 12.3.3 Reaccreditation evaluations shall begin with a desk audit by the Administrative Office of the entity's evidence of empowerment in accordance with Article 11.4.1, and accredited levels, using procedures developed by the Committee on Site Teams and approved by the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors.
- 12.3.4 If the Criteria for Certificate Accreditation are met, the site team shall recommend to the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors that reaccreditation be granted.
- 12.3.5 If, in the opinion of the site team, the criteria have not been met, the Administrative Office shall report this to the chairperson of the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors. The Certificate Assembly Board shall determine if additional time should be afforded to comply or the certificate accreditation should be withdrawn.

## **ARTICLE 12.4 APPEAL PROCESS**

- 12.4.1 The Certificate Assembly reserves the right to grant, deny, or withdraw the accreditation. The Certificate Assembly shall give to the entity a written notice of intent to deny or withdraw the certificate accreditation and the reasons therefore. Upon receipt of the intent to withdraw certificate accreditation, the affected entity has thirty (30) days to respond. Withdrawal of certificate accreditation requires a two-thirds vote of the Certificate Assembly.
- 12.4.2 A copy of the written notice to deny or withdraw certificate accreditation shall be forwarded to the applicant entity and each member of the Certificate Assembly via registered mail within fourteen (14) days of the ruling.
- 12.4.3 The entity may request a hearing before the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors to be held at the next scheduled Certificate Assembly Board meeting. A decision shall be rendered in writing by the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors within thirty (30) days of the end of the hearing.

- 12.4.4 If, after a hearing before the Certificate Assembly Board, an entity is aggrieved by a decision of the Certificate Assembly Board to deny or withdraw the accreditation, the entity may, within thirty (30) days of receipt of written final notice of denial or withdrawal, appeal to the Certificate Assembly. The Certificate Assembly may confirm the notice of denial or withdrawal given by the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors, or may grant or continue the certificate accreditation subject to any conditions the Certificate Assembly may specify.
- 12.4.5 The Administrative Office shall forward a copy of the final notice of denial or withdrawal of certification to each member of the Certificate Assembly.
- 12.4.6 Referrals back to the Administrative Office for action can be made at any time during the appeal process.
- 12.4.7 The Administrative Office will be the focal point for communications during all appeal process interaction.
- 12.4.8 The site visitation team has the authority and responsibility to review and resolve deficiencies at the local level to minimize the need for an appeal.
- 12.4.9 Site team members shall not be involved in the voting process for appeals.

## **ARTICLE 12.5 FEE STRUCTURE**

- 12.5.1 Membership fees shall be assessed annually. Fees shall be based on a fee table approved by the Certificate Assembly Board of Governors. The approved fee table will be maintained in the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress Handbook.
- 12.5.2 Application Fees for Accreditation and Reaccreditation
- 12.5.2.1 Any certifying entity applying for initial accreditation or reaccreditation shall submit, together with its application, the fee(s) as specified by the fee table as described in 12.5.1.
- 12.5.3 Non-Payment of Fees
- 12.5.3.1 Any entity found in default of payment of fees will have all rights and privileges of membership revoked, including the right to vote, and to issue IFSAC seals and certificates.

## **ARTICLE 12.6 CERTIFICATES**

- 12.6.1 The Certificate Assembly shall reserve the right to control the use and distribution of any certificates bearing its name or logo. It shall be the responsibility of each accredited entity to provide the information necessary to apply for certificates for each person internationally certified by the entity.
- 12.6.1.1 No entity shall issue an IFSAC seal and number for any level for which the individual has not successfully completed a level appropriate examination administered by the issuing entity.

- 12.6.1.1.1 Entities shall have written policy that requires examination for all certificates and seals issued by the entity.
- 12.6.2 It is the responsibility of the accredited entity to report, using a procedure agreed to jointly in writing by the Administrative Office of the Certificate Assembly and the accredited entity, the identity of all individuals internationally certified to an accredited level.
- 12.6.3 The Certificate Assembly has established a procedure whereby individuals who have been certified by an accredited entity may be recognized internationally by having their names placed on an International Registry indicating their discipline and level of certification.
- 12.6.4 Nothing in these criteria shall prevent the accredited entity from issuing other certificates provided that IFSAC is not referred to in the wording on the certificate or seal.
- 12.6.5 The Administrative Office, as a service, may issue to individuals an additional certificate of international certification. Such certificates will be issued only to individuals who have been certified by an accredited entity and whose information can be verified through the international registry. The Administrative Office may advertise and charge a fee for this service.

## **ARTICLE 12.7 SITE TEAM**

- 12.7.1 The site team for initial/reaccreditation shall consist of a minimum of three (3) personnel selected by IFSAC Administration from a list of qualified members. The only exception would be for reaccreditation site visits that have five (5) or fewer levels of accreditation - the site team shall consist of a minimum of two (2) personnel. Variations due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g., illness, inclement weather) will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.
- 12.7.2 If a site team member resigns and therefore creates a vacancy, IFSAC Administration shall promptly designate a replacement.
- 12.7.3 The site team leader shall be selected by IFSAC Administration.
- 12.7.4 Cost for site visits will be the responsibility of the entity requesting certificate accreditation. Other criteria being absent, all specifics of funding will be governed by criteria set by the Board of Regents and State Statutes of the State of Oklahoma.
- 12.7.5 IFSAC requires a grace period (at least one year) before team members can serve as consultants for an institution/program they just evaluated. Any site team member who has been determined as using site visits as a way to establish a consulting clientele will be removed from the pool of visitors and the site team member's home entity will be notified of the infraction.

Definition of a consultant shall be that individual who received remuneration for services.



## **ARTICLE 12.8      DATA COLLECTION/REPORTING**

- 12.8.1 The accredited entity shall provide to the Administrative Office the following information:
- a) Name of individual certified
  - b) Level of certification
  - c) IFSAC seal number issued for each certification
  - d) Date of certification
  - e) Individual's date of birth (to be used for identification of a person/record when verification of certification is requested)
    - i) If the accredited entity is prohibited from collecting birthdate information due to jurisdictional laws, regulations, or the mandates of a superseding authority, the entity may use an alternative identification format that is acceptable to IFSAC Administration and can be included in the registry database.
- 12.8.2 Data transfer procedures will be determined in advance between the Administrative Office and the accredited entity.