

FIRE SERVICES EXAMINATIONS BOARD

STUDY NOTE

EXAMINATION	LEADING FIREFIGHTERS EXAMINATION
PAPER	HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
SUBJECT	HEALTH, SAFETY & WELFARE
ITEM	SAFE PERSON CONCEPT
STUDY NOTE No.	1313

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY NOTE

This study note has been prepared as the basis of study in connection with the qualifying examinations for promotion.

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate knowledge of the information contained in the study note and understand how it should be applied:

The 'References' made at the end of the Study Note are included for information only and candidates will not be expected to study these as part of the bibliography.

THE SAFE PERSON CONCEPT

1. Introduction

The Fire Service can normally satisfy the required levels of health, safety and welfare of people at work by providing and maintaining:

- (a) a safe working environment;
- (b) safe work equipment;
- (c) safe systems of work; and
- (d) a competent workforce.

However, the operational work of the fire service, is performed in a working environment that is constantly changing and can be inherently hazardous and may be possible to make safe.

To maintain the effectiveness of operational crews, in dynamic and hazardous environments, brigades need to ensure that the individuals who perform operational roles are as safe as is reasonably practicable.

A greater emphasis on ensuring, safe work equipment, safe systems of work and a competent workforce is therefore required.

This approach is known as the 'Safe Person Concept'. This concept is based on having the right support mechanisms in place to ensure firefighters are safe while they are at work.

There are two aspects to this concept:

- (a) organisational responsibilities; and
- (b) individual responsibilities.

2. Organisational Responsibilities

Firefighter selection
Training
Information
Equipment
Safe Systems of Work
Instruction
Supervision
Personal Protection Equipment

These can be summarised as follows:

(a) Firefighter Selection

Individuals recruited to undertake operational roles must be capable of developing the job skills to meet the demands of the work.

(b) Training

Operational training must be based on knowledge about the hazards on the incident ground and delivered in a planned, systematic and continuous manner.

(c) Information

Crews who attend incidents must be provided with information about the risks, and control measures associated with the hazards they will face. This information may be generic in nature or it may relate to specific sites.

(d) Equipment

Operational crews must be provided with equipment that is suitable for the purposes that it will be used for. Prior to purchase, brigades have to plan the arrangements to ensure that all operational equipment will be rigorously inspected, tested and maintained. Crews must know the limitations of the equipment particularly when its use is being improvised.

(e) Safe Systems of Work

Brigades must adopt systems of work to ensure that operational work activities are undertaken safely. Safe systems of work range from how crews may jointly handle a heavy piece of equipment, to the adoption of national procedures for the safe control of Breathing Apparatus wearers. It will include:

- Assessment of the task
- Hazard Identification
- Identification of safe methods
- Implementing the system
- Monitoring the system.

(f) Instruction

Individuals and crews must receive clear instructions relating to their role in the operation of equipment and safe systems of work.

(g) Supervision

At an incident, operational crews must be supported with clearly defined, lines of communication, and competent supervision.

(h) Personal Protective Equipment

The brigade must provide individuals with the appropriate level of personal protective clothing, which meets standard specifications. Breathing apparatus provides the standard Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE) within the Fire Service.

3. Individual Responsibilities

Teamwork
Vigilance
Application
Performance
Awareness
Adaptability

The individual responsibilities are summarised as follows:

(a) Teamwork

To be an effective member of a team that co-operates to achieve a common goal.

(b) Vigilance

To be vigilant for their own safety and that of others.

(c) Application

To apply their knowledge and skills within accepted safe systems of work.

(d) Performance

To competently perform assigned tasks.

(e) Awareness

To be able to recognise their own abilities and limitations to perform assigned tasks and their need for further development.

(f) Adaptability

To adapt to changing circumstances.

These, together with the organisational responsibilities make up the safe person concept.

References

Home Office