

# FIRE SERVICES EXAMINATIONS BOARD

## STUDY NOTE

EXAMINATION

SUB-OFFICERS EXAMINATION

PAPER

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

SUBJECT

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

ITEM

OPERATIONAL TRAINING

STUDY NOTE No.

2305

### *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.*

## OPERATIONAL TRAINING

### 1. Introduction

There are a number of statutory duties that require brigades to train their personnel including:

- (a) The Fire Service Act 1947;
- (b) The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974;
- (c) The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999;
- (d) The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992.

### 2. The Purpose of Operational Training

The purpose of operational training is to contribute to safe and effective fire service operations.

### 3. The Aims of Operational Training

The aims of operational training are to:

- (a) Prepare people for roles and responsibilities;
- (b) Provide people with the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes that will enable them to perform their role effectively competently and safely;
- (c) Provide opportunities to assist and encourage continuous professional development;
- (d) Develop a positive and flexible approach to training;
- (e) Minimise the likelihood of accidents and injuries to personnel.

### 4. Levels of Operational Training

There are three progressive levels of Operational Training, these are:

- (a) Drills

Drills are safe systems of work, which enable crews to acquire knowledge and develop the core skills necessary to use fire service equipment safely and effectively.

Drills are a fundamental learning activity which should be conducted at a pace and frequency to suit the level of performance of the individual and/or the crew.

This allows crews to become competent with handling equipment or performing tasks, which require a co-ordinated approach.

When personnel are competent in these core skills, the drills will have served their primary purpose. The acquired knowledge, skills and understanding should be applied and further developed with more advanced or specialist training.

The learning objectives associated with drills include the:

- (i) Acquisition of knowledge and specific core skills;
- (ii) Safe operation of equipment;
- (iii) Development of effective teamwork.

(b) Techniques

Techniques are safe systems of work, which enable crews to apply their core skills to achieve defined objectives using specific equipment.

As with drills, techniques should be conducted at a pace and frequency to suit the level of performance of the individual and/or the crew. This allows crews to practice their core skills in specific situations and different environments.

Techniques should be developed and practised sufficiently to ensure that competency in performance of both individuals and crews is acquired and maintained.

The learning objectives associated with techniques include:

- (i) Practical knowledge in the operation of equipment;
- (ii) Safe and effective use of equipment;
- (iii) Awareness of equipment limitations;
- (iv) Achievement of specific, operational objectives.

(c) Scenario Based Training

Scenario based training is more meaningful and helps to reinforce the learning experience and enhance the awareness and confidence of the firefighter at an operational incident. The main purpose of such training is to practice and implement the skills and knowledge required at incidents. The scenarios should provide realistic training events, based on knowledge about operational incidents and allow firefighters to apply the tactics, procedures, techniques and equipment used at an incident.

Scenario based training will develop and maintain the competence of firefighters whilst ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, their health and safety and that of others.

The learning objectives associated with scenario based training include the:

- (i) Experience of the hazards and risks associated with the scenario;
- (ii) Application of dynamic risk assessment;
- (iii) Selection and application of appropriate safe systems of work;
- (iv) Application of a combination of core skills and techniques;

Further information relating to Scenario Based Training can be found in Study Note 2306.

## 5. Training Need

A training need exists when the performance of an individual does not meet the standard identified by their role, whether measured in terms of knowledge, skills, attitude or understanding, and it is considered that a learning experience will overcome this deficiency.

The identification of training need associated with operational training includes:

- (a) The evidence gained from an assessment of an individual's performance;
- (b) The evidence gained from the assessment of the performance of the crew;
- (c) The evidence gained from feedback from individuals and crews;
- (d) Operational de-briefs;
- (e) Accident/near-miss analysis;
- (f) The underpinning knowledge and skills derived from National Occupational Performance Standards. (NVQs).

## 6. Training Methods

Risk assessments, together with the information gained from assessments of individual and crew performance will influence the content and methods of training. Whatever method chosen, the following best practice should be adopted:

- (a) Content is chosen to meet the learning objectives;
- (b) The method of delivery is appropriate to the target group and delivered at a pace, which sustains interest;
- (c) Learning resources are produced in a format which are easily understood;
- (d) Layout of the venue facilitates learning;

- (e) Underpinning knowledge and information is imparted at appropriate times during the practice of the skill;
- (f) Trainees are given the opportunity to clarify any issues arising from the session;
- (g) The time constraints of the session are realistic to the practical skill being taught;
- (h) Appropriate feedback is given on candidate's practice;
- (i) Trainees are given adequate time to practice the skill;
- (j) Content is accurate.

## 7. Transferability of Knowledge and Skills

Fire service work demands that people are properly trained, but there is a limit on the time that can actually be spent on training. It is also impracticable to provide detailed training for every type of activity firefighters may be expected to deal with. This difficulty can be overcome by carefully analysing the knowledge and skills required for one activity and seeing if they can be applied in some other situation. The ability to successfully transfer learning from one situation to another is of key importance for individual development and organisational flexibility, and opportunities that allow the transfer of learning gained from one particular activity to be applied in another is an essential method of training.

## References

Fire Service Manual Volume 4, Fire Service Training