



Utah Fire Service Certification Council Meeting Minutes

Jan. 15, 2025, at 10 a.m.

Utah Fire and Rescue Academy, Room 203
and via Teams online

1. **Certification Council meeting called to order, by Council Chair Scott Spencer**

Meeting called to order by Council Chair Scott Spencer at 10 a.m.

2. **Welcome council members and visitors, by Scott Spencer**

Members in attendance: Scott Spencer, Ron Harris, TJ Brewer, Rod Kearl, Krista Horting, Dave Olsen, Ted Black, Dave Youngberg, Merlin Spendlove, Chris Trevino, Jeremy Raymond

Members not in attendance: Wade Snyder, John Evans

Guests: Jared Sholly from Davis Technical College, Marc McElreath

3. **Declaration of quorum, by Scott Spencer**

Scott Spencer declared a quorum.

4. **Approval of council meeting minutes from November 20, 2024, by Scott Spencer**

TJ Brewer motioned to approve the minutes from November 20, 2024, and it was seconded by Ron Harris. No one opposed, and the motion carried.

5. **Approval of January 15, 2025, council agenda, by Scott Spencer**

Chris Trevino motioned to approve the agenda for January 15, 2025, and it was seconded by Krista Horting. No one opposed, and the motion carried.

6. **Davis Technical College RCA's request for additional written attempt, by Jared Sholly**

Jared Sholly stated that they switched to the 7th edition of Firefighter when it became available. He was under the impression that it covered the Hazmat information. When the class did not pass as they usually do, they realized the full curriculum was not in this edition. A Hazmat manual was also needed.

Jared requested a 4th attempt for 3 students from his previous class. He has now given them the correct curriculum to study from. He also requested a 2nd attempt for the 13 from the second group who need it.

Ted Black asked if the first group continued to get incorrect information through their 2nd & 3rd attempt. Jared stated it wasn't until the second class started that they noticed that the test questions didn't match what was in the manual they were using.

TJ Brewer asked if we have any policy prohibiting the Certification Council from making a decision today. Jolene stated that we have given a 4th attempt previously as approved by the Certification Council.

Dave Olsen recommends we give the first group of students the opportunity to take the test one more time.

If the second group also needs a 4th attempt, the issue will be returned to the Certification Council for approval.

Dave Olsen motioned to allow the 3 students from the first group the opportunity to take the test one more time. Ted Black and Krista Horting seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Jared Sholly asked if the first group, which tested prior to January 1, 2025, will need to pay the 2025 retest fee. It was not initially part of their tuition fees. It was determined that they will need to pay the 2025 retest fee of \$90.

7. **Report from Forestry, Fire & State Lands, by Wade Snyder**

Wade Snyder was unable to attend and had nothing to report.

8. Report on testing, certification, failed skills, and upcoming exams (3 months), by Jennifer Lindley

The Certification Report was presented by Jennifer Lindley: 741 new certifications, 43 with non-affiliated; 744 recertifications. She showed the certification comparison for the 3 previous years. Numbers have increased almost 30% over the past 3 years. Charts showed the increase. Increase could be due to the additional Technical Rescue levels, but we don't anticipate the numbers decreasing for the next couple of years.

She also presented the Failed Skills Report. The numbers were smaller for August to October 2024. It was mostly Inspector and Officer I, with the typical missed skills.

9. Report on Fire Prevention Board meeting, by Scott Spencer

Scott Spencer reported on the FPB meeting held on January 14, 2025. Scott Spencer and UFRA Director Brad Wardle gave their report to the Fire Prevention Board. They brought up the retirement of Gil Rodriguez and Gary Kilgore and that Chief David Olson will be stepping down from the Certification Council. Battalion Chief Michael Slater from the Ogden City Fire Department was presented and approved by the Fire Prevention Board to replace Chief Olsen on the Certification Council. It was reported that the Cancer Initiative is moving forward, and more types of cancer are being added to the list of presumptive cancers.

10. Recognition of David Olsen, Certification Council member, by Jolene Chamberlain

Jolene recognized Chief David Olsen for the time he served with the Certification Council. Chief Olsen has done a lot of work for the council during the small amount of time he served. This position will be taken by Deputy Fire Chief Mike Slater from Ogden. David Olsen thanked the council for the opportunity to serve. He also stated that he is retiring and is looking forward to enjoying plans outside of the fire service in the future. Scott Spencer also thanked Chief Olsen for his service.

11. Discussion and motion to approve/review the following submitted portfolios, by Scott Spencer

- **Michael Jensen, Fire Officer II portfolio: reviewed by Krista Horting**

Krista Horting reviewed the Fire Officer II portfolio and recommended council approval.

Jeremy Raymond made a motion to approve Michael Jensen's Fire Officer II portfolio, and it was seconded by Merlin Spendlove. No one opposed, and the motion carried.

- **Chris Whetton, Live Fire 1403 portfolio: reviewed by TJ Brewer**

TJ Brewer stated that Chris Whetton did a fantastic job. Recommends approval.

Jeremy Raymond made a motion to approve Chris Whetton's Live Fire 1403 portfolio, and it was seconded by Rod Kearl. No one opposed, and the motion carried.

- **Embret Fossum, Fire Officer III portfolio: needs to be reviewed**

This portfolio has been submitted and needs to be reviewed. Chris Trevino will review it.

12. Discussion and motion on submitted petitions, by Jolene Chamberlain

Unified Fire Authority sent a petition for 2 candidates, Austin Betti and Isaac Sefcik, to reenter the testing process sooner than a year later. Jolene presented the petitions for the 2 candidates. One of them has only taken 2 attempts. The other has taken Hazmat Ops three times and is asking to waive the one-year waiting period. He will be taking a new class in April at UFA.

Rod Kearl motioned to allow both candidates to reenter testing after taking the class again. Merlin Spendlove seconded the motion. The motion passed.

13. Discussion and motion regarding adding "OR" in all standards with evolution examinations

Wording: ". . . evolution, or three skills (chosen randomly)"

This was discussed at the last council meeting. The highlights in yellow are what has been changed. This shows where the word "or" has been added, indicating that they will have 2 evolutions or 3 skills chosen randomly for FF I and FF II and Technical levels. Candidates won't know if they are getting evolutions or skills, so they won't be able to train for the evolutions only.

Dave Youngberg said the committee working on the new FF I standard recommends these changes. These words were submitted to Pro Board and IFSAC for accreditation. This will go into effect immediately and stay until the next level update.

Krista Horting motioned to approve the edits as presented. Jeremy Raymond seconded the motion. The motion passed.

14. Bridgerland Technical College accreditation site visit report, by John Evans & Dave Olsen

Dave Olsen reported on the site visit at Bridgerland Technical College. The site team was impressed with their program and process. The team had discussions with students, staff, and executives. All concerns and questions were answered. The team recommends that Bridgerland Technical College retain their accreditation.

Bridgerland Technical College is requesting that their accreditation include the following additional levels for their accreditation: Ropes Awareness and Operations and Common Passenger Vehicle Awareness and Operations along with the required levels of firefighter I & II and Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations.

Jolene explained that ARA's can now obtain Firefighter I & II, Hazmat Awareness & Operations, Rope Rescue Awareness & Operations, Common Passenger Vehicle Awareness & Operations, and Wildland I/II.

Jeremy motioned to approve the reaccreditation of Bridgerland Technical College. Ron Harris seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

15. Review, discussion, and motion to approve updates to Policies and Procedures Manual to meet accreditation requirements, by Sarah Head

Changes were updated for accreditation approval.

- 2.48 and 12.39 "Skills Spot Checks" were updated for clarification purposes (for accreditation) as presented.
- 12.19: "Exam Materials" wording was added for clarification purposes (for accreditation) as presented.
- 14.6: added "Tester" update training
Added "and exam materials . . . preserved." Materials to be kept 3 years.
- 14.6.1 is *NEW*: added "must complete UVU HR Compliance course training annually"
Added "should" to tester training information. New section to add specifics. All employees do this. We just didn't have a policy on it, so it was added.
- 14.9: added "UFRA SOGs, UVU policies"
This wording was added to meet accreditation requirements.

Jeremy Raymond motioned to approve all updates as presented. David Olsen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

16. Review, discussion, and motion to approve prerequisite requirements (PPE, Product Control) for FF I (required for FF I: NFPA 1001, 1010); IFSAC requires separate testing, by Sarah Head

We have pulled questions creating a separate test for certification. The Hazmat Ops test is comprehensive and meets this level. If the student wants to receive certification for PPE and/or Product Control, they must request separate testing for those individual certifications. We are not required to offer separate PPE & Product testing, because the Hazmat Operations exam is comprehensive.

Ron Harris motioned to approve separate testing for PPE and/or Product Control if requested. Chris Trevino seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

17. Review, discussion, and motion to approve the updated Reciprocity form, Exam Request form, and Instructions for Written Exam, by Jolene Chamberlain/Sarah Head

Reciprocity Form:

The applicant information wording was updated with a section for the applicant, not the training officer, to complete the form. Number 2 was added to the form, referencing the policy.

The fee was changed to the new 2025 fee of \$200. It must be paid directly to UFRA or through invoicing the department.

Ron Harris motioned to approve the presented updates. Krista Horting seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Exam Request Form:

The form was updated to request the full legal name and person identification (PID) number. Currently, a PID number can be requested by contacting the Certification specialists. If candidates are new, a PID will be created for them prior to testing.

Written Testing Instruction Form:

The form was updated to instruct candidates to enter their PID number on the Scantron test form in place of the last 4 digits of their Social Security number.

Certification/Recertification Form:

This form was updated to add a column for candidates' PID numbers.

Chief David Olsen motioned to approve the updates. Ron Harris seconded the motion. The motion passed.

18. Discussion and motion to approve council meeting dates, by Scott Spencer

- March 19, 2025
- May 21, 2025
- July 16, 2025
- September 17, 2025
- November 19, 2025
- January 14 or 28, 2026

Jolene Chamberlain requested that the January meeting be held online due to Winter Fire School beginning the following week.

Jeremy Raymond motioned to approve the dates, with January 14, 2026, as the January date, and to hold the January meeting online. Chris Trevino seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

19. New Business, by Scott Spencer

- NFPA 1030, Fire and Life Safety Educator I and II level (2024 edition) updates were approved by Pro Board and are now posted on the UFRA Certification website. Tests began as of January 1, 2025.
- UFRA portal update, by Jolene Chamberlain

The portal is being built, and it takes so much time for meetings and development. Development is proceeding while meetings are happening so the process is not slowed. The portal will be used in the future for new candidates, requesting exams, certifications, recertifications, and reciprocity.

- Updates on online testing, by Trudy Meister

Trudy presented a list of each level and the first dates they were tested online. As of this meeting, 481 online exams have been administered.

UFRA currently owns 40 tablets that are available to send for testing. There are logistical issues with delivering and returning tablets. Computer access for testing must be with a department computer or a testing center. Tests may not be taken on candidates' personal computers.

Jolene stated that we have reached our goal to have all our levels available for online testing. We are asking for 270 tablets to be made available for departments to use. We ask that RCAs use their own testing centers.

- Testing fee waiver, by Jolene Chamberlain

There are some departments that cannot pay for the testing fees. A waiver form has been created. Jolene Chamberlain, Scott Spencer, and Director Brad Wardle are on the Fee Waiver Committee to approve fee waivers for specialty levels and Technical Rescue levels. Full or partial fee waivers will be determined by the committee. The waiver will not be online but is made available as departments reach out to UFRA.

20. Old Business, by Scott Spencer

- Any other items that need to be discussed.

Jeremy Raymond asked about the site visit at Southwest Technical College. Dave Youngberg visited the college and reviewed their program. Dave is working with them to address the need for hydrants to hook to. The city won't let them use hydrants to practice connection and to flow water. Their largest hurdle is that they were not using the in-house testing to filter out candidates before candidates took the UFRA tests.

Merlin Spendlove asked if they need hydrants. Hurricane may have some that could be used by the college. Ron Harris asked that we address this topic in the training conference without specifying or calling out this college.

- Marc McElreath addressed Winter Fire School coming up next week. Currently 1,081 registered: 820 students, 35 full-time staff, 120 adjunct instructors—plus vendors.
- Skyler Skinner was discussed at the last meeting. The council approved that he be suspended. This was taken to Director Brad Wardle, and it was determined that Skyler would be terminated as a tester and instructor with UFRA. He has been terminated.

21. The next council meeting is on Wednesday, March 19, 2025, at UFRA

TJ Brewer made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Rod Kearl seconded it. No one opposed, and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 11:22 a.m.