



Utah Fire Service Certification Council Meeting Minutes

March 19, 2025 at 10 a.m.

UFRA, Room 147

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, Michael Slater, John Evans, Merlin Spendlove, Chris Trevino, Ted Black

Members attending online: Wade Snyder, Jeremy Raymond

Members not in attendance: Dave Youngberg, Krista Horting

Guest: Marc McElreath

Brad Wardle introduced Sarah Head as the new Certification program manager with UFRA. Also, with the retirement of Dave Olsen, there was a need to fill the spot on the Certification Council. The newest council member is Michael Slater, deputy fire chief for the Ogden City Fire Department.

3. Declaration of a quorum, by Scott Spencer

Scott Spencer declared a quorum.

4. Approval of Certification Council meeting minutes held on January 15, 2025, by Scott Spencer

TJ Brewer motioned to approve the minutes from January 15, 2025, and it was seconded by Jeremy Raymond. No one opposed, and the motion carried.

5. Approval of the March 19, 2025, Certification Council agenda, by Scott Spencer

Rod Kearl motioned to approve the agenda for March 19, 2025, and it was seconded by Ted Black. No one opposed, and the motion carried.

6. Introduction of new council member, by Scott Spencer

Michael Slater, deputy fire chief for the Ogden City Fire Department, is the newest council member.

7. Recognition and presentation of accreditation for Bridgerland Technical College, by Jolene Chamberlain

Jolene Chamberlain presented a plaque to the Bridgerland Technical College team for reaccreditation with UFRA.

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

Jolene covered for Scott at the meeting. Jolene reviewed the Certification Council minutes from January 2025 and recognized the hard work of the Certification Council members in their council duties and their other responsibilities.

Ted Black reported that the board approved the NERIS program. It may go into effect around November. They will shut off the old system as of January 2026.

9. Report on Forestry, Fire & State Lands, by Wade Snyder

As they are working through the legislative session, House Bill 48 is on their minds at FFSL. They are working on a group to get rulemaking started. They have a task force in Kansas and Texas supporting

their effort through a state-to-state compact. The governor will soon be signing newly passed legislation for a state-to-state compact that allows Utah to share resources between states to deal with the wildland threat and leverage partner states. Utah is using some existing avenues unofficially now until that is signed.

Jeremy asked for an explanation of House Bill 48. Wade is not able to share much now but it is based on establishing a wildland-urban interface layer on a map that we publish and establish through rules. There will be a fee associated with the highest risk within that wildland-urban interface layer. Wade clarified that the map is only supposed to publish the high-risk wildland-urban interface. They are planning on doing “roadshows” to the areas. Reach out to Wade if your area has not heard about this.

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

On the Certification Council Activity Report, we had our typical Firefighter I, Firefighter II, Hazmat Awareness, and a lot of Operations exams. The Technical Rescue levels had some Common Passenger, and several people certifying in Ropes. That number will be increasing for the Tech Rescue levels.

We issued 2,627 recertifications from November 2024 to January 2025.

The Failed Skills Report showed a few failed 2nd attempts for ADO Aerial & Pumper, FF II, and Rope Rescue Awareness. On Inspector I, some candidates are leaving answers blank on paper exams. This is a new thing we noticed.

11. Updates of online testing, by Trudy Meister

Trudy reported what has been happening for those taking advantage of free Friday testing. The past few months we have had 6, 5, and 7 candidates take online tests. Numbers may increase with time.

The council packet has a flyer about laptop donations from State Farm & NVFC. Online testing will be most successful as departments are able to acquire some of their own equipment.

Jeremy was able to give an online exam over the weekend using department laptops and iPads. We need to make sure testers are actively watching candidates take the exam. It would be so easy to search for an answer online if the tester is not diligent.

Trudy explained that it should be blocked from opening another tab.

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

- **Embret Fossum**, Fire Officer III portfolio: reviewed by Chris Trevino
Chris Trevino reviewed the Fire Officer III portfolio and worked with Bret to provide additional information to complete the requirements. Chris recommended council approval.

Chris Trevino made a motion to approve Embret Fossum’s Fire Officer III portfolio, and it was seconded by Merlin Spendlove. No one opposed, and the motion carried.

- **Larry Hamblin**, Fire Officer II portfolio: needs to be reviewed
Michael Slater will review this portfolio.
- **Christopher Aston**, Fire Officer II portfolio: needs to be reviewed
Chris Trevino will review this portfolio.
- **Ryan McConaghie**, Fire Officer II portfolio: needs to be reviewed
TJ Brewer will review this portfolio.

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

- **Kate Rampton** (Mapleton Fire Department): FF I and FF II failures

Petitioning to reenter testing after 120 days to retake FF I and FF II after taking a class with the Mapleton Fire Academy. The department will be testing in April.

Chris Trevino motioned to allow Kate to reenter the testing process. Mike Slater seconded the motion. The motion passed.

- **Devin Dutson** (Mapleton Fire Department): FF I, FF II, and Hazmat Ops failures
Petitioning to reenter testing after 120 days to retake FF I, FF II, & HMO after entering the Mapleton Fire Academy. Due to testing anxiety and ADD, he is also able to request accommodation during testing for either a reader or extended time.

Mike Slater motioned to allow Devin to reenter the testing process after 120 days. John Evans seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

- **Morgan Carter** (Spanish Fork Fire Department): Hazmat Ops failures
BC Blake Edwards is requesting that Morgan Carter be allowed to reenter the testing process after 120 days. Morgan is retaking the Hazmat Ops class beginning in February and plans to test in March.

Merlin Spendlove motioned to allow Morgan to reenter the testing process after 120 days. Scott Spencer seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

- **Dan L. Edwards** (Draper Fire Department): requesting reciprocity or reinstatement of certifications

Draper Fire is requesting for Dan Edwards to have his certifications reinstated to Utah certification levels after leaving Utah and receiving reciprocity in Idaho. Training records for Idaho and reciprocity certificates were provided.

TJ Brewer motioned to approve issuing reciprocity for Utah, Rod Kearl seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

- **Makensie McManigal** (Tooele Fire Department): requesting to test before her one year is over

Makensie McManigal would like to reenter the testing process after completing a class being taken from April to May and then test in May. She wants to test before her probation period ends.

Merlin Spendlove motioned to allow Makensie to test earlier. Rod Kearl seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

14. New Business, by Scott Spencer

- Updates on Firefighter I/II SME meetings, by Dave Youngberg and Sarah Head
FF I and FF II new test banks must be completed before December to be submitted to Pro Board & IFSAC, so the accrediting entities have 6 months to approve the banks before June 2026.
- Discussion on changing Policy 18.3 to read: "Certificates will be created and available online for candidates to print from UFRA's portal within forty-five (45) days of receiving the certification request." (Sarah Head)

Sarah presented the requested policy change for 18.3 due to a significant increase in exam requests and testing, which then increases the number of certifications. With the online Lookup System down, requests for certification copies are now going to the Certification specialists, adding to their workload and delaying the response time.

This would be a temporary change until the new portal is available.

Ted motioned to approve the policy wording update. Chris Trevino seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.

- UFRA Portal update, by Jolene Chamberlain
UVU was not satisfied with the security system of the online Lookup System. UVU is working with UFRA to create a new online portal. The portal will provide service to all departments, chiefs, and students. It gives chiefs and students access to look up training and certification information.

Students can create a new PID with correct information. Chiefs can look up years of service, hire date, and current title/rank.

- Update on HB 65, “Firefighter Cancer Amendments,” by Jolene Chamberlain
Jolene read a letter about recognizing the cancer initiative and task force (leading to HB 65).

Jolene has been sending reports to State Chiefs with a spreadsheet of information to be updated and returned to UFRA.

- Reaccreditation site visit for Davis Technical College on March 20, by Jolene Chamberlain
John Evans, Rod Kearl, Jolene, and Jennifer will be attending the site visit tomorrow.
- Certification test site evaluation, by Sarah Head
Policy requires that we do random test site evaluations to evaluate testers and test sites. Sarah is asking for council members to visit a test site in their area and complete the evaluation prior to the Pro Board and IFSAC site visits. A QR code is provided to complete an evaluation form.

Council members agreed to assist with these evaluations.

15. Old Business, by Scott Spencer

Other items that needed to be discussed.

- Merlin Spendlove suggested looking into the policy of waiting 1 year to retest. Can we address this at the next council meeting?
- TJ Brewer recommends addressing the reciprocity policy so they can be approved by the Certification program manager without being presented to the Certification Council for approval.
- Ted recommended having a set policy that works with surrounding states.
- The policies will be emailed to each of the council members so they can review them.
- A review of the 1-year waiting policy and the reciprocity policy was added to the agenda for the next council meeting.

16. Motion to adjourn, by Ted Black

Ted Black motioned to adjourn, John Evans seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned.

The next Certification Council meeting will be on Wednesday, May 21, 2025, at UFRA.