



3.200 BC Structure Firefighter Minimum Training Standards

3.200.1 GENERAL

The Fire Commissioner is legislatively mandated to define the minimum standards of training required for structure firefighters in British Columbia. The BC Structure Firefighter Minimum Training Standards (the 'Training Standards') do align with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards using a competency-based progression ladder that provides for a minimum level of sequential training and operational firefighter competencies that must be met by each firefighter in the province.

The Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) will define, determine, and establish the community's service level to be provided by the fire department. Once the intended service level is formally declared it is then used to determine the minimum training competencies from the current 'BC Structure Firefighter Minimum Training Standards' (the 'Training Standards') that must be provided for and taken by that department's fire service personnel.

3.200.2 DEFINITIONS

Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ): is the Local Authority that has decided to provide with voted approval from residents and has defined a Fire Department service through an establishment bylaw, service bylaw or statute that provides expenditure of collected tax funds and/or administers and holds an agreement or agreements with a neighbouring jurisdiction's established Fire Department for its residents.

Firefighter: a member of a Fire Department, working with or without remuneration, who is assigned to fire suppression duties, fire inspection or investigation duties respecting the potential, the mitigation, the cause, the origin, the circumstance of a fire, or the training and/or maintenance of any fire service duty and fire equipment needed to perform the duties described.

Fire Department: a department established and operated as a Local Authority service responsible for the prevention or suppression of fires in a defined Fire Protection Area by a Local Authority or a board, or commission of a registered society having the responsibility for the management or conduct of work or services through a service agreement, or equivalent of any of the above.



3.200.3 POLICY STATEMENTS

- The Training Standards will be reviewed and modified as required every 3 years; or sooner if there is significant need, as determined by the Fire Commissioner and the fire service stakeholders in BC, by convening a Training Standards sub-committee, if needed.
- The Training Standards are available and applicable to all structure fire services personnel (firefighters) in British Columbia:
 - The Training Standards are focussed on the person performing the functions of a firefighter not the structure of the department.
 - The departments themselves may be fulltime career fire personnel, paid-on-call firefighters, volunteer firefighters, a combination of career and volunteer, and fire departments established as a society under the *Society Act* (B.C.) if they are established and supported by the local authority (AHJ) by an establishment bylaw, service bylaw or statute.
- It is the responsibility of each AHJ to determine, define and formally declare its intended service level of the fire department for the community, which in turn is used to determine the required minimum firefighter training competencies that must be met by the firefighters for which the AHJ is responsible for.
- As a competency-based training program, formal certification (whether by Accredited Certification), while encouraged, is not critically required by the OFC Training Standards. In-house assessments and tests of personnel competencies can be conducted internally by the AHJ so long as the testing and evaluation procedures follow the criteria of the Training Standards (and applicable NFPA Standards), and that detailed records of firefighter training and evaluation results are maintained.
- Each firefighter must be provided training and evaluation in all applicable competencies and skills which are required to ensure the fire service personnel are able to safely perform their assigned tasks at an emergency fire scene.
- These Training Standards do not apply to the Province's Wildfire Services personnel and resources when actioning non-structure fires in the wildland areas of the province.



3.200.4 CONDITIONS/RESPONSIBILITIES

- The former firefighter minimum training standards (the 'Playbook') that was originally implemented in September 2014 required that all AHJ determine and declare a service level for their fire departments by June 30, 2016.
- The AHJ must provide a copy of the declared service levels to the OFC, upon request.
- Adoption of the current Training Standards must be confirmed by the AHJ to the OFC by March 2024.

3.200.5 AUTHORITIES

Fire Services Act (B.C.) Section 3(3)(b)

Electronically signed

Brian Godlonton
Fire Commissioner
Office of the Fire Commissioner
Emergency Management BC

Date: September 28, 2022

3.200.6 RELATED DOCUMENTS

Accompanying documents to the policy.

- Policy 3.200 PROCEDURE
- Policy 3.200 ANNEX
- British Columbia Structure Firefighter Minimum Training Standards