Building Construction and Systems Training for Commanders, Company Officers & Firefighters

An intense and concentrated examination of trends and methods in building construction for the fire service with an emphasize on construction and occupancy risk assessment, structural and construction systems, and their direct relationship on structural firefighting operations, firefighter survivability and the command decision-making process. Escalating trends in firefighter fatalities and injuries, and the decline in structural fire incidents has impacted the current generation of firefighters who have limited structural firefighting experience but have a profound need to understand building systems and occupancy performance under fire conditions.

Participants will gain an understanding of inherent construction features and hazards that directly influence effective risk management and decisive strategic and tactical considerations with a focus on key construction features, inherent occupancy profiles that will influence strategic, tactical and task level operations and crucial assembly systems affected by fire dynamics, fire behavior and combat fire suppression operations.

These programs, lectures and seminars examine crucial construction elements and occupancy types and correlates building construction performance toward combat structural fire suppression operations. Case studies will reinforce concepts presented and evoked open discussion and dialog on building construction and operational safety. These fast paced programs will utilize extensive multimedia materials, interactive activities, case study activities and simulations to reinforce course content and subject areas, providing exceptional learning opportunities.

Christopher J. Naum, SFPE
Chief of Training, Command Institute, Washington, DC
Second Vice President, ISFSI and Board Member IAFC SH&I Section

A 35-year fire service veteran and former Fire Chief/Coordinator at a United States nuclear power plant, he is a nationally recognized authority on building construction, structural collapse and command management, and has traveled throughout the United States, Canada, United Kingdom and Asia delivering training programs on building construction, command risk assessment and firefighter safety.

An Adjunct Instructor with the National Fire Academy, and Firefighter Safety Advocate, he is a member of the Board of Directors, IAFC Safety, Health & Survival Section, the Open Fire Academy International and the ISFSI. A former architect and fire protection engineer he was the 1987 ISFSI George O. Post National Fire Instructor of the Year. He authors the periodic column on Firehouse.com entitled Structural Anatomy focusing on building construction, command management and firefighter safety and also advocates and writes extensively within various fire service internet training forums and groups including Fire Engineering, FireRescue1, and Firefighter Nation where he authors The Command Safety and Building Constructor and firefighter safety. He is the Second Vice President with the International Society of Fire Service Instructors [ISFSI] and a Contributing Editor with Firehouse Magazine and Firehouse.com. He previously served as a commanding company officer for over twenty years in field operations with a volunteer fire department in New York.

He continues to present his popular structural anatomy building construction & firefighter safety training series throughout the United States and internationally and is the developer of the informational portal www.buildingsonfire.com dedicated to building construction, command risk management and firefighter safety, launching early in 2009. Mr. Naum has delivered training to over 175,000 personnel throughout his career and is authoring a new text book integrating building construction, risk management and firefighter safety, for the fire service.

New Seminar & Lecture Topics for 2009

Building Construction for the Command & Company Officer

Buildings on Fire: Engineered Structural Systems & Fireground Operations

Building Construction, Command Risk Management and Operational Safety

Dynamic Risk Assessment of Occupancies for Operational Safety


Fire Star Command

Contact us for Keynote Addresses, Special Presentation needs and additional Program offerings

Building Knowledge = Firefighter Safety
Building Construction for the Command and Company Officer

Effective fireground operations requires command and company officers to have a profound need to understand building systems and occupancy performance under fire conditions. This program examines current trends and methods in building construction that affect command and company level risk assessment and strategic and tactical decision-making in the development of incident action plans. Topics include construction and occupancy risk assessment, structural and construction systems and their direct relationship on structural firefighting operations, firefighter survivability and the command decision-making process.

Buildings on Fire: Engineered Structural Systems & Fireground Operations

The modern fireground involves structures that perform differently under structural fire conditions, are affected by fire behavior and require significantly different strategic and tactical operating considerations. Understanding the principles of engineered structural systems (ESS) and assemblies, the concepts of light weight construction and firefighting operations and the inherent structural characteristics, materials usage, performance and supporting systems of engineered systems and material construction provides students with a defined understanding of these systems and their stability and expected performance under structural fire conditions. Current research investigative studies and case studies will reinforce concepts with a greater degree of understanding and awareness of risk factors for deployment and company operations.

Building Construction, Command Risk Management and Operational Safety

An insightful and thought provoking look at Building Construction and command safety with the emphasis on firefighter safety and survival on the fireground related to the changing paradigms for an improved safety culture in the fire service. The program will review key building construction systems, occupancies, assemblies and features with an emphasis on dynamic risk assessment, recognition-primed decision making and safety insights. Case studies will be presented with focused discussion on the lessons learned. This program will provide a fresh perspective on command accountability, tactical responsibility and firefighter safety.

Defining Fire Service Safety: What’s Your Role?

The shifting fire service paradigms related to an evolving safety conscious work environment is beginning to resonate throughout the fire services. Changing the safety culture of the fire services and the way we do business in the streets requires redefining firefighter safety and how the fire service manages safety as a natural part of all fire and emergency services operations. This program identifies the core elements for developing an integrated safety program within your organization and the fundamental core elements that define an intelligent and safe approach towards unified safety, risk reduction, operational superiority and an integrated safety focus within the fire service.

Dynamic Risk Assessment of Occupancies for Operational Safety

An examination of dynamic risk assessment factors of various building occupancy types, with an emphasis on occupancy-building construction profiles and inherent structural systems for operational safety. Implementing dynamic risk assessment performance indicators for various occupancies will directly influence the relationship of structural firefighting operations, firefighter survivability and the command decision-making process. Expanding and promoting the dynamic management of risk in buildings & occupancies and institutionalizing this into mission critical elements of strategic and tactical decision-making during combat structural fire operations will provide enhanced focus and continuing assessment of building structural integrity, fire behavior and construction performance to ensure the safety and integrity of tactical company missions within the incident action plan at various buildings and structures, regardless of their construction type, materials, occupancy classification, age or size.


Did anyone tell you the Rule of Fireground Operations have changed? A practical and thought provoking look at what is needed to make the cultural changes the fire service talks about in the areas of firefighter safety and LODD reduction, but may not be willing to meet the necessary demands for immediate and measurable initiatives, through deliberate and conscientious actions. This program provides key insights and presents fundamental core principles on the dynamic risk assessment of building construction, occupancy hazards, systems and assembly performance, structural collapse indicators and safety awareness during combat fire suppression operations. Key fundamental principles and their rules of combat structural fire engagement will be presented and reinforced, integrating case studies, firefighter injury reduction & line of duty death initiatives and providing cutting edge insights on Building Construction for the Fire Service.

Five Star Command™: Defining Firefighter Safety during Combat Fire Engagement

Changing the safety culture of the fire services and the way we do business in the streets requires redefining firefighter safety methodologies during combat structural fire engagement and incident operations. This program presents new concepts and methodologies of Five Star Command™ and the five (5) fundamental core relationships of: Building Construction, Risk Management, Firefighter Behaviors, Incident Operations and Situational Safety. The concept of Five Star Command™ will present these five fundamental core elements along with the five points of excellence within each domain that provide an intelligent and safe approach towards unified fireground safety, risk reduction, operational superiority and company integrity. This program provides a clear roadmap for defined training and operational area that support integrated firefighter, company and command officer development and proficiencies.