Fire Service Dispatch Certification

Fire Service Dispatch Certification prepares telecommunicators to effectively receive, assess, and manage fire-related calls for service. The course develops foundational knowledge of fire dispatch protocols, fire service operations, fire behavior, firefighter safety, the Incident Command System, and disaster management. Learners examine the telecommunicator's role in gathering critical information, dispatching appropriate resources, providing Pre-Arrival Instructions, relaying changing scene conditions, supporting fireground communications, and coordinating resources during large-scale incidents.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, learners will be able to:

1. Explain the telecommunicator's primary responsibilities when handling fire-related calls for service.
2. Apply a structured fire dispatch process to collect, prioritize, and relay critical incident information.
3. Identify fire service personnel, vehicles, equipment, and operational priorities used during emergency response.
4. Explain basic fire behavior, stages of fire, extinguishment principles, and firefighter safety considerations.
5. Describe the purpose and structure of the Incident Command System and the telecommunicator's role in supporting coordinated fireground operations.
6. Explain the characteristics of disasters and the importance of pre-planning, resource coordination, and communication during large-scale incidents.
7. Provide appropriate Pre-Arrival Instructions and support the safety of callers, responders, and the public during fire and rescue emergencies.

Course Introduction

The course introduction provides an overview of Fire Service Dispatch Certification and the key knowledge required of a fire service telecommunicator. It introduces fire department response responsibilities, fire-related protocols, firefighter functions and equipment, fire behavior, the Incident Command System, multi-agency response, and the telecommunicator's role in supporting firefighter and public safety.

Content/Activities

- Fire Service Dispatch Certification Introduction
- Fire Department Response Responsibilities
- Fire-Related Protocols
- Firefighter Functions and Equipment
- Fire Behavior and Extinguishment
- Incident Command System Overview
- Multi-Agency Response
- Course Module Overview

Module 1: Fire Call Process

This module establishes the telecommunicator's role in receiving and managing fire-related calls for service. Learners examine the Unified Call Taking Formula, fire dispatch protocols, the Initial Survey, Chief Complaint, Primary and Secondary Questions, and Pre-Arrival Instructions. The module also applies these concepts to structure fires, trapped callers, lightning strikes, explosions, and the accurate relay of information to responders.

Module Objectives

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Describe the role and primary functions of the telecommunicator on a fire-related call for service.
2. Identify the actions required during the fire dispatch process.
3. Differentiate the Initial Survey, Chief Complaint, Primary Questions, and Secondary Questions.
4. Explain the role of Pre-Arrival Instructions within a fire service protocol.
5. Describe the appropriate response considerations for structure fires, trapped callers, lightning strikes, and explosions.

Content/Activities

- Primary Functions of the Telecommunicator
- Unified Call Taking Formula and Fire Dispatch Protocols
- Initial Survey, Chief Complaint, and Primary/Secondary Questions
- Pre-Arrival Instructions and Their Importance
- Structure Fire Protocol and Trapped Caller Instructions
- Relaying Information to Responders and Building Descriptions
- Lightning Strike and Explosion Incidents
- Module Knowledge Checks

Module 2: Fire Service Operations

This module introduces the functions, resources, vehicles, equipment, and operational priorities of the fire service. Learners examine the variety of services firefighters perform, mutual aid, different fire department staffing models, response apparatus, local resource awareness, strategic fireground priorities, high-rise firefighting, and other tools that support fire response.

Module Objectives

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Describe the functions firefighters perform within the community.
2. Identify common types of fire service organizations, response vehicles, and equipment.
3. Explain the importance of mutual aid and familiarity with resources in neighboring communities.
4. Describe the strategic priorities and major steps of the fireground process.
5. Identify operational and caller-safety considerations associated with high-rise fires.

Content/Activities

- Understanding Fire Service Operations and Firefighting Functions
- Types of Fire Services and Mutual Aid
- Engine/Pumper and Truck/Ladder Companies
- Other Fire Service Vehicles and Apparatus Lists
- Interchangeable Equipment Names
- Strategic Fireground Priorities and Fireground Process
- High-Rise Firefighting and Pre-Arrival Instructions
- Additional Fire Service Tools and Module Knowledge Checks

Module 3: Fire Behavior

This module provides the foundational fire-behavior knowledge telecommunicators need to understand fireground conditions and firefighter safety concerns. Learners examine the Triangle of Combustion, Fire Tetrahedron, extinguishment methods, backdraft, flashover, and the stages of fire. The module also addresses communications and firefighter-safety systems, including radios, emergency buttons, PASS devices, incident clocks, SCBA monitoring, urgent communications, and Mayday transmissions.

Module Objectives

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Identify the components of the Triangle of Combustion and Fire Tetrahedron.
2. Explain how fire may be extinguished by removing or controlling essential elements of combustion.
3. Differentiate backdraft, flashover, and the major stages of fire development.
4. Identify firefighter communication and safety equipment and explain its purpose.
5. Explain the importance of fire incident timing, SCBA monitoring, urgent radio traffic, and Mayday communications.

Content/Activities

- Triangle of Combustion and Fire Tetrahedron
- Extinguishing Methods
- Backdraft and Flashover
- Incipient, Growth, and Fully Developed Fire Stages
- Portable Radios and Emergency Buttons
- PASS Devices and Firefighter Protection
- Fire Incident Clock, 10-Minute Notifications, and SCBA
- Urgent/Mayday Radio Transmissions and Module Knowledge Checks

Module 4: Incident Command System

This module introduces the National Incident Management System and the Incident Command System as standardized frameworks for coordinating emergency operations. Learners examine NIMS compliance, the purpose of ICS, incident command responsibilities, responder accountability, Rapid Intervention Teams, functional areas, integrated communications, and the telecommunicator's role in facilitating fire-scene coordination.

Module Objectives

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Describe the purpose of the Incident Command System.
2. Identify major components of ICS and explain how they work together.
3. Explain the importance of integrated communications during a fire emergency.
4. Describe the roles of the Incident Commander and Rapid Intervention Team.
5. Explain the telecommunicator's role in supporting fire-scene communication, coordination, and accountability.

Content/Activities

- National Incident Management System (NIMS)
- NIMS Compliance Requirements
- Incident Command System Structure
- Incident Commander
- Rapid Intervention Team
- Maintaining Accountability
- ICS Functional Areas: Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance
- Integrated Communications and Module Knowledge Checks

Module 5: Disaster Management

This module prepares telecommunicators to support emergency communications during disasters and large-scale incidents. Learners examine the definition and characteristics of a disaster, the telecommunicator's responsibilities during periods of high call volume, the need to manage multiple incidents, resource allocation, radio coordination, proactive planning, and the importance of maintaining an accurate disaster resource list.

Module Objectives

Upon completion of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Define a disaster and describe its common characteristics.
2. Explain the telecommunicator's role during a disaster.
3. Describe the importance of coordinating and monitoring radio communications during large-scale incidents.
4. Identify principles of resource allocation and explain how they apply during a disaster.
5. Explain the importance of disaster pre-planning and maintaining an accurate, accessible resource list.

Content/Activities

- What Is a Disaster?
- Disaster Characteristics
- Telecommunicator's Role During a Disaster
- Managing Multiple Calls and Incidents
- Resource Allocation and Radio Coordination
- World Trade Center Bombing Case Example
- Proactive Disaster Planning and Interagency Communication
- Disaster Resource Lists and Module Knowledge Checks

Final Course Assessment

Final Quiz
The instructional modules are followed by a Final Quiz designed to assess learner understanding of the major concepts presented throughout the Fire Service Dispatch Certification course.

Assessment Coverage

- Fire Call Process
- Fire Service Operations
- Fire Behavior
- Incident Command System
- Disaster Management
- Firefighter and Caller Safety
- Pre-Arrival Instructions
- Resource and Communication Coordination

Conclusion

The course conclusion reinforces the major responsibilities and knowledge areas required of a Fire Service Dispatch-certified telecommunicator. It revisits fire call handling, fire service operations, fire behavior, coordinated incident management, disaster response, firefighter protection, and the telecommunicator's role in providing accurate information and safe, appropriate instructions.

Conclusion Objectives
Upon completion of the course conclusion, learners will be able to:

1. Summarize the telecommunicator's role in fire and rescue incidents.
2. Explain the importance of gathering and relaying accurate information to fire service responders.
3. Reinforce the role of pre-planning and coordinated response during emergencies and disasters.

4. Explain the importance of Pre-Arrival Instructions during fire and rescue incidents.
5. Identify tactics used by the telecommunicator to support firefighter safety while responding to and operating at an emergency scene.

Content/Activities

- Review of Fire Call Handling
- Review of Fire Service Operations
- Review of Fire Behavior
- Review of Incident Command and Coordinated Communications
- Review of Disaster Management and Pre-Planning
- Review of Pre-Arrival Instructions
- Review of Firefighter Safety Responsibilities
- Course Conclusion

Course Completion Criteria

To successfully complete this course and earn a certificate and continuing education hours, learners must achieve a minimum score of 75%. The quiz must be completed within 60 minutes.

- CE hours awarded: 2
- Certificate duration: 12 Months

Technical Requirements

- Desktop, laptop, or mobile device
- Speakers or headphones
- High-speed Internet access
- A current web browse