



South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation

South Carolina Fire Academy

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**Ken Kerber, Assistant State Fire Marshal
Fire Academy Superintendent**



S.C. Fire Academy Earns ProBoard Accreditation



The South Carolina Fire Academy recently achieved accreditation through the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (ProBoard), which provides further acknowledgement of the quality instruction and leadership being provided to the fire service.

Entities achieving accreditation through ProBoard are recognized as having met the rigors of review by an independent organization. This third-party independent review assures candidates and governance bodies that the SCFA meets national standards. The accreditation also ensures uniformity of qualifications, which allows students trained at the SCFA more mobility to or from ProBoard states.

The ProBoard accreditation is effective beginning January 15, 2015. Additionally, the Academy has been accredited through the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) since 1993.

If you have specific questions not addressed below, contact your regional coordinator or the accreditation/certification staff at (803) 896- 9078 or (803) 896-4074.

FAQ

The S.C. Fire Academy is accredited to which ProBoard levels?

The Academy is initially accredited to the following levels:

- Firefighter I and II, Airport Firefighter, Fire Officer I and II, Fire and Life Safety Educator I, Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialist, Fire Instructor I and II.

The Driver Operator series receives approval April 1, 2015. These levels include:

- Driver Operator Pumper, ARFF, Mobile Water Supply, and Aerial.

What special testing is required for ProBoard?

Accredited entities, such as the SCFA, are required to have the ability to test the entire NFPA Professional Qualification Standard for the subject area. For written and practical skills, the Academy will use the same testing elements currently used for IFSAC. ProBoard and IFSAC do not require separate testing.

I am certified through IFSAC. What do I need to do to achieve ProBoard certifications?

If a South Carolina firefighter was previously certified through IFSAC before January 15, 2015, he will need to retest (written exam only) for the specific level. Unfortunately, the two accrediting groups do not allow transfer from one to the other. If a firefighter is certified from one, he can

move forward in the certification process (i.e. student has an IFSAC certification for Fire Officer I, he can enroll and become certified as a Fire Officer II through IFSAC and ProBoard).

If a firefighter moves from another state and is certified through ProBoard, how does he transfer his certifications into South Carolina?

ProBoard accreditation allows the S.C. Fire Academy to accept ProBoard certifications for reciprocity, as long as the Academy is accredited to that specific level.

Reciprocity is the awarding of certification, without any required testing, to those individuals who have previously been certified at an occupational level by a ProBoard accredited entity. IFSAC certification will result in IFSAC reciprocity; ProBoard certification will result in ProBoard reciprocity.

The candidate must complete an *Application for Reciprocity* [form](#) and submit copies of ProBoard certificates. The form must include his current South Carolina fire chief's signature.

When I get my IFSAC certificate, will I also receive a ProBoard Certificate?

Once a student successfully completes testing, for areas where we are ProBoard accredited, the SCFA will issue an IFSAC certificate. The student will also receive an *Application for Registration and Certification* for ProBoard. Academy staff will complete the "Certifying Entity Confirmation" section. The student must complete the applicant information section and submit it, along with a \$15 processing fee, to ProBoard. ProBoard will register the candidate in the ProBoard National Registry and mail a certificate to the student.