



Comprehensive Program Review

FINAL SUMMARY REPORT

Associate Certificate in Exterior Fire Fighter Operations
Associate Certificate in Interior Fire Fighter Operations
Certificate in Full Service Fire Fighter Operations

School of Public Safety, Fire & Safety Division



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1. Self-Study Report Summary

Conclusions

The comprehensive review of the EFOAS, IFFOAS, and FSFO1 programs highlighted the complexities and challenges inherent in their structure, delivery, and administration. Most program delivery occurs at arm's length from JIBC. Students are volunteers for their community's fire department (therefore post employment), admitted to the program at the direction of their Training Officer. Their progression is determined by their department, and JIBC has little ability to influence their retention. The delivery model has made the administration of the programs complex, as it does not align well with JIBC systems, procedures, and processes designed with more conventional credentials in mind. Further, in aligning FSFO1 with the core 21.5 credits of the Certificate in Fire Fighting Technologies program and NFPA 1001, FSFO1 (and therefore also EFOAS and IFFOAS) is less able to respond to changing requirements as defined by the BC Minimum Training Standards, which are the standards BC fire departments must adhere to. And in fact, while the curriculum mirrors the BC Minimum Training Standards, it is not perfectly aligned. Students who complete one, or multiple levels of JIBC's programs do not achieve full compliance with the provincial Standard of the same level, as the components of the Standard that JIBC does not teach.

In consideration of these complexities, and in consultation with the Vice

- x Recommendation #2 Evaluate FSFO1 against the new consolidated NFPA 1010 Standard for Firefighter, Fire Apparatus Driver/ Operator, Airport Firefighter, and Marine Firefighting for LandBased Firefighters Professional Qualifications and revise as appropriate.
- x Recommendation #3 Review opportunities to improve registration and student record systems and processes to better serve the needs of students.
- x Recommendation #4: EFFOAS, IFFOAS and FSFO1 program staff meet face with Training Officers from various volunteer departments annually to ensure communication and quality control.

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- Would the Exterior, Interior, and Fire Service Fire Fighter programs be better situated as professional certificates, not academic credentials?
- Should the programs be adjusted to separate from the Certificate in Fire Fighting Technologies and align it with the BC Minimum Training Standards?
- How can we improve program management and administration?

The PAC supported the recommendation to transition to professional programs. Most volunteer fire fighters are mandated to be trained for the fire service but have no desire to be a career fire fighter, and thus an academic credential is of little interest to them. As departments typically acknowledge and celebrate when students complete their courses, not attending JIBC convocation would not be seen as an issue. Further the change to professional programs would allow more flexibility to respond to the needs of the field, although the PAC acknowledged a layer of governance was still required and constrained in some ways by accreditation requirements.

Views on strict alignment to the BC Minimum Training Standards and the value of accredited programs varied. However, the PAC agreed that the names of the programs caused confusion, particularly given the disconnect between JIBC curriculum and the provincial standards. Renaming the programs was agreed to be a good solution.

Consensus was that there was an ongoing place for JIBC in providing training of volunteer fire fighters. However, the PAC felt that increasing regional training activities, being more responsive to communities, improving administrative processes, offering options (evaluation only versus instruction and evaluation) were key to sustainability.

3. Self-Study Team Response to ERT Report

The Program Review Team was very pleased with the discussion at the PAC meeting and appreciated the input of those present. The Fire & Safety Division is committed to formally creating a separate PAC for vocational programs, and this has been included in the action plan in the Quality Assurance Action Plan (QAAP, Appendix 1). Overall, the PAC's recommendations aligned with those of the SSR and confirmed a path forward.

4. Final Recommendations & Action Plan

In the process of building the QAAP, the recommendations from the Self-Study Report were refined and focused, and then enhanced by the feedback from the PAC and further internal discussions. Recommendations were translated to actionable tasks grouped under three goals:

1. Vocational fire fighter programs are structured and delivered to meet the needs of BC's volunteer fire departments and their members
2. EFOAS/IFFOAS/FSFO1 curriculum reflects current standards and best practice in fire fighting.
3. FSD is better able to leverage data to inform future program and curriculum improvements



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The resulting QAAP details substantial changes to vocational fire fighter training programs at JIBC. This represents an opportunity to ask further questions on how this training fits within the broader provincial context and what additional steps might be required to ensure ongoing sustainability.

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