

Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigator



WHAT IS AN AAFS STANDARD FACTSHEET?

The AAFS produces clear, concise, and easy to understand factsheets to summarize the contents of technical and professional forensic science standards on the OSAC Registry. They are **not** intended to provide an interpretation for any portion of a published standard.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STANDARD?

This standard defines the Job Performance Requirements (JPR) for fire investigators. These JPRs are the specific job tasks that fire investigators need to perform. The JPR includes the requisite knowledge and skills that are needed to complete the job task. The JPRs are supported by requisite knowledge areas of fire science, fire investigation, fire scene safety, and building systems.

NFPA 1033 is based on the investigation methodology of [NFPA 921-21](#) which together form the basis for certification of fire and explosion investigators.

WHY IS THIS STANDARD IMPORTANT? WHAT ARE ITS BENEFITS?

The use of this standard assures that fire investigators are trained and qualified to execute fire investigations consistent with [NFPA 921-21](#). It forms the basis for certification of fire investigators.

The standard provides a clear definition of the specific tasks involved in fire investigation, and clearly describes the requisite knowledge and skills that investigators need to perform their duties.



HOW IS THE STANDARD USED AND WHAT ARE THE KEY ELEMENTS?

The key elements of the standard are the areas of requisite knowledge for fire investigation and the Job Performance Requirements (JPR) to allow the fire investigator to properly perform their duties. The requisite knowledge areas include fire science (fire chemistry, thermodynamics, fire dynamics, explosion dynamics), fire investigation (fire analysis, fire investigation methodology and technology, evidence documentation, collection, and preservation), fire scene safety (hazard recognition/evaluation/mitigation, hazardous materials, safety regulations), and building systems (construction types, fire protection systems, electricity and electrical systems, fuel gas systems). The annex describes the detailed knowledge required in each area.

There are seven JPRs defined in the standard:

1. General
2. Scene examination
3. Scene documentation
4. Evidence collection/preservation
5. Interviewing
6. Post-incident investigation (after the scene examination)
7. Presentation (written and verbal reports, including testimony)

Each JPR has specific sub-tasks and has defined knowledge and skill requirements.

