Unit 2: Investigator Qualifications

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Investigator Qualifications

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Objectives
Describe the skill sets needed by the Fire Investigator and the potential Technical and Forensic Experts that may be needed to support the investigation
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Skill Sets

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Basic Foundation

FI-110

Wildland Fire Observations and Origin Scene Protection for First Responders
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Primary Education

FI-210 Wildland Fire Origin and Cause Determination

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Principal Guidelines

NFPA 921: Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations

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Principal Guidelines (Con’t)

NFPA 1033: Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigator

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Your Experts

Basic Foundations for your Experts:

- Knowledge
- Skill
- Experience
- Training
- Education
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Experts Activities

Everything that your Experts do must be:
- Relevant
- Reliable
- Testable
- Subject to Peer Review
- Generally Accepted within the discipline
- Subject to known or potential rate of error

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Experts

GIS:
- Accurate Maps and Geographic Relief

Geomatics Engineers:
- Natural features and design comparisons
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Experts (Con’t)

Photography:
- Accurate Close ups and Activity Documentation

Electrical Engineers:
- Equipment Design, installation, and Use

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Experts (Con’t)

Metallurgist:
- Metal Analysis and Components

Mechanical Engineers:
- Construction Design and Components
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Experts (Con’t)

Arborist:
- Tree and Branch Analysis and Strength

Entomologist:
- Wood degradation and weakening

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Experts (Con’t)

DNA/Forensic Labs:
- Tree and Branch Identification

Fire Behavior:
- Fire Patterns and Timing of Events
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Experts (Con’t)

Meteorologist:
- Weather Patterns and Weather History

Fire Investigators:
- Second Opinions and Fresh Eyes

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The Attorney’s

How they can help the Fire Investigation:
- Provide Technical Advise
- Help direct the activities to establish firm basis for the case
- Establish rapport with the Fire Investigators
- Establish “Attorney-Client” Relationship and “Work-Product” Protections for activities
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Case Management
As with any activity – ICS Rules:
- Establish your organizational structure
- Assign a Specific Individual that will serve as the "IC - Case Manager"
- Provide the Case Manager with the authority and responsibility to develop and manage the activities.
- Ensure the Case Manager can and will carry the case through the entire process and will provide continuity until the jury renders a verdict.

Knowledge Check
During an Investigation of Power Line Caused Wildfires, various Experts should be brought into the case:
A. When the case has been slated to go to trial
B. When the attorney says they are needed
C. When the Fire Investigator requires the expertise to assist with or to support the investigation
D. When the opposing side begins to challenge your fire causation methodology and theories

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Knowledge Check

Incorporating the attorneys into the case should be done:
A. Early on so that they can assist with the case and incorporate “attorney-client” and “work-product” protections
B. Once it is determined that the case might be litigated
C. When the attorneys ask to join in on the investigation
D. When the suspect electric utility has assigned an attorney for their involvement

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### Unit 2: Investigator Qualifications

#### Knowledge Check

Investigations of Power Line cause Wildfires should have a Case Manager assigned:

- A. Once the evidence has been collected and documented
- B. When the case has been determined to involve criminal negligence
- C. When the investigation has determined that the fire’s cause is suspected to be electric utility related
- D. When the case has been slated for fire suppression cost collection or damage recovery

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**TRANSITION** to Unit 3: System Description