

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ARSON INVESTIGATORS

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***P.O. Box 212486
Columbia, SC 29221-2486***

SOUTH CAROLINA CHAPTER 33

Professional Credentialing Position Statement

The Board of Directors for the SCIAAI recognizes the importance of professional credentialing as a way to demonstrate professional competence in fire investigation. While becoming credentialed is not necessary for an investigator to be qualified and competent in the profession, it demonstrates a commitment to training, education, and experience a fire investigator should strive to attain. Further, the achievement of a professional credential is not required to conduct fire investigations, but it does help ensure credentialed members are seeking to meet the job requirements of NFPA 1033, *Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigators*.

The Board encourages all members to maintain records of their experience as a fire investigator, to include total fires worked, structure fires, vehicle fires, and their causes (to include undetermined). Further, the Board encourages all members to develop and maintain a current curriculum vitae (CV) for presentation during legal proceedings. The CV will also allow members to maintain their training records, education, and experience in one place as they prepare to challenge professional credentialing and certification tests.

The Certified Fire Investigator (CFI) credential is widely recognized in the profession as the highest level of fire investigation certification. The CFI application and examination process includes a thorough assessment of the candidate as a whole. It encourages applicants to examine their education, training, and experience as a measurement of achievement in the profession. The re-certification process helps ensure members are staying current in the latest methods and theories of fire investigation. CFI is the standard to which fire investigators should strive to achieve.

The Board recognizes that members may not be employed in a full-time capacity as fire investigators. In this instance, attainment of the CFI certification may be difficult. However, certifications such as Fire Investigation Technician (FIT), Evidence Collection Technician (ECT), Certified Instructor (CI), and the Motor Vehicle Fire Credential Endorsement Program are excellent ways to demonstrate commitment to the profession while earning valuable experience and training. Members are encouraged to seek out training programs that will allow them to attain these certifications.

Finally, the Board recognizes that members need assistance in obtaining professional credentials. The Board offers our support to members needing guidance with obtaining certification, completing applications, or finding training. We will seek to bring training to the organization that will improve knowledge of the 16 topics that a fire investigator shall maintain as up-to-date basic knowledge beyond the high school level as required by NFPA 1033. The Board has established an IAAI Professional Certification Program Liaison that will assist members seeking to obtain any credential and certification offered by the IAAI.