Update from the Committee on Accreditation

Pro Board 2026 Education and Accreditation Conference

1

Where I'm coming from:

- 36th year in public safety
  - Fire, EMS, RN, EM
- Ed.D. EPOL, Pub Safety Culture & Change
- 26th year at the University of Illinois
- 16th year with the Pro Board
- 10th year chairing the COA

2

3

4

5

The Pro Board Committee on Accreditation is the thought leader in accredited certification.

6

Why?

- Accredited Certification leads to better-trained responders.
- Better trained responders lead to safer emergency response.
- Safer emergency response leads to safer communities.
- Safer communities lead to a safer world.

7

Why?

- Accredited Certification leads to better-trained responders.
- Better trained responders lead to safer emergency response.
- Safer emergency response leads to safer communities.
- Safer communities lead to a safer world.

8

Why?

- Accredited Certification leads to better-trained responders.
- Better trained responders lead to safer emergency response.
- Safer emergency response leads to safer communities.
- Safer communities lead to a safer world.

9

Why?

- Accredited Certification leads to better-trained responders.
- Better trained responders lead to safer emergency response.
- Safer emergency response leads to safer communities.
- Safer communities lead to a safer world.

10

Asking the COA to ignore a non-accreditable practice is asking us to place less value on the safety of your constituents

11

Just because a site team missed a non-accreditable area on the last visit DOES NOT mean that we will miss or ignore it on the next visit.

12

How?

The Pro Board aims to reach the **greatest** number of emergency responders through the **smallest** number of accredited agencies.

13

Specific topics to share:

14

13. Self Assessment 2.0

1. Answer the question, the whole question, and nothing but the question.
2. Paste ONLY THE RELEVANT portions of the policy.
3. Share your full Policy/Procedure manual for context.

15

Self Assessment 2.0

If we can't easily discern your answer to the question, we will return the self assessment.

If you're copying and pasting the same content from your policies more than once, double-check that you're answering the question.

Not sure? Ask us.

16

12. Accreditation Management System 2.0

- Coming Soon!

17

11. "Acceptable Methodologies"

1. Cognitive- Written
2. Cognitive- Project
3. Performance-Based- Psychomotor
4. Performance-Based- Process
5. Portfolio
6. Other- ONLY IF APPROVED FOR "OTHER."

18

19

"Acceptable Methodologies"

1. Cognitive- Written
2. Cognitive- Project
3. Performance-Based- Psychomotor
4. Performance-Based- Process
5. Portfolio
6. Other- ONLY IF APPROVED FOR "OTHER."

20

"Acceptable Methodologies"

1. Cognitive- Written
2. Cognitive- Project
3. Performance-Based- Psychomotor
4. Performance-Based- Process
5. Portfolio
6. Other- ONLY IF APPROVED FOR "OTHER."

21

"Acceptable Methodologies"

1. Cognitive- Written
2. Cognitive- Project
3. Performance-Based- Psychomotor
4. Performance-Based- Process
5. Portfolio
6. Other- ONLY IF APPROVED FOR "OTHER."

22

"Acceptable Methodologies"

1. Cognitive- Written
2. Cognitive- Project
3. Performance-Based- Psychomotor
4. Performance-Based- Process
5. Portfolio
6. Other- ONLY IF APPROVED FOR "OTHER."

23

"Acceptable Methodologies"

1. Cognitive- Written
2. Cognitive- Project
3. Performance-Based- Psychomotor
4. Performance-Based- Process
5. Portfolio
6. Other- ONLY IF APPROVED FOR "OTHER."

24

10. Timeline for Applications

- Extensions of Accreditation:, most Changes in Practice:

Allow 60 days minimum.

- Self-Assessments:

Allow 6 months from when you click submit to have the site visit.

25

9. PQ CC SOG TG WOW!

26

8. Submission Groupings:

- 1010: 5, 6, 7
- 1010: 8, 9, 10
- 1010:11-17
- 1006: Max of 2 levels in one application
- 470: Awr, Ops, Mission Specifics*
- 470: Technician, Specialists
- 470: IC, Safety Officer, Others
- 1020: Officer 1-4
- 1020: Instructor 1-3
- 1020: Live Fire levels

27

7. Testing with Video

- Needs to mirror your in-person evaluation methods.
- Needs to be approved BEFORE you start.

28

6. Be VERY careful with who you let deliver your exams.

29

Be VERY VERY careful with **for-profit** agents who you let deliver your exams.

30

5. Document Review for RS/RK

31

4. YOU are the AHJ for testing-related content and decisions, not your testing customers.

32

3. Chapters/Levels may be tested together as long as they are scored separately.

33

The NEXT edition of NFPA 470 will change how some of you test Mission Specific chapters.

34

2. Changes to COA review practices:

- ADMIN REVIEW if:
  - No changes to the standard/level
  - One JPR change/Minor changes
- COA REVIEW if:
  - New standard/level to the agency
  - Major changes to content or formatting

35

Consent Agenda, CY 2025

193 Applications in 2025

131 Met examples after tech review → 68%

(Was 25% in CY 2024)

62 Went to COA review, then were approved after minor modifications.

36

Administrative Review Process:

- Complete local validation.
- Complete and submit AMM.
- Tech Review compares the AMM to the examples.
- If it matches the examples,
  - It goes to the Vice Chair.
  - Vice chair verifies that it meets the example and approves.

37

Other Possible Outcomes:

1. If it is between 99% and 90% of the example, the TA flags the differences and sends to the next Monday staff meeting. Staff directs the application to be approved or sends to a COA review team.
2. If more than 90% variance, TA returns to the agency to verify methods, and goes back to step 3, then sends to a COA review team.
3. Directly to COA Review if:
   A. New standard/level/chapter to the agency
   B. Major changes to the standard from the technical committee

38

1. NFPA 3000: Active Shooter/ Hostile Event Response

Chapter 13- Competencies for Fire and EMS Personnel

39

Switching Topics

Artificial Intelligence and Accredited Testing

40

41

42

When did TICs enter the fire service?

43

When did TICs enter the fire service?

1998

44

When were TICs added to the NFPA FF standard?

45

When were TICs added to the NFPA FF standard?

2024

46

47

48

KEY POINT #1:

Use of AI for testing isn't coming, it's here.

49

KEY POINT #2:

AI doesn't replace your people. It's a force-multiplier for your people.

50

KEY POINT #3

Your students are already using it.

51

E. Rogers, "Diffusion of Innovation"

52

G. Moore, “Crossing the Chasm”

53

G. Moore, “Crossing the Chasm”

54

Open versus Private AI Models

55

OPEN AI Models

- Not secure
- Not indexed
- No quality control
- May rely on unreliable sources
- Hallucinations- it builds upon its own creations.

56

PRIVATE AI Models

- Secure
  - Development
  - Grading
  - Storage
- Indexed
- Validated by your team
- You choose the sources
- Bias detection
- More **valid**
- More **reliable**

57

If you are using publicly-available exam questions, they are already out there.

58

For Products, use AI to:

59

60

For Psychomotor & Process, use AI to:

- Create evaluation checklists
- Evaluate videos of students
- Evaluate evaluators
- Analyze student performance
- Interact with avatars
- Recommend tool improvements

61

62

For Portfolio Assessments

Compare syllabi to your requirements

63

64

65

66

We don't always get it right.

But we're getting it more right than wrong.

Like you, we're trying. And we're learning.

217-390-9000

72

How can we help?

73