



THREAT SUPPRESSION, INCORPORATED

THREAT SUPPRESSION®

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Joint Public Safety Response to Fire-as-a-Weapon: The ABC²s - Practical

Executive Summary:

The Joint Public Safety Response to Fire-as-a-Weapon practical course combines classroom instruction with practical training that places law enforcement and fire personnel in the same operational problem. Participants apply fire-behavior knowledge, joint command principles, rescue tactics, fire-department resources, and coordinated movement during live-smoke, live-fire, force-on-force, and scenario-based exercises. The program can be configured as a one-day or two-day hands-on course, commonly delivered as a 16-hour integrated practical or an advanced 20-hour program with a four-hour lecture and two practical days.

THE CHALLENGE: Many law enforcement agencies and fire departments have not planned or trained for fire-as-a-weapon event, despite these events occurring almost daily in the United States. Most agencies train for fires and hostile incidents separately. Very few agencies have practiced this training during live smoke and fire. Practical training forces responders to make decisions while smoke, heat, violence, and collapsing options compete for attention.

Course Overview:

Length	One-day or two-day hands-on practical; commonly 16 hours, or 20 hours when paired with a four-hour lecture and two practical days.
Format	Classroom instruction, fire-behavior training, practical stations, live smoke and fire, force-on-force, and capstone scenarios.
Audience	Law enforcement and fire personnel, including patrol officers, SWAT and tactical operators, fire and company officers, and agency-recognized instructors.
Class Size	Up to 50 for the integrated practical and generally up to 40 for the advanced two-day practical. Final limits depend on the facility, equipment, and staffing.
Prerequisites	Agency-recognized instructors; prior room- and building-clearing training for law enforcement; apparatus and live-burn qualifications for fire personnel. The practical course is physically demanding.
Cost	Customized quote based on format, scope, facility, staffing, equipment, travel, and lodging.

What Participants Will Learn:

Why Fire-as-a-Weapon Requires Joint Training

Fire-as-a-weapon is not simply a structure fire that occurs during a police operation. It is a hostile event in which smoke or fire is introduced to increase complexity, deny entry, block escape routes, trap occupants, attack responders, or increase lethality. The lecture gives law enforcement, fire, EMS, dispatch, and command personnel a shared understanding of how fire changes movement, access, survivability, and operational priorities.

Research, History, and the ABC2 Framework

The course is grounded in acquired-structure burns, commercial burn-building exercises, live-fire training, and repeated joint operations with law enforcement and fire personnel. Participants examine notable fire-as-a-weapon events and the lessons they provide for command, access, egress, responder safety, and victim rescue. The program also uses the ABC2 framework developed by Threat Suppression in 2013: Ambush, Barricade, Civil Unrest, and Complex Coordinated Attacks. Each category creates a different operational problem and requires coordination among law enforcement, fire, EMS, dispatch, command staff, and supporting agencies.

Case Studies and Operational Lessons

The lecture uses case studies from the United States and abroad to show how fire changes a hostile event. Examples include the 1982 Detroit high-rise attack, the 2013 Hialeah apartment fires and barricade, the 2019 Cincinnati apartment fire during a standoff, the 2020 Seattle hostage rescue in smoke and fire, the 2020 Honolulu barricade and neighborhood fire, and the 2008 complex coordinated attacks in Mumbai. The cases examine ignition, fire growth, blocked egress, attacks on responding personnel, evacuation, hostage rescue, property loss, and the consequences of delayed or uncoordinated decisions.

Fire Behavior and Tactical Operations

Participants learn to recognize basic fire behavior and smoke indicators, understand how fire growth and ventilation affect the interior environment, and identify conditions that threaten occupants and responders. The lecture introduces the four phases of fire as used in the course and explains how each phase affects survivability, movement, and tactical options. It also addresses basic ways responders can limit the spread of fire and its byproducts while waiting for or coordinating fire-department support. The lecture does not qualify participants to perform structural firefighting or replace agency-specific fire, EMS, or tactical training. Its purpose is to improve recognition, communication, decision-making, and the timely integration of the resources that a hostile fire event requires.

Selectable Practical Configurations

The practical program can be configured to meet the host agency's mission and training environment. A one-day hands-on version introduces patrol officers to fire-as-a-weapon events. A two-day tactical operator version provides deeper live-fire and force-on-force application, commonly as a 16-hour integrated practical or a 20-hour program that includes a four-hour lecture. A separate two-day configuration can emphasize managing fire-as-a-weapon during large-scale civil unrest. Final station selection depends on the facility, equipment, staffing, and safety plan.

Learning Objectives:

At the conclusion of the selected program, participants will be able to:

1. Define fire-as-a-weapon events and distinguish them from conventional structure fires and ordinary tactical incidents.
2. Describe how perpetrators may use smoke and fire to increase complexity, deny entry, block egress, trap occupants, and attack responders.
3. Explain the ABC2 framework: Ambush, Barricade, Civil Unrest, and Complex Coordinated Attacks.
4. Describe the history and operational lessons of significant fire-as-a-weapon events.
5. Recognize basic fire behavior and smoke indicators that affect responder and occupant survivability.
6. Identify how fire growth, smoke movement, ventilation, water application, and building construction affect tactical decisions.
7. Explain the respective responsibilities and limitations of law enforcement and fire personnel during a joint fire-as-a-weapon response.
8. Coordinate breaching, ventilation, entry, rescue, and fire-suppression support operations in a hostile environment.
9. Deploy and use hose lines, ground ladders, positive-pressure fans, and other fire-department resources within the selected training scope.
10. Describe and, where appropriate, practice the tactical use of fire apparatus and armored vehicles during rescue and fire-suppression support operations.
11. Conduct searches and victim or downed-officer rescues in low-visibility and no-visibility environments.
12. Apply practical methods for moving responders and victims through changing fire, smoke, access, and threat conditions.
13. Use simple rope-rescue systems or other approved methods to expedite high-threat extractions when included in the course design.
14. Apply integrated response principles to residential, commercial, high-rise, vehicle, barricade, and civil-unrest scenarios.
15. Manage a hostile mass-casualty incident involving multiple casualties, multiple threats, and simultaneous fire operations.
16. Demonstrate coordinated decision-making and communication during a capstone fire-as-a-weapon exercise.

Host Agency Requirements:

The host agency is responsible for coordinating the course, registering participants, obtaining any applicable continuing-education credit, and providing the classroom, audiovisual equipment, practical-training locations, local fire-department resources, and participant equipment required for the selected configuration. The host must confirm that the training facility can safely support live smoke, live fire, force-on-force, simulated munitions, tactical movement, and the selected practical stations. The classroom, skills areas, fire-training facility, and required apparatus must be available for the full scheduled program.

Depending on the selected configuration, host-provided resources may include a fully equipped engine company; straight-stick and tower ladder companies; a hydrant capable of flowing at least 1,500 gallons per minute; a class A burn building; approved class A burn materials; smoke machines and smoke concentrate; a flashover simulator when available; a forcible-breaching door and wood props; hydraulic breaching equipment; an armored vehicle such as a BearCat or MRAP; two four-door junked

vehicles; two police vehicles or training vehicles; and a Gator, Mule, or comparable all-terrain vehicle. The host must also provide the equipment listed in the approved course equipment plan, including APRs with appropriate training filters, training weapons or cleared duty weapons, simulated-munition weapons and ammunition when force-on-force is selected, issued tactical evacuation equipment, ballistic protective equipment, gloves, helmets, and eye protection for all participants.

The host is responsible for securing any required live-burn approvals, exemptions, facility authorizations, and local safety reviews, including an NFPA 1403 exemption or equivalent authorization when required for law-enforcement participation in live smoke and fire. Local certified live-burn instructors and other qualified safety personnel must be available when required by the facility, the authority having jurisdiction, or the selected station plan. Final equipment, staffing, safety, and attendance requirements will be confirmed during scheduling because the needs differ between the integrated practical and advanced two-day configurations.

About Threat Suppression:

Threat Suppression, Incorporated is a research-driven safety, security, and public-safety training and consulting firm founded in 2012. The company is a leading provider of integrated active assailant training for the Department of War, providing more than 165 classes at 45 major installations. The company has invested more than 50,000 hours in internal active assailant research. Threat Suppression serves as a principal member of NFPA 3000 and participates in multiple state and federal ASHE workgroups that shape national active assailant preparedness standards and policy.

The company's leadership has commanded active assailant events and was lead author on the 2021 Oxford High School mass shooting after-action report, one of the most comprehensive analyses of an active assailant incident response. Threat Suppression provides active assailant preparedness, rescue task force training, emergency management support, behavioral threat assessment and management, exercises, after-action reviews, and physical security services to federal agencies, military installations, public safety organizations, healthcare systems, schools, and private organizations. Our work combines operational experience, applied research, and field-tested instruction.

In 2013, the company developed the ABC2 framework for fire-as-a-weapon response and began conducting joint research and live-fire training with law enforcement and fire personnel. Since then, Threat Suppression has conducted more than 75 live-fire structural burns and provided training to federal agencies, military installations, SWAT teams, fire departments, and other public-safety organizations. Our work combines operational experience, applied research, and field-tested instruction.

To Schedule or Learn More:

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Course Page: www.threatsuppression.com/fire-as-a-weapon

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