



## **CURRICULUM VITAE DONALD J. PERKINS, CFI**

### ***Area of Specialization:***

Fire Investigation/Litigation – Case File Review - Consulting - Instructor

### ***Background and Professional Experience:***

Mr. Perkins' background consists of education/technical training and over 50-years of combined experience as a full paid Public Suppression Firefighter, Fire Prevention Officer, Fire Investigator, Captain, and as owner / Fire Investigator for Fire Cause Analysis. He began his work as a full paid firefighter in 1965 and worked in a major municipal fire department for 28 years and retired in 1994 at the rank of Captain. As a Fire Suppression Captain, Mr. Perkins worked on shift for over ten years. He was assigned to both Engine and Truck Companies at Battalion Headquarters in one of the busiest fire stations in San Jose, California. He was Incident Commander on numerous fires over the course of his career. Mr. Perkins also held the position of Fire Investigator (2 years) and Arson Unit Supervisor / Investigator for 4 years. During this time frame he conducted or supervised over 3,000 fire investigations. Mr. Perkins was also assigned to the San Jose Fire Prevention Bureau for over four years working in code enforcement, plan checking, and fire protection systems inspections. Mr. Perkins met the standards and successfully passed his tests to be qualified as a NFPA Certified Fire Protection Specialist.

Mr. Perkins founded the firm Fire Cause Analysis in 1980. In addition to conducting his own investigations, he presently manages a team of highly qualified fire investigators. Mr. Perkins has conducted or supervised over 4,000 fire investigations and has over 40-years-experience in fire/arson investigations involving commercial and residential property, vehicle and marine vessels, arson and fraud, and has given expert witness testimony in both State and Federal Courts.

Mr. Perkins is a certified Level II Fire Investigator through the California State Fire Marshal's Office. He is also a "Pro-Board - Certified Fire Investigator" by the International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI). In July, 2005 he met the certification standards established for a Type 3 Wildland Fire Investigator developed by the National Wildland Coordinating Group. He is a licensed Private Investigator in California, Nevada, Oregon, and Arizona. He has a "Lifetime Teaching Credential" in the State of California and teaches the basic and advanced curriculum in Fire/Arson Investigation as directed by the California State Fire Marshal's Office. Mr. Perkins has taught students enrolled in the Fire Science Program at local colleges as well law enforcement personnel at the Criminal Justice Training Center in San Jose.

---

#### OFFICES:

California  
Arizona  
Oregon  
Nevada  
Washington  
N.Dakota

#### CORPORATE OFFICE:

935 PARDEE STREET  
BERKELEY, CA.  
94710-2623 USA  
800.726.5939  
[www.fcafire.com](http://www.fcafire.com)

Mr. Perkins has been a guest speaker and lecturer for the California Association of Arson Investigators, the International Association of Arson Investigators, and the International Association of Marine Investigators. Mr. Perkins was a member on the IAAI Certified Fire Investigators (CFI) Committee for three years and chaired the “IAAI Testing Committee” which writes the national certification test (CFI) for fire investigators. Mr. Perkins is a “co-author” on the IAAI Development Committee for the NFPA document “User’s Manual for NFPA 921”. Mr. Perkins was a project team member and contributed to the document “Performance of California Homes and Buildings in Urban Wildland Interface”, a grant provided to Fire Cause Analysis by the California State Fire Marshal’s office. Mr. Perkins is a contributing author for the “California Education Bar” and is the “co-author” on Chapter 12, Origin & Cause of Fire, in the 2008 – 2012 editions of “Scientific Evidence in California Criminal Cases”, a two-volume document for the benefit of practicing lawyers.

### ***Education/Training/Special Seminars:***

City of San Jose Fire Department – 8-week Fire Academy – 1967  
Explosive Ordnance Reconnaissance / Sabotage Device - 4/69  
Certificate of Achievement in Firemanship - 6/71  
San Jose City College, San Jose, California - 1972

- Associate of Arts Degree: Fire Science  
West Valley College, Saratoga, California - 1975
- Associate of Arts Degree: Business Management

California Fire Academy - Asilomar, California - Fire Investigations - I, II, III -1976-77  
California Fire Academy - Asilomar, California - Fire Investigation – 2B  
California Fire Academy - Asilomar, California - Fire Instructor - IA, IB  
California Fire Academy - Asilomar, California - Incident Command Tactics - I, II, III  
Santa Clara County Peace Officers School, Post Certified 1976  
Arson/Bomb Scene Investigation - Calif. State Fire Marshal's Office 1978  
National Fire Academy -Emmetsburg, Maryland - Fire/Arson Investigation School - 1979  
Fire Scene Photography - San Francisco, California - Kodak – 1980  
Hazardous Materials Familiarization Seminar - 11/80  
Advanced Fire Investigation - Denver Fire Department - 1981  
National Fire Academy - Emmetsburg, Maryland - Fire/Arson Detection Instructor – 1982  
Electrical Fire Investigations - San Francisco, California – Seminar - 1982  
California Department of Justice - Sacramento, California - Criminal Analysis - 1983  
San Jose Police Department - Crime Scene Investigator School - 1984  
Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms - Glenco, Georgia -Advanced Arson for Profit – 1985  
Fire Scene Photography - Santa Clara, California – Nikon - 1985  
Marine Casualty Investigations School - United States Coast Guard 1985  
F.B.I. Academy - Quantico, Virginia - Police/Arson School - 1986  
California Department of Justice - Sacramento, California - Surveillance Techniques - 1986  
F.B.I. Bomb Investigations - Gilroy, CA - Seminar  
Kinesics Interview Techniques - San Jose, California - 1989  
Determining the Cause and Origin of Fires & Explosions - NAFI – 1990  
Fire Protection Institute - Houston, Texas - Fire Marshals of North America 1992  
Advanced Concepts in Fire Investigation - Seminar - 1/93  
Dynamics of Fire Behavior - Factory Mutual Fire Test Facility - IAAI 10/93

Investigation of Large Loss Fires in Commercial & Industrial Buildings - IAAI - 4/94  
Introduction to Industrial and Commercial Fire Protection Engineering - UC Davis - 12/94  
Electrical & Gas Appliance Fire Investigations - Seminar – Fire Findings - 1995  
California Fair Claims Settlement Practices Regulations - 1993 / 1995 / 1997 / 1999  
Third International Conference on Fire Research and Engineering 10/99  
Fire Dynamics / Live Burn Training Seminar – AZ - IAAI / ATF / NIST - 3/2000  
National Fire Academy -Emmetsburg, Maryland – Courtroom Testimony Facilitator - 2001  
Fire and Materials Conference – Fire Investigations – San Francisco, CA – 2003-2007-2011  
Electrical Fire Investigations in Residential Dwellings - Seminar - 4/94  
Public Agency Training Council – Electrical Fire Investigation – 12/01  
NWCG – Wildland Fire Origin & Cause Determination – FI-210 – 7/05  
Wildland Fire Litigation Conference – Reno - 4/09, Sacramento 4-12, Monterey 3-15  
International Association of Arson Investigators-Annual Seminar’s – 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014  
2010, 09 07, 06, 05, 04, 03, 02, 00, 1999, 97, 95, 93, 91, 89, 88, 87  
California Conference of Arson Investigators Workshops (1979 – 2017)  
International Association of Marine Investigators – IAMI 2009, 2010

### ***Professional Experience:***

#### **Fire Cause Analysis, Berkeley, California - 1980 to Present**

President Emeritus - Fire Cause Analysis in partnership with President Dennis Field CFI, Chief Operations Officer - Ulises Castellon CPCU, Managing Engineer John White PE, CFI & Fire Protection Engineer, Geoff Hazard CFI, and Andy Breasly, CFEI, CFVI.

Mr. Perkins is an IAAI – Pro Board CFI, Forensic Specialties Accreditation Board CFI, (Certified Fire Investigator) and with the responsibility of directing and managing twenty highly qualified fire investigators. He works with law firms, and the insurance industry, providing additional services in all fire related disciplines including Computer Modeling, Fire Testing, Fire Safety Consulting, Mechanical & Electrical Engineering and Forensic Studies.

#### **San Jose Fire Department, San Jose, California - 1967-1994**

Firefighter / Driver - Engineer / Fire Prevention Officer / Fire Investigator - 1978-1980 / Captain 1980-1994 / Retired – Captain -February 4, 1994

#### **San Jose Fire Department, San Jose, California - 1984 to 1988**

Arson Unit Supervisor - Managed a staff of five fire investigators. Conducted and supervised over 3,000 investigations. Testified as an expert witness in Municipal and Superior Courts in both Criminal and Civil Cases.

#### **Campbell Fire Department, Campbell, California - 1965-1967**

Firefighter – Suppression

**United States Navy, 1961-1965**

Torpedomen 2<sup>nd</sup> Class, Qualified in Nuclear and Conventional Submarines

**United States Coast Guard Reserve, 11th Coast Guard District - 1980 to 1990  
Marine Safety Office, Investigations Unit**

Marine Casualty Investigator – Conducted numerous marine vessel fire investigations. Investigations included the explosion and fatality aboard the USMV Hess, the “Honda-Bluehawk” fire loss, and was a member of the marine Board investigating the fire and explosion aboard the tanker “Puerto Rican”.

**Mission College, Santa Clara, California – 1986 to 1994**

Fire Science Instructor - Teach basic and advanced Fire/Arson Investigation Courses to students enrolled in the Fire Science Program. Instruction in Fire Investigation, established by the State Fire Marshal's Office.

**American River College, Sacramento, California – 1990 to 1997**

Fire Science Instructor - Teach basic and advanced Fire/Arson Investigation Courses to students enrolled in the Fire Science Program. Instruction in Fire Investigation established by the California State Fire Marshal's Office.

**Evergreen Community College, San Jose, California - 1990 to 1997**

- Law Enforcement Training Center – Instructor
- Teach "Evidence Collection in Arson Investigations" class to Police Officers throughout the State of California.

**California Conference of Arson Investigators, San Luis Obispo, California**

- Guest lecture - July 97' CCAI conference
- Live Burn Facilitator – July 2000 conference
- Guest lecture - July 2013' CCAI conference
- Guest Lecture – March 2017 conference

**California Conference of Arson Investigators Roundtable**

- Guest lecture – 98 - 2010 – 2015 -2017 - CCAI Sacramento region roundtables

**International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI)**

- Guest Lecture - September 97 - IAAI Annual Conference - Olympia, Washington
- Guest Lecture – April 2016 - IAAI Annual Conference - Orlando, Florida

**Certified by the California Bar Association for Continued Education - 1996**

- Instructor for MCLE credits on the “Dynamics of Fire Investigation”

**38th RIMS (Risk & Insurance Management Society) Annual Conference -2000**

- Guest Lecture
- **34th Marine Investigators Conference West - 2002**, International Association of Marine Surveyors Inc., Guest Lecture

**Annual Conference – International Association of Marine Investigators - Galveston Texas 2010**

- Guest Speaker and live burns – 8 hours of “Introduction to Fire Investigations in Marine Vessels”

**California Conference of Arson Investigators – Monterey Roundtable, Monterey, CA 2013**

- Guest Speaker – 8 hours of “Introduction to Fire Investigations in Marine Vessels”

**San Diego Insurance Adjusters Association – San Diego, CA 2015,**

- Guest Speaker – 4 hours of “Fire Investigations in Marine Vessels”

**WSATI - “Western States Auto Theft Investigators” – Lake Tahoe, NV 2015**

- Guest Speaker – 4-hours of Vehicle Fire Investigations and Live Burn.

**WSATI - “Western States Auto Theft Investigators” – Lake Tahoe, NV 2017**

- Guest Speaker – 4-hours - “Fraud - Vehicle Fire Investigations” & Live Burn.

**NAIA - “National Association of Independent Insurance Adjusters” Coeur d’Alene, Idaho 2016**

- Guest speaker “DNA of Fire Investigations”.

**CPCU Adjusters Association – San Diego May 2017**

- Guest Speaker “DNA of Fire Investigations”

**Mid-Valley Claims Adjusters Association – Stockton July 2017**

- Guest Speaker “DNA of Fire Investigations”

**Claims Conference of Northern California – San Diego September 2017**

- Guest Speaker “Burn to Learn and DNA of Fire Investigations” Live Burn at Roseville Fire Department and 3-hour lecture presentation.

**WSATI - “Western States Auto Theft Investigators” – Las Vegas, NV January 2018**

- Guest Speaker – 8-hours of “Vehicle Fire Investigations” & Live Burn.

**Puget Sound Marine Claims Association – Seattle, WA February 2018**

- Guest Speaker – “Navigating Troubled Water Vessel Fire Investigations”

**Society of Marine Surveyors Claims Association – Oakland, CA February 2018**

- Guest Speaker – “Navigating Troubled Water Vessel Fire Investigations”

**California Conference of Arson Investigators – Newport Beach, CA Roundtable, CA 2018**

- Guest Speaker – 4 hours - “Fire Investigations in Marine Vessels”

**Co-Author “User’s Manual for NFPA 921” – Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations 2003**

- IAAI Development Committee - Published by National Fire Protection Association

**Co-Author – 2008 – 2010 Editions - “Scientific Evidence in California Criminal Cases” - Chapter 12, Origin & Cause of Fire.**

- A two-volume document for the benefit of practicing lawyers produced by the California Education Bar.

***Marine/Vessel Fire Experience:***

**US Navy** (1961 to 1965) - Served on USS Patrick Henry SSBN 599 (submarine, ballistic-nuclear) and USS Tigron SS419 - WWII fleet submarine - Missile Launch Technician and Torpedomen. Developed an understanding of ships, and working knowledge of propulsion systems, and equipment used.

**US Coast Guard** (1980 to 1990) – Reserves - Marine Casualty Investigator - Assigned to MSO San Francisco - Coast Guard Investigations at Coast Guard Island, Alameda, CA. - Conducted numerous investigations in the maritime field with responsibilities including the investigations in grounding, collisions, sinking of vessels, and vessel fires.

**Major Vessel Investigations:**

Investigation of the “Puerto Rican”, a tanker which caught fire off the San Francisco coast and sank. The vessel bow, and a tank were towed into San Francisco bay for examination. Mr. Perkins was assigned to the Marine Board of Inquiry for the loss and provided information as to possible causes as well as research on the vessel. The research was conducted by diving down to the remains of the vessel, collecting evidence and photographing damage from underwater.

The “Honda Blue Hawk” was carrying hundreds of new 1986 Honda’s, when it caught fire off the coast of California. After its extinguishment, it was towed into San Francisco bay where Mr. Perkins examined the vessel and participated in the investigation for the Coast Guard. Since the fire occurred in International waters and the ship was registered in Japan, no formal report was provided.

An explosion and fire on the USS Hess, located at the AAA Naval Shipyard in San Francisco, resulted in a fatality. Mr. Perkins was involved directly with the investigation to determine origin and cause of the explosion.

In 2012, Mr. Perkins conducted the investigation of an explosion and fire on the M/V Jupiter, a large container vessel, with a fire and explosion in the engine room, with injuries at sea. The vessel was examined for origin and cause of the incident with a successful conclusion in the port of Mazatlán, Mexico.

Mr. Perkins has provided expert witness information for the federal government and the US Attorney General's office in San Diego on a suspected fire and sinking of a vessel suspected of carrying narcotics.

As a private investigator with Fire Cause Analysis, Mr. Perkins has investigated dozens of fires of all types of vessels, including large sailboats, yachts, pleasure craft, fishing vessels and commercial vessels, including the "Argo Commodore" from the San Francisco "Red & White" fleet, the 208' – M/V - "Alaska Spirit" - large commercial fish processing vessel out of Seward, Alaska, the Motor Yacht "Mi Baur" 92' Hatteras-La Paz Mexico, the 102'–steel hull - motor yacht "Polar Bear" in San Pedro, California, the Motor Tug "Chief"- San Diego, and the "Tahoe Queen" paddle wheeler in Lake Tahoe. He is a member of the International Association of Marine Investigators (IAMI).

Mr. Perkins is also a certified NAUI Scuba Diver and a qualified Navy diver, which has been useful in conducting investigations and photographing underwater.

## **Major Fire Investigation Experience:**

Mr. Perkins has investigated numerous large loss fires and explosions in a variety of commercial and industrial buildings. The following list provides a sample of the variety of fire investigations he has personally been involved in:

Christian Brothers Winery Fire / Explosion, Parlier, CA  
MBA Polymers – Industrial – Dust explosion - Richmond, CA  
Andros Fire – Manufacturing – Berkeley, CA  
Interstate Bank Building – Hi-Rise - Commercial Office - Honolulu, Hawaii  
Liz Claiborne Factory – Garment Manufacturing – Colombo, Sri Lanka  
Subaru Observatory – Keck II Observatory - Mauna Kai – Hilo, Hawaii  
North Star – Ski Resort - Restaurant -Truckee, CA  
Kirkwood Ski Resort – Power plant – Kirkwood, CA  
Homewood Ski Resort – Lodge Fire – Homewood, CA  
Crescent City Pier – Pier Fire – Crescent City, CA  
Santa Barbara Pier – Pier Fire – Santa Barbara, CA  
Moro Bay Pier - Pier Fire – Moro Bay, CA  
San Francisco Pier – Pier Fire, San Francisco, CA  
Los Angeles Pier – 800' Pier fire and Warehouse, Los Angeles  
Gold Strike Casino – Hotel & Casino – Boulder City, Nevada  
El Dorado Hotel and Casino – Reno, Nevada  
KFX - Industrial Coal Processing Facility – Gillett, Wyoming  
NUMI Motors – Tank Farm – Fremont, CA  
San Francisco Opera House – Opera House – San Francisco, CA  
1330 Broadway – Hotel – Oakland, CA  
Yaser Store Fire – Retail -Sunnyside, WA  
Alaska Spirit–280' Fishing Vessel – Seward, Alaska  
M/V Blue Hawk – Vehicle Transport ship, San Francisco, CA  
M/V Puerto Rican – explosion/fire on Tanker – San Francisco, CA

M/V Jupiter – explosion / fire on Container Vessel – Mazatlán, Mexico  
USS Hess – explosion – AAA Shipyard, San Francisco, CA  
MI Baur’ – 92’ motor yacht – La Paz, Mexico  
Polar Bear – 105’ motor yacht – San Pedro, CA  
Motor Tug Queen – San Diego, CA  
Tahoe Queen – Touring paddle wheeler – Lake Tahoe, NV  
Rocky Mountain Gold Mine Fire, Elko, NV  
Fregosi Paint – Industrial – San Francisco, CA  
Rough & Ready - Wildland – Rough & Ready, CA  
Poe Fire – Wildland – Butte County, CA  
Galvin Fire – Wildland – Fallbrook, CA  
49er Fire – Wildland – Auburn, CA  
Caughlin Fire – Wildland – Reno, NV  
Washoe Fire – Wildland – Reno, NV  
Coast Sausage Fire – Industrial - Arson – Oakland, CA  
Tran Market Fire – Retail Strip Mall – Arson - Stockton, CA  
Mountain Cold Storage – Refrigeration cold storage – Washington  
Kamps Propane – Propane Incident – Lodi, CA  
University of California – Explosion / Fire, Irvine, CA  
University of California – Fire, Santa Cruz, CA  
University of Honolulu – Fire – Honolulu, HI  
Placer County Water Treatment Facility – Newcastle CA  
Hampton Hotel / Cannery Fire – San Francisco, CA  
Orthodox Church - Church - Los Altos, CA  
Friar Tucks - Restaurant - Commercial - Nevada City, CA  
Union Pacific Railroad – Rail Car - Wyoming  
Amtrak - Dining car - Washington, DC  
Amtrak – Rail car – New Orleans, LA  
Amtrak – Dorm Car – Chicago, Ill  
Amtrak – Coach / Collision & Fire – Fallon, NV  
Amtrak – Locomotive Fire – Chicago, IL  
Santana Row – Retail / Dwelling – San Jose, CA  
Forsgren Shopping Center – American Samoa  
Redwood Valley Business Park – Industrial - Redwood Valley, CA  
Sears – Department Store – Mexico City, Mexico  
Blyth Inc. – Manufacturing – Monterey, Mexico  
9ines – 9-story high rise – Omaha, Nebraska  
Makiki St. Condo’s – 11- story high rise – Honolulu, HI  
Wines Central – Warehouse – Vallejo, CA  
Christian Brothers Winery / storage facility – Visalia, CA  
Oakstone Winery Fire – Fair Play, CA  
Helwig Winery Fire – Plymouth, CA  
Prometheus Real Estate – 4-story condo –total loss – Santa Clara, CA  
Universal Studio Fire – Los Angeles, CA  
North Star Foods – Food processing plant - St. Charles, MN  
Galleria Fire – Shopping Center – Roseville, CA  
Natural Gas Explosion and Fire – San Bruno, CA  
“Promise Keepers” Business Building Fire, Denver, CO



Co-Generation Plant Fire – Milpitas, CA  
“Tuesday Morning” Commercial Fire - Citrus Heights, CA  
“Ross” home goods – Roseville, CA  
Baja Wood – Manufacturing Plant Fire -Playas de Rosario, Baja, Mexico  
National Cement Company – Fire – Kern County, CA  
Phillips Farm – Packing Warehouse / cold storage – Visalia, CA  
Turtle Bay Resort – Golf Kart Maintenance facility - Oahu, Hawaii

***Professional Affiliations:***

International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI) – 1978 to present  
California Conference of Arson Investigators – 1978 to present  
International Association of Marine Investigators (IAMI) – 2007 to present  
National Fire Protection Association – 1978 to present  
National Association of Fire Investigators – Certified CFI (Past Member)  
IAAI – CFI Certification Committee Chairmen – Past member  
California Conference of Arson Investigators – Past Training Committee Member  
Santa Clara County Arson Task Force - Past President and Training Officer  
Central Coast Claims Association – Past President-member  
California Arson Prevention Committee - Past Chairman  
San Mateo County Arson Task Force – Past Associate Member  
Society of Fire Protection Engineers - Associate Member - member  
International Association of Firefighters - Past member  
Fire Marshals Association of North America  
Northern California Fraud Investigators Association  
California Association of Licensed Investigators (CALI) - 1980 to 2010