

CURRICULUM VITAE DONALD J. PERKINS, CFI

Area of Specialization:

Fire Investigations / Litigation Support – Case File / Peer Review - Consulting - Instructor

Background and Professional Experience:

Mr. Perkins' background consists of education/technical training and over 57-years of combined experience as a full paid Public Suppression Firefighter, Fire Prevention Officer, Fire Investigator, Captain, and President Emeritus / Fire Investigator for Fire Cause Analysis. He began his work as a full paid firefighter in 1965 and worked in a major municipal fire departments for 28 years and retired in 1994 at the rank of Captain. As a Fire Suppression Captain, Mr. Perkins worked on shift for over fifteen 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 provides an oversight role to a team of highly qualified fire investigators. Mr. Perkins has conducted or supervised over 4,000 fire investigations and has over 45-years of specific experience and continuing education 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-CFI” by the International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI), and has met the required IAAI continuing education “Re-Certification requirement since the CFI Certification program began in 1992. 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 since 1980. 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, California.

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Mr. Perkins has been a guest speaker and lecturer for the International Association of Arson Investigators, the California 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 – 2019, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014
2010, 09, 07, 06, 05, 04, 03, 02, 00, 1999, 97, 95, 93, 91, 89, 88, 87
IAAI - CFITrainer.Net Training Modules – Completed 48 CFI (Certified Fire Investigator-Continuing
Education Modules to date - 2023
California Conference of Arson Investigators - Workshops - Roundtables (1979-2023)
International Association of Marine Investigators – Workshops – Publications IAMI
(2009–2022)

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 Berasley, CFEI, CFVI.

Mr. Perkins is an IAAI – Pro-Board CFI, Forensic Specialties Accreditation Board CFI, (Certified Fire Investigator) and with an oversight responsibility to twenty, highly qualified fire investigators with FCA. 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 /
Arson Unit Supervisor 1984-1988 / 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, 1961-1964

TM2SS - Torpedomen 2nd Class, Qualified Submariner on Nuclear and Conventional Submarines

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

Marine Casualty Investigator – USCG - Authority on all navigable waterways on the west coast – Assigned / Conducted numerous marine casualties (groundings, drownings, collisions, and fire investigations of various vessels. Major Fire Investigations included the explosion and fatality aboard the USMV Hess, the “Honda-Bluehawk” fire loss, and directly involved on 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.

California State Fire Marshal’s Office, Sacramento, California – 2018 - 2022

Fire Science Instructor – Teach Fire/Arson Investigation series - 1A-B-C to students enrolled through 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 State Fire Training & Rescue Authority, Sacramento, California – 2019 - 2022

- Fire Science Instructor - Teach basic and advanced Fire/Arson Investigation Curriculum Courses – 1A, 1B, 1C – as directed through the California State Fire Marshal’s Office. Each class is 40-hours of instruction. 2020-2022 – 12 classes completed.

Industrial Emergency Council - Adjunct Instructor - Sacramento, California – 2022 - Present

- Fire Science Instructor - Teach basic and advanced Fire/Arson Investigation Curriculum Courses – 1A, 1B, 1C – as directed through the California State Fire Marshal’s Office. Each class is 40-hours of instruction.

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 CCAI conference

California Conference of Arson Investigators Roundtable

- Guest lecture – 1998 - 2010 – 2015 -2017 – 2018 CCAI Sacramento region roundtables

International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI)

- Guest Lecture - September 2007 - 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”

International Association of Defense Counsel (IADC) – Pebble Beach, Monterey, CA 2014

- Guest Speaker – “Shipboard Fires”

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.

NAIIA - “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”

International Association of Marine Investigators – Western States Regional Training Seminar – Port Orchard – Seattle, Washington 2018

- Guest Speaker – “Fire Investigations in Marine Vessels”

Publications / Co-Author:

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.

Co-Author - California State Fire Marshal’s Grant

- Contributing Author - “Performance of California Homes and Buildings in Urban Wildland Interface”

Marine / Vessel Fire Experience:

US Navy (1961 to 1964)

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)

USCG Reserve - 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.

He is a member of the International Association of Marine Investigators (IAMI), and Affiliate Member of SAMS (Society of Accredited Marine Surveyors). 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 Vessel Investigations:

Investigation of the “Puerto Rican”, a tanker which caught fire off the San Francisco coast and sank. The vessel’s 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.

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:

Compressed Natural Gas Fire – Trillium CNG, Woodland, CA
Shelby Terminal / NuStar Energy Fire – Tank Farm, Crockett, CA
University of Reno, NV – Natural Gas Explosion, NV
Aqua Metals Fire, Industrial - McCarran, NV

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 King – 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
Kamp’s 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
Saucto Land Company – Total Commercial Building loss - One City Block, Monterey, CA
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
National Fire Protection Association – 1978 to 2020

International Association of Marine Investigators (IAMI) – 2007 to present
Society of Accredited Marine Surveyors (SAMS) – Affiliate Membership - 2018 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

D Perkins 01/01/2023