



# Mythbusters...ARFF Training

*What We Think We Know*



**HOW PREPARED ARE WE,  
REALLY?**

# Introductions

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# Chuck Knowles

- Chuck Knowles has 20 years of experience in public safety as a firefighter, police officer, and emergency medical technician. He is currently assigned as a Lead Instructor at the DFW Airport Fire Training Research Center.

# Jim Bradshaw

- Jim Bradshaw has 18 years of experience in public safety as a firefighter, police officer, and emergency medical technician. He is currently assigned as a Lead Instructor Supervisor at the DFW Airport Fire Training Research Center.

# Why Are We Doing This?

- Trained over 3500 firefighters.
- Common observations.
- Research (improving who we are and what we know)

# Minimum Training Standards

- Basic Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighter
  - Common – 48 hours
  - Texas – 120 hours (80 hours?)
  - FAA – 20 hours CE annually
  - Department Led - ?

# Minimum Training Standards

Are we doing more, less, or meeting the bare minimum?

Is it enough?



# Plausible Myth

## MYTH:

They went to \_\_\_\_\_ training. They know that.

## REALITY:

Training officers need to constantly evaluate their personnel to gauge their knowledge.

# Personnel Myth

## MYTH:

Everybody in ARFF knows about Throttles-Bottles-Batteries.

## REALITY:

They may know the phrase, but they may not know WHY they do it.

# Technical Myth

## MYTH:

Dangerous Goods on a cargo aircraft are loaded in the most forward position.

## REALITY:

Declared Dangerous Goods may be scattered throughout the entire aircraft.

# Personnel Myth

## MYTH:

Everybody in ARFF knows the importance of early ventilation.

## REALITY:

Firefighters focus on rescue, fire attack, and THEN ventilation.

# Technical Myth

## MYTH:

If we turn off the master battery switch in the flight deck, we can't open the cargo doors.

## REALITY:

Cargo doors are still powered electrically until disconnected at the battery itself.

# Personnel Myth

## MYTH:

We have plenty of breathing air, and we know how to use it.

## REALITY:

ARFF incidents may be extended, and air conservation is paramount.

# Technical Myth

## MYTH:

The best way to put out an engine fire is to hit it from the front, hit it from the back, and access a panel.

## REALITY:

Modern design makes it almost impossible to access the areas of the engine we need.

# Personnel Myth

## MYTH:

ARFF operators know everything about their apparatus, and can put them into action at a second's notice.

## REALITY:

Without recurrent training and frequent practical exercises, this skill diminishes.



# Busted Myth

## MYTH:

It won't ever happen here.

## REALITY:

It can happen anywhere, anytime.

# Evaluate

Is this you?

How many firefighters do you have?

How many don't know? One, two,  
twenty?

How many is too many?

# Call To Action

When you get home, do an honest assessment of your capabilities and knowledge.

This is a starting point to evaluate where we are, and then train to the level where we need to be.