



THE INSTITUTION OF FIRE ENGINEERS
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Case Study

Flight Sergeant James Henderson GFireE

Year joined the IFE: 2001

Current Job Title: RAF Fire & Rescue Service
Accreditation Centre Manager

Employer: Royal Air Force Fire & Rescue Service

Location: Manston, UK

Please describe your current role:

I am responsible for delivering apprenticeships to all new recruits and look for opportunities for other qualifications that fire fighters of all ranks can gain. We currently offer Incident Command Awards at level 3 & 4, Level 3 Fire Operations in the Community and TAQA assessor qualifications. I have a team of 4 who manage this with approximately 50 assessors to mentor.

Please provide a brief outline of your career so far:

I have served in a variety of locations both within the UK and abroad. My career started in 1996 based at RAF Northolt before taking up a NATO position in Germany.

I then moved to RAF Kinloss in the north of Scotland before transferring to RAF Waddington in Lincolnshire and then RAF Brize Norton, which is our largest RAF Station in the UK, and moved to my current location at our training establishment, DFTDC Manston. I have carried out three tours of duty in Iraq, four in the Falkland Islands and a tour in the UAE along with short term detachments in a variety of different locations worldwide. I was involved in the training of military personnel and deploying to give specialist advice during the national fire strikes in 2002.

Have you worked on any unusual or high profile projects? Carrying out multiple tours of duty in the Middle East were certainly unusual where I was confronted with many incidents that any other Fire Service would expect to deal with.

The arduous conditions and the limited resources in a theatre of war produced incidents of an extraordinary nature.

I was also the Force Fire Officer in UAE where we had a coalition of Canadian, Australian, Dutch, New Zealand, UK and UAE military fire fighters. This was interesting working in this environment as each nation had different regulations to follow, so we had a specific agreement in order for us all to ensure standardisation.

What attracted you to gain IFE membership?

Whilst servicing in Germany, I had some spare time which I put to use by studying for my IFE Graduate exams. I wanted to use my time productively to gain qualifications that would be recognised.

What was your employers attitude towards registration?

When I gained membership there were very few people within my organisation registered with IFE. By my membership and a few others this increased the awareness of my employer. The RAF now has a very positive attitude towards the IFE.

How did you find the process and assistance you received? The process and assistance was straight forward and it was beneficial that I could sit my exams anywhere in the world.

How has IFE membership benefitted your career? I gained Graduate status quite early in my career and it aided promotion as I had proven my knowledge.

What are your future goals?

My aim is to be promoted to Warrant Officer, which is the highest rank available for Non Commissioned personnel with the RAF. I also wish to carry out a tour of duty in Afghanistan.