

IFE Level 4 Certificate in Aviation Fire Operations

Examiner Report – March 2026

Introduction

Only 12 candidates sat the examination and 11 (92%) achieved a pass. The best answered question was 5 with an average mark of 13 and the least well answered was question 6 with an average mark of 4.

Question 1

Fire and Rescue Service personnel attending stand-by duties at helicopter landing sites should receive familiarisation training on the type of aircrafts that are likely to use the landing site. Provide the areas this training should cover. (20 marks)

Examiner Feedback

Most candidates achieved average marks on this question, which appears to relate to an area not routinely covered in local training or experience. Responses tended to focus on general aircraft processes and types, particularly fixed-wing operations, which led some candidates to include irrelevant material such as ejection seats and MDC as perceived risks.

Question 2

The operational objective of the Aerodrome Rescue and Fire Fighting Service (ARFFS) is to respond as quickly as possible to aircraft accidents and/or incidents in order to create maximum opportunity for saving life.

- a) *The operational objective of the firefighting service should be to achieve a response time of how long and to what point? (2 marks)*
- b) *Explain the term 'Response Time'. (2 marks)*
- c) *Explain the terms 'Optimal Visibility' and 'Surface Conditions'. (4 marks)*
- d) *A response safe system of work includes a number of elements that must come together. A comprehensive hazard and risk analysis should be conducted within the aerodrome boundary that Aerodrome Rescue and Fire Fighting Service (ARFFS) vehicles are likely to use to achieve the operational objective. Detail what the safe system of work should consider. (12 marks)*

Examiner Feedback

- a) This section provided straightforward marks, with most candidates achieving full or near-full credit.
- b) Again, this section offered accessible marks and provided a useful foundation for progression into subsequent parts of the question.
- c) Most candidates achieved high marks in this section, demonstrating a strong level of understanding.

- d) This section resulted in more variable performance, with average marks overall. It was evident that many candidates had limited familiarity with Safe System of Work documentation. Where marks were awarded, this was typically through broader explanations that only partially addressed the specific requirements of the question.

Question 3

It is understood that firefighting foam is detrimental to the environment due to its make-up. Accounting for the need to carryout Foam Training explain the precautions and mitigations that can be applied. (20 marks)

Examiner Feedback

This question was not well answered overall. While candidates generally recognised that firefighting foam has environmental impacts due to its composition, many responses focused on general training considerations rather than addressing the specific precautions and mitigations required when carrying out foam training.

Stronger answers identified controls that can be applied to limit environmental harm during foam use, demonstrating an understanding of how operational systems and procedures should be adapted in practice. However, this was not consistently achieved.

Given the importance of this topic in relation to vehicle operations and crew development, candidates are encouraged to ensure they are familiar with the relevant reference material and to focus their revision on practical environmental control measures associated with foam training scenarios.

Question 4

Planning at a strategic level to ensure that Fire and Rescue Service develop and maintain an appropriate and proportionate response to aircraft incidents is fundamental.

- a) *List the different types of aircraft. (4 marks)*
- b) *Fire and Rescue Services will determine the appropriate and proportional response to aircraft incidents, what are the elements that will be considered in developing this? (7 marks)*
- c) *Using performance Type B foam, provide the headings of the categories and the media requirements to meet a Category 5 airport. (9 marks)*

Examiner Feedback

- a) Most candidates achieved 2 marks out of 4. While identification of aircraft types was intended to provide straightforward marks, many candidates misinterpreted this, incorrectly grouping responses under broad categories such as military, light, and large aircraft rather than identifying specific types.
- b) Very few marks were gained in this section. The question required consideration at a Strategic Level; however, most candidates provided responses at an Operational Level, resulting in a failure to address the key requirements of the question and limiting access to the available marks.
- c) This section was poorly answered by those who attempted it. Responses often included incorrect or irrelevant formulae and lacked clear structure or appropriate headings, resulting in missed opportunities to gain marks.

Question 5

Explain the following terms in relation to the airport operating surfaces:

- a) Runway Incursion. (3 marks)*
- b) Intermediate Holding Position. (3 marks)*
- c) Runway End Safety Area (RESA). (3 marks)*
- d) Provide examples of causal factors that generate a runway incursion? (11 marks)*

Examiner Feedback

- a) This section provided straightforward marks, with all candidates who attempted it achieving credit.
- b) Again, this section offered accessible marks based on a well-established concept within airport operations.
- c) This section continued the trend of strong performance, with most candidates achieving high marks.
- d) Performance in this section was more variable, with average marks achieved by most candidates. This was unexpected given that earlier parts of the question provided clear direction towards the required responses, suggesting that some candidates did not fully develop their answers in line with the progression of the question.

Question 6

When developing Fire and Rescue Service's response plans it is essential that planners are cognisant of existing regional multi agency 'major incident procedures' and that these complement neighbouring Fire and Rescue Service procedures.

Explain the Risk Evaluation Cycle and provide the answer in a diagram form. (20 marks)

Examiner Feedback

Only one candidate attempted this question. Given that major incident procedures are routinely established for airports and supported by multi-agency training with off-site partners, this low level of engagement was unexpected.

The model answer gave reference to the basic documents that are utilised to form the requirements that are policy for site, including the Health and Safety Legislation.

Question 7

- a) *During the incident, access and containment of areas in the aircraft may be required. If the flight deck of a public transport aircraft is intact, access should be prevented, and documentation should not be removed from the cockpit unless there is a risk of loss or damage. List the type of documentation that may be carried. (10 marks)*
- b) *As the incident comes to a close the recovery of equipment is statistically a phase when accidents and injuries are prevalent and therefore there is a need to maintain the highest attention to command and control throughout this operation. List the considerations that are to be applied during this phase. (10 marks)*

Examiner Feedback

- a) Reasonable marks were achieved, reflecting the widespread understanding that specific documents are carried within aircraft cockpits internationally.
- b) Good marks were achieved, with candidates generally applying their knowledge of appropriate actions rather than focusing solely on scene characteristics. This allowed for a broad range of relevant explanations that covered the key areas required.

Question 8

When carrying out a task and resource analysis, the principal objective should be to identify in real time and in sequential order the minimum number of Aerodrome Rescue and Fire Fighting Service (ARFFS) personnel required at any one time to achieve the objectives.

- a) *List the processes to be followed to attain the objectives. (10 marks)*
- b) *The results of the analysis should be recorded in a table or spreadsheet format and should be laid out in a method that ensures it documents the processes carried out. Explain what is contained in the spreadsheet. (10 marks)*

Examiner Feedback

- a) It was evident that candidates had focused their revision on the phases of the TRA. This limited the marks achieved, as this was not the specific requirement of the question. Greater emphasis is needed on understanding not only the phases, but also how the process develops and generates the information required to support operational decision-making.
- b) This section required a concise application of the TRA process from the start of an incident through to task completion, including identification of key pinch points. It was clear that the full scope of the TRA was not well understood by many candidates, which adversely affected performance in this section.