



Erfurt Municipal Fire Service

«Extremely practical and instructive»

It was an ambitious programme of exercises that the eight-man delegation from the Erfurt Municipal Fire Service (Germany) had to complete at the International Fire Academy ifa. For two days, they were practising search and rescue techniques, training in fire fighting inside road and railway tunnels and then critically analysed the particular procedures. «Arduous, but extremely practical and instructive,» that was the conclusion of the professionals from Germany.



Erfurt Fire Service

Founded: 1910

Responsible: for 200'000 inhabitants

Four divisions:

- › Administration/Rescue service
- › Hazard defences
- › Hazard prevention
- › Technical service/Logistics

Headcount: around 220 professional fire fighters, with approx. 180 on duty; 24 units of the volunteer fire service, numbering 660 people

«Less chat – more training. That's what we like.»

Jürgen Jakobi, Erfurt Municipal Fire Service



«This is the only fire academy of its type in Europe – if not in the world»

Torsten Hinsche, Deputy Chief Officer, Head of the Hazard Prevention division, Erfurt Municipal Fire Service

Training content

In theory, the professionals of the Erfurt Municipal Fire Service had already learned a lot about deployment tactics in underground transportation facilities. They were just a bit short on practical experience. With the two-day training course at the International Fire Academy ifa, the opportunity presented itself to apply, practise and optimise what they had learned under the realistic conditions of the tunnel exercise facilities at Balsthal and Lungern.

On the first day, the focus was on the procedure in road and railway tunnels. So in the tunnel exercise facilities of Balsthal, apart from search and rescue techniques, fire fighting on burning vehicles and railway waggons was practised. On the second day in Lungern – deep within the mountains of the Swiss Alps – the Erfurt team trained in fighting a raging fire on two trucks in a road tunnel.

Statements from the participants

«The deployment tactics in underground transportation facilities differ from fire fighting in buildings with regard to various aspects. In this respect, it is very important to be able to practise 1:1. Right from the first training units, we established in what areas we were lacking and had to put our theoretical knowledge into practice even better. We were able to improve in lots of areas – but it will still be a long time before we are perfect.»

«The instructors approached things in a very structured and motivating manner. They always tried to highlight the positive points and form a bridge between there and opportunities for

improvement. All in all, we received the best possible care and instruction from A to Z. They also made sure we drank enough water, as the people involved in the exercise were losing fluids quickly in the extreme conditions.»

«Here in the International Fire Academy ifa, you can practise every conceivable scenario in tunnels very realistically, without having to put a tunnel out of service for training purposes. Every fire services should avail themselves of the opportunity and train here.»