

ARFF Graduates Trained to Prepare for the Worst

State of Hawaii Airports Rescue Fire Fighter (ARFF) members make up a small percentage of HFFA active duty members, but their role at all airports statewide is essential because airports can't operate without them. By FAA regulation, no airport in the State of Hawaii is allowed to operate without a staffed airport fire station. Rescuing passengers and keeping them safe is priority #1.

On March 22, 2013, the Department of Transportation Airports Division graduated 39 men and women in a joint training class of ARFF and Federal fire fighters. Among them were 16 ARFF recruits and 9 new hires, making it one of the largest ARFF classes graduated to date.

Miles of ocean may separate them now, but these graduates underwent a demanding 22-week training course of physical and written tests requiring land, water and aircraft knowledge including skills and techniques of fire suppression. Unlike structural fires, it takes seconds to burn through a fuselage which could potentially expose tanks filled with highly combustible fuel enough to level a building to rubble. It's preparing for the unthinkable.

It's also reassuring to know that HFFA ARFF members are standing by at the ready to keep air travel safer for all. Welcome and Mahalo!

ARFF Recruits (16)

Benjamin Kaleo	Justin Damo
Brandon Rogers	Kawika Noyes
Cheyenne Blevins	Lane Shiroma
Collin Carlos	Lowry Ellis
Deena Choi	Medardo Elgarico
Erik Funakoshi	Michael Wertz
Ian Pascua	Patrick Hamilton
Jason Chillingworth	Royce Overlock

New Hires (9)

Randell Albertson Sr
Roman Anderson
Raymond Blouin Jr
Michael Caputo
Stephen Esmeralda
Bart Gunderson
Brad Klopp
James Martin
Kaohilii Romualdo

Clockwise from far right: Crews await their turn to extinguish a live structural fire. All gather together for a morning briefing to learn about the day's events and type of training they will be performing. Forcible entry techniques using specialized tools to gain access or to create an exit. State ARFF recruits must have their Life Guard water safety certification.

