



Gotthard Fire & Rescue Service

«The ideal opportunity for repetitive training»

They are responsible for the Gotthard road tunnel – and they improve their know-how at the International Fire Academy ifa: the specialists from the Gotthard Fire & Rescue Service. The main focus of the training programme was how to handle the special fire-fighting appliance, which is used in the case of a truck fire scenario, amongst others. «For our team, this was the first opportunity to take part in a fire drill many times in succession. An ideal opportunity,» is the way Beat Walther, Deputy Fire Chief, summarised the days in Lungern.



Gotthard Fire & Rescue Service

The Gotthard Fire & Rescue Service is a Municipal Fire Service and takes care of the Gotthard road tunnel, the A2 motorway from Amsteg to Faido and part of the Gotthard mountain pass.

Organisation

- › A total of 55 people and 22 special-purpose vehicles are available to ensure safety in the Gotthard road tunnel.
- › Based at support stations in Göschenen and Airolo, the two platoons can be in the tunnel within no longer than 3 minutes of the alarm being sounded.

«The training sessions are highly recommendable.
Every fire service can learn a lesson or two here.»

Valerio Cereghetti, Officer, Gotthard Fire & Rescue Service



«The support and catering were perfect.
We'll be back.»

Beat Walther, Deputy Fire Chief, Gotthard Fire & Rescue Service

Training content

The training objectives of the Gotthard Fire & Rescue Service were clearly defined: deployment techniques and tactics had to be taught under practical conditions with the service's own special fire-fighting appliance, systematic exercises were to demonstrate the dangers and techniques of deployment in a tunnel with fire and smoke and course participants were expected to achieve greater reliability when coping with difficult tasks. The instructors placed particular importance on realistic scenarios, just as could be expected in the Gotthard road tunnel, in order to deal with any weak points.

Apart from individual exercises, such as searching vehicles and extinguishing smaller fires, the Gotthard Fire & Rescue Service also trained on fully developed fires in two HGVs. The training was matched to the circumstances of this particular Municipal Fire Service: in other words, the fires had to be very efficiently extinguished with few personnel but plenty of equipment. The employment of the monitor on the moving special fire-fighting appliance proved to be particularly effective. This enables fire-fighting from a certain distance, before other members of the on-call team take over and continue fire-fighting. Detailed post-training discussions rounded off each lesson and allowed valuable conclusions to be made for deployment at future incidents and ongoing training.

Statements from the participants

«The tunnel training facilities and large number of deployment scenarios at the International Fire Academy ifa could have been made especially for us. The training infrastructure is so realistic that we are able to recognise deployment situations just like those that could occur in the Gotthard road tunnel.»

«As we were able to practise each scenario over and over again with no time delays, we were all subjected to great physical stresses and strains. In addition, the mental pressure was increased due to the

restricted spaces between the trucks. And the smoke and heat also made an effective contribution to the personal experiences we were able to gain.»

«We recommend the training to all outfits responsible for road tunnels. Thanks to the possibility of situating fire points and vehicles individually, every deployment situation that can actually occur in your own tunnel can be simulated and practised.»