



PFP CON '26 DUBAI

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Join us in thanking our Sponsors
for their generous support of this year's event.

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A WORD FROM THE FCIA & NFCA BOARD PRESIDENTS

Welcome to PFPCON '26 Dubai, and thank you for being a part of the Firestop Contractors International and National Fireproofing Contractors Associations.

It is an honor and privilege to serve as your 2026 FCIA and 2025 NFCA Board Presidents.

To our members, thank you for supporting the FCIA and NFCA and the efforts we're making to increase the global awareness of Passive Fire Protection and advance our shared mission of safer buildings worldwide. If you're not a member, we encourage you to join us.

FCIA and NFCA continue to drive the foundation of the 'DIIM' message – 'D'esign, 'I'nstall, 'I'nspect and 'M'aintenance of Passive Fire Protection – created by the FCIA to promote safer buildings around the world. We will continue to grow and promote our industry educational and resource offerings, including the FCIA Firestop Education Program (FEP), NFCA Handbook of Accepted Fireproofing Knowledge (HAFK), and FCIA Manual of Practice (MOP), as well as will continue to promote the contractor, inspection agency, and manufacturer accreditation programs.

We will continue our collaborative efforts with one another and additional organizations in the Passive Fire Protection Industry, inclusive of Architects, Engineers, Contractors, Inspectors, and local AHJ's by providing education about Passive Fire Protection and increasing awareness about the critical role Specialty Contractors play in the success of safer buildings.

Our Director, International Initiatives, Ahbishek Chhabra, continues his tireless efforts to bring international awareness to the world of Passive Fire Protection. He has been recognized for his global impact educating key decision makers on the importance of the 'DIIM' model and has energized the rethinking and usage of the Specialty Contractor. Big thank you for your dedication, Abhi.

In September '25, FCIA and NFCA introduced our new Technical Director, Dr. Gabby Peck. Gabby will be instrumental in providing educational content to the masses, not only to North America and Canada, but Internationally as well. Her expertise will be an asset to the Association and industry at large. Welcome aboard, Gabby!

And if you haven't already seen the announcements or felt the hype, make your plans to attend PFPCON '26 Las Vegas! We're combining our efforts and producing the most explosive event for Passive Fire Protection the industry has witnessed to date. Finally! FCIA's Education & Committee Action Conference (ECA) and NFCA's Week of Learning under one roof, together, forging unity, education, and committee initiatives! This is a don't miss opportunity and you sign to get involved.

In closing, we're looking forward to a robust 2026. We encourage you to take advantage of the calendar of events. As a member, supporter, follower, you are a part of a supportive Association committed to collaboration, growth, and shared success. FCIA and NFCA provide valuable resources, educational opportunities, and platforms for professional and personal growth. Consider committee involvement. Consider bringing FCIA and NFCA in to help educate the marketplace, Code Officials, AHJs, and all involved stakeholders. Help us grow together. You can make a difference. You've taken the first step to becoming a difference maker by attending here. Will you keep walking with us?

Thank you for your continued support of the FCIA. It takes teamwork to make the dream work!


Joseph Wilkinson, 2026 FCIA Board President


Steve Winston, 2025 NFCA Board President

DUBAI '26 | 5





2026 FCIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

For the Association to thrive and grow, it needs good leaders, strong leadership. FCIA's Board of Directors is a very diverse and passionate group of Contractors. Each person has chosen to give back to the Association through serving on the Board, participating on Committee(s), and more.

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NFCA's Board of Directors is responsible for steering the organization while adhering to the stated mission of furthering the quality of structural fire-resistance in buildings. To carry out this charge, NFCA Board volunteers meet multiple times per year to provide oversight and strategic direction.

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FCIA & NFCA COMMITTEES NEED YOU...(TO GET INVOLVED)

FCIA & NFCA Committees are comprised of Member volunteers who work together on various pieces of Association business, from Codes and Standards development to Marketing outreach and more. This collaboration is how we gain industry consensus on issues related to the improvement of passive fire protection in buildings around the globe and how we create opportunities for the growth of our industry.

Consider volunteering your time and talents with one of the following Committees. Contact the Committee Chair(s) or lissettek@cmservices.com for additional information or to inquire about joining a Committee.

FCIA COMMITTEES

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Join us in thanking our Sponsors
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PFPFCON '26 DUBAI AGENDA

PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED

FCIA and NFCA partner with Messe Frankfurt for the first time ever to bring PFPFCON '26 Dubai to Intersec Dubai. PFPFCON '26 Dubai delivers an unparalleled platform for advancing global best practices in Passive Fire Protection. Here you'll connect with leading experts, innovators, and professionals committed to fire and life safety in the built environment.

12 JANUARY 2026

Sponsored by FLAMRO and Rise & Shine Insulation & Fire Protection LLC

SHARJAH D

All times listed are in GMT+4

7:30 am – 1:00 pm	PFPFCON '26 Dubai Registration Open
8:00 am – 8:30 am	Welcome Tea & Coffee
8:30 am – 9:00 am	FCIA & NFCA Welcome Comments, Association Reports, & Sponsor Introductions Abhishek Chhabra, FCIA & NFCA Gabby Peck, Ph.D., FCIA & NFCA FLAMRO Rise & Shine Hilti MVL Firestop Siderise
9:00 am - 9:45 am	The Role of Passive Fire Protection Gabby Peck, Ph.D., FCIA & NFCA
9:45 am – 10:15 am	Meaningful Protection: What Happens When Passive & Active Work Together Zahi Daher, NFPA
10:15 am – 10:45 am	Zoning, Egress & Operations: The Healthcare Safety Triad Ahmed Taher, AESG
10:45 am - 11:00 am	Networking Break Sponsored by MVL Firestop Building Materials Trading LLC
11:00 am - 11:45 am	Structural Fire-Resistance in Hospitals: The Role of Passive Fire Protection in Maintaining Building Integrity Under Fire Gabby Peck, Ph.D., FCIA & NFCA
11:45 am - 12:15 pm	Structural Fire Protection: Ensuring Compliance When It Matters Most Amjad Al Hamad, Thomas Bell Wright
12:15 pm - 12:45 pm	Code Updates: Middle East & International Trends Capt. Eng. Mohamed Alhanaee, Abu Dhabi Civil Defence Authority
12:45 pm - 1:00 pm	PFPFCON '26 Dubai Day 1 Reflection Abhishek Chhabra, FCIA & NFCA Gabby Peck, Ph.D., FCIA & NFCA



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12 JANUARY 2026



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7:30 am – 1:00 pm	PFPFCON '26 Dubai Registration Open
8:00 am – 8:30 am	Welcome Tea & Coffee
8:30 am – 8:45 am	FCIA & NFCA Day 1 Recap and Welcome Abhishek Chhabra, FCIA & NFCA Gabby Peck, Ph.D., FCIA & NFCA
8:45 am - 9:15 am	Codes and Compliance Pathways Abhishek Chhabra, FCIA & NFCA
9:15 am – 9:45 am	'I'nstallation, 'I'nspection, and Accreditation: Raising the Bar Vidur Berry, FM Approvals Gabby Peck, Ph.D., FCIA & NFCA Matthew Schumann, UL Solutions
9:45 am – 10:15 am	Preserving Compartmentation Integrity During Hotel Renovations Vinay Deshpande, Vitruvius Fire Safety Consulting
10:15 am – 10:45 am	Design Challenges of Structural Fireproofing in Modern Airport Terminals Mukesh Tomar, Jacobs
10:45 am - 11:00 am	Networking Break Sponsored by Siderise
11:00 am - 11:45 am	Maintaining Compartmentation During High-Rise Renovations Gabby Peck, Ph.D., FCIA & NFCA
11:45 am - 12:15 pm	Addressing Compliance Challenges in Opening Protectives: Bridging European and American Standards in the Middle East Cristina Perez, Intertek
12:15 pm - 12:45 pm	Fire-Rated Ducts Daniel Wysokinski, Emirates Safety Laboratory
12:45 pm - 1:00 pm	PFPFCON '26 Dubai Day 2 Reflection Abhishek Chhabra, FCIA & NFCA Gabby Peck, Ph.D., FCIA & NFCA



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PFPFCON '26 DUBAI AGENDA

14 JANUARY 2026

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All times listed are in GMT+4

7:30 am – 1:00 pm	PFPFCON '26 Dubai Registration Open
8:00 am – 8:30 am	Welcome Tea & Coffee
8:30 am – 8:45 am	FCIA & NFCA Day 2 Recap & Welcome Abhishek Chhabra, FCIA & NFCA Gabby Peck, Ph.D., FCIA & NFCA
8:45 am - 9:30 am	Structural Fire Protection for High-Load Environments Gabby Peck, Ph.D., FCIA & NFCA
9:30 am – 10:15 am	Mitigating Fire Safety Claims: Ensuring Fire Safety Compliance Peter Van Gorp, HKA
10:15 am – 10:45 am	Protecting Mission-Critical Infrastructure: Structural Fire-Resistance and Compartmentation Robert Parkinson, Joule Group
10:45 am - 11:00 am	Networking Break Sponsored by Hilti
11:00 am - 11:30 am	Building the Future - Enabling Safe Adoption of 3D Printing & Modern Methods of Construction Mohamed Amer, International Code Council
11:30 am - 12:00 pm	From Print to Performance: Fire-Resistance and Passive Fire Protection System of 3D-Printed Structures Laxminarayan Nayak, Liva Group
12:00 pm - 12:30 pm	Effective Firestopping Management: Risks, Mitigation, and Best Practices John Sajeev, ALEC
12:30 pm - 1:00 pm	Closing Plenary: Building the Future of Passive Fire Protection Abhishek Chhabra, FCIA & NFCA Gabby Peck, Ph.D., FCIA & NFCA



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14 JANUARY 2026



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EDUCATION FOR THE FM & UL FIRESTOP EXAMS

FCIA's Education for the Firestop Exams helps prepare Specialty Firestop Contractors and Special Inspectors to pass the FM or UL Firestop Exams. Passing the Firestop Exam(s) is required for Firestop Contractors pursuing FM 4991 Approved or UL Solutions Qualified Firestop status and for Firestop Inspectors to prove competence to AHJ's or International Accreditation Services IAS AC 291 Special Inspection Agency responsible individual status.

PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED

13 JANUARY 2026

SHARJAH D

All times listed are in GMT+4

1:30 pm - 5:00 pm	Firestop Exam Registration Open
2:00 pm - 4:00 pm	FCIA Education for the FM & UL Firestop Exams Bill McHugh, FCIA Gabby Peck, Ph.D., FCIA
4:00 pm - 4:15 pm	Break
4:15 pm - 5:15 pm	FCIA Education for the FM & UL Firestop Exams Bill McHugh, FCIA Gabby Peck, Ph.D., FCIA
5:15 pm - 6:30 pm	Quality Management System Manual Development Education Bill McHugh, FCIA Matthew Schumann, UL Solutions

14 JANUARY 2026

SHARJAH D

All times listed are in GMT+4

1:30 pm - 5:00 pm	Firestop Exam Registration Open
2:00 pm - 6:00 pm	FM & UL Firestop Exam for DRI Candidates & Inspection Personnel Note: The UL Firestop Exam is OPEN BOOK exams. UL Exam Participants MUST provide their own copy of the FCIA Manual of Practice. The ULC Addendum covers questions specific to Canada. The FM Firestop Exam DOES NOT allow use of the MOP during the exam.



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SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

12 JANUARY 2026

8:30 am - 9:00 am

**FCIA & NFCA Welcome Comments,
Association Reports, & Sponsor
Introductions**

Abhishek Chhabra, FCIA & NFCA | Gabby
Peck, Ph.D., FCIA & NFCA
FLAMRO | Rise & Shine | Hilti | MVL Firestop
| Siderise

You've heard of FCIA and NFCA, maybe you're even a new member, but what exactly do the Firestop Contractors International Association (FCIA) and National Fireproofing Contractors Association (NFCA) do?

In this session, join FCIA leadership to learn about the origins of the organizations, what the missions and guiding principles are, and how both groups advocate and work to further the fire and life safety industries in the Gulf Region.

Then, hear from each of our sponsors as they introduce their companies.

9:00 am - 9:45 am

The Role of Passive Fire Protection
Gabby Peck, Ph.D., FCIA & NFCA

This presentation explores the importance of Passive Fire Protection in building safety

by comparing three fire scenarios: a building with no fire protection, one relying solely on active systems (e.g., sprinklers and alarms), and one combining active systems with comprehensive passive fire protection measures. Through real-world case studies and lessons learned from notable incidents, attendees will gain a clear understanding of how passive fire protection works to contain fire and smoke, protect escape routes, and maintain building integrity.

The session demonstrates why passive fire protection is not just a regulatory requirement, but rather is a fundamental life-safety cornerstone that saves lives in fires.

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Define passive fire protection and distinguish it from active fire protection systems.
- Explain the key mechanisms by which passive measures contain fire spread and preserve structural stability.
- Examine real-world fire incidents to identify the consequences of inadequate or absent passive protection.
- Evaluate the synergistic benefits of integrating passive and active fire protection strategies in building design and retrofit.





9:45 am - 10:15 am

Meaningful Protection: What Happens When Passive & Active Work Together

Zahi Daher, NFPA

This session provides a high-level overview of how passive and active fire protection systems work together to deliver meaningful, code-compliant protection. Using NFPA 101 as the foundation, with focused insights from NFPA 80 and its latest updates, the presentation highlights the critical role of passive fire protection in compartmentation, life safety, and system performance. The session emphasizes coordination, common gaps, and key considerations relevant to the GCC region to support safer, more resilient buildings.

This session will:

- Define the role of NFPA codes and standards especially NFPA 101 and NFPA 80.
- Explain the relationship between passive and active fire protection systems and why neither can be effective in isolation.
- Outline the critical role of passive fire protection (compartmentation, fire doors, fire resistance) in protecting life and property.
- Identify common passive fire protection gaps and how NFPA standards address them.
- Shed light on the importance of inspection, testing, and maintenance (ITM) of passive systems to ensure ongoing compliance and performance.

10:15 am - 10:45 am

Zoning, Egress, & Operations: The Healthcare Safety Triad

Ahmed Taher, AESG

This session examines how zoning, compartmentation, means of egress, and operational practices collectively shape fire and life safety in healthcare facilities. Using global and regional incident statistics, it highlights why healthcare occupancies face unique risks and require specialized design and management strategies.

Participants will explore key requirements from leading codes, and learn how operational readiness, staff actions, and building performance must align to ensure effective emergency response and protect vulnerable patients.

This session covers:

- Healthcare fire statistics.
- The unique challenges of healthcare fire and life safety.
- A holistic overview of “Healthcare FLS and Operational Considerations”.
- Case reflection and practicality analysis.

11:00 am - 11:45 am

Structural Fire-Resistance in Hospitals: The Role of Passive Fire Protection in Maintaining Building Integrity Under Fire

Gabby Peck, Ph.D., FCIA & NFCA

Hospitals are among the most challenging occupancy types for fire-safety design. The non-ambulatory patients, oxygen-enriched environments, and continuous operation result in a demand that the structure remains protected and collapse be delayed as long as possible during a fire. This fast-session examines the contribution of Spray-Applied Fire-Resistive Materials (SFRM) and Intumescent Fire-Resistive Materials (IFRM) in protecting steel and concrete structures in healthcare facilities.

The presentation explains the distinct mechanisms of passive fire protection, their performance under standard and hydrocarbon fire curves, and their practical application in high-rise and complex hospital projects, with particular focus on regional environmental challenges (high humidity, temperature cycling etc).

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Differentiate the fire-protection mechanisms, advantages, and limitations of SFRM and IFRM systems.
- Explain why hospitals require extended fire-resistance periods and identify the specific structural elements (columns,



SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

beams, transfer girders, and floor systems) that most benefit from SFRM/IFRM protection under UAE and international codes.

- Recognise the primary environmental and durability challenges affecting SFRM and IFRM performance in hot-humid Gulf conditions.

11:45 am - 12:15 pm

Structural Fire Protection: Ensuring Compliance When It Matters Most

Amjad Al Hamad, Thomas Bell Wright
International Consultants

Today, it is clear that there is a significant number of steel structures which are still prone to fires. During fires, the steel tends to lose its structural capacity, which can lead to the collapse of the structure. This creates a need for steel protection such that safety and compliance are achieved.

This session begins by explaining how different historical events shaped today's standards and highlights why steel protection is important in terms of structural stability during fires. The session will also discuss testing, assessments, and how modern advancements in steel protection have changed the world of fire safety as we know it.

Delegates will:

- Understand the history behind structural fire protection.
- Learn the key mechanisms related to steel behavior during fires.
- Understand testing procedures and assessments for steel members.
- Know the importance of steel protection in terms of cost, time, and safety.
- Learn about modern steel protection solutions and advancements.

12:15 pm - 12:45 pm

Code Updates: Middle East & International Trends

Capt. Eng. Mohamed Alhaneae, Abu Dhabi
Civil Defence Authority

This session will provide an update on Code requirements for Passive Fire Protection in the Gulf Region.

12:45 pm - 1:00 pm

FCIA & NFCA Update & PFPCON '26 Dubai Day 1 Reflection

Abhishek Chhabra, FCIA & NFCA | Gabby
Peck, Ph.D., FCIA & NFCA

Tune in as we reflect upon everything learned at day 1 of PFPCON '26 Dubai.





13 JANUARY 2026

8:30 am - 8:45 am

FCIA & NFCA Day 1 Recap & Welcome
Abhishek Chhabra, FCIA & NFCA | Gabby Peck, Ph.D., FCIA & NFCA

Start the day with a welcome from FCIA and NFCA leadership and a fast-paced recap of Day 1, highlighting key moments and setting momentum for what's next.

8:45 am - 9:15 am

Codes and Compliance Pathways
Abhishek Chhabra, FCIA & NFCA

Building Codes around the world continue to evolve regularly. This session touches on how they evolve, slightly differently from each other, but more importantly how similar they are in intent.

With that background, we explore the mechanics of compliance and various conformity assessment mechanisms which are used to enforce these building codes. As the construction industry evolves at different paces around the world, so are the approaches to construction and tracking building materials and workmanship. With an aim to understanding how repeatability of

supply of materials, as well as workmanship, can be assessed, compliance pathways will shed light on the nooks and corners of what gets written into technical regulations, as well as procurement contracts that can help plug the gaps and enhance reliability by making liability and responsibility more quantifiable!

9:15 am - 9:45 am

'Installation, 'Inspection, and Accreditation: Raising the Bar
Vidur Berry, FM Approvals | Gabby Peck, Ph.D., FCIA & NFCA | Matthew Schumann, UL Solutions

This session takes a look at the various Contractor, Inspection Agency, and Manufacturer accreditation programs and outlines why these programs are important.

9:45 am - 10:15 am

Preserving Compartmentation Integrity During Hotel Renovations
Vinay Deshpande, Vitruvius Fire Safety Consulting

Renovation and refurbishment activities in hotels and hospitality facilities often create unintentional breaches in fire and smoke compartmentation - compromising life safety, asset protection, and business continuity.





This session presents a case study demonstrating how compartmentation integrity can be preserved through systematic planning, phased execution, and rigorous on-site quality assurance. The presentation will highlight key risks encountered during renovations, common failures observed in existing buildings, and strategies to maintain compliance with passive fire protection requirements throughout construction. Attendees will gain insight into coordinating contractors, implementing temporary protection measures, documenting penetrations, and ensuring reinstatement aligns with firestopping standards and manufacturer listings. The case study offers actionable lessons that apply across hospitality and mixed-use buildings.

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

- Identify common pathways through which compartmentation is compromised during hotel renovation and refurbishment works, including penetrations, openings, service rerouting, and unapproved modifications.
- Evaluate renovation-related risks to passive fire protection systems and recognize the implications these defects have on fire spread, smoke migration, and overall building safety.
- Apply a structured methodology for maintaining compartment integrity throughout renovation, including pre-works surveys, construction staging, temporary fire-stopping measures, and quality assurance protocols.
- Differentiate between compliant and non-compliant firestopping practices, with an understanding of approved products, tested assemblies, installer qualifications, and the documentation required for code and AHJ acceptance.
- Implement a practical reinstatement and verification process that ensures all penetrations, firestopping details, and compartment lines are restored in accordance with manufacturer listings,

drawings, and passive fire protection standards.

10:15 am - 10:45 am

Design Challenges of Structural Fireproofing in Modern Airport Terminals

Mukesh Tomar, Jacobs

Modern airport terminals are busy and highly occupied places where people are in transit and less familiar with their surroundings. Architectural and client “look and feel” ambitions turn these terminals into a large open and uncomparted space, which contains a considerable amount of fuel load distributed across the terminal compared to other buildings. The open nature of terminal buildings and presence of fuel aggravate fire to grow beyond the place of origin at a faster rate. Therefore, building structures should be designed not only to allow occupants to safely evacuate but also to withstand prolonged high temperature exposures to avoid loss of strength or complete collapse during the firefighting period and beyond to protect the property and allow business continuity.

Various elements of structures need to be fire protected in a terminal building following prescriptive codes/standards including but not limited to the roof, floors, columns and beams, certain ceilings, and more. There are multiple challenges in fire-rating these items, which will be discussed in this session.

11:00 am - 11:45 am

‘M’aintaining Compartmentation During High-Rise Renovations

Gabby Peck, Ph.D., FCIA & NFCA

This session explores the critical role of compartmentation as a foundational passive fire protection strategy in high-rise buildings, with a particular focus on the challenges encountered during renovation, retrofit, and upgrade projects. This presentation examines how construction activities in live or occupied environments can inadvertently compromise fire and smoke barriers, while highlighting



practical approaches to preserve or enhance compartment integrity using real world examples.

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

- Describe the core principles of compartmentation in high-rise buildings and identify common mechanisms by which renovation and retrofit activities can temporarily or permanently reduce fire and smoke resistance.
- Evaluate the specific risks to compartmentation introduced during phased or live renovations in occupied high-rise facilities, including vertical spread pathways, cladding interfaces, and temporary construction measures, using real world case studies.
- 3. Analyse strategies and tools for maintaining or restoring compartmentation integrity throughout the renovation lifecycle, including temporary protections, material selection, and sequencing of works in operational environments.

11:45 am - 12:15 pm

Addressing Compliance Challenges in Opening Protectives: Bridging European and American Standards in the Middle East

Cristina Perez Domper, Intertec

In a region where both European and American standardization frameworks coexist, there are often questions on how passive fire protection products may be used in conjunction. Focusing on opening protectives, a review of the existing requirements and clear steps to consider to properly integrate products compliant with different standards will be provided.

Delegates will learn:

- Current code requirements.
- Differences between the European and American approach to opening protectives.
- Considerations for each in the Middle

East.

- How to tackle the integration of products compliant to different standards.
- Certification versus site-specific assessments.

12:15 pm - 12:45 pm

Fire-Rated Ducts & Penetration Seals: Is "Mix & Match" Acceptable?

Daniel Wysokinski, Emirates Safety Laboratory

This presentation focuses on penetration seals around fire-rated ducts, including kitchen extract ducts. Why are these seals so important? How are they tested? And, most importantly, who is responsible for this scope of work?

12:45 pm - 1:00 pm

PFPCON '26 Dubai Day 2 Reflection

Abhishek Chhabra, FCIA & NFCA | Gabby Peck, Ph.D., FCIA & NFCA

Tune in as we reflect upon everything learned at day 2 of PFPCON '26 Dubai.

14 JANUARY 2026

8:30 am - 8:45 am

FCIA & NFCA Day 1 Recap & Welcome

Abhishek Chhabra, FCIA & NFCA | Gabby Peck, Ph.D., FCIA & NFCA

Begin the final day of PFPCON '26 Dubai with a welcome from FCIA and NFCA leadership and a recap of key takeaways from Days 1 and 2 to frame the discussions ahead.

8:45 am - 9:30 am

Structural Fire Protection for High-Load Environments

Gabby Peck, Ph.D., FCIA & NFCA

High fuel load environments, such as warehouses, data centres, and high-piled storage facilities, present some of the





most demanding challenges in fire-safety design. The exceptionally high quantities of combustible materials result in fire load densities far exceeding those of typical occupancies, leading to intensely rapid fire growth, extreme heat release rates, and severe thermal attacks on the structure that significantly increase the risk of early collapse.

This session examines why structural fireproofing is essential in these high fuel load settings. The presentation focuses on the unique fire severity characteristics that demand enhanced protection of steel structures, the practical challenges in achieving reliable performance in large-span projects, and the regional complications that further complicate effective fireproofing.

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Explain why high fuel load occupancies generate significantly more severe fire scenarios than standard buildings and why structural fireproofing becomes disproportionately more critical for preventing progressive collapse.
- Identify the key structural elements that require enhanced fire resistance ratings in high fuel load environments.
- Evaluate the primary challenges—arising from intense fuel-driven fire behaviour, large open volumes, and specific environmental and operational conditions—that affect the selection, application, and long-term reliability of structural fireproofing systems.

9:30 am - 10:15 am

Mitigating Fire Safety Claims: Ensuring Fire Safety Compliance

Peter Van Gorp, HKA

This session explores effective strategies for mitigating fire safety claims through proactive risk assessment and robust documentation, while ensuring full compliance with evolving fire safety regulations and standards.

10:15 am - 10:45 am

Protecting Mission-Critical Infrastructure: Structural Fire-Resistance and Compartmentation Robert Parkinson, Joule Group

This session provides a focused exploration of Passive Fire Protection (PFP) in modern data centers, highlighting its critical role in ensuring structural integrity and effective compartmentation.

Attendees will gain clarity on the fundamental code and regulatory requirements that shape PFP design in the UAE, while also examining the unique fire risks inherent to data center environments and how these challenges drive specific design responses. Through practical case studies and lessons learned, the presentation showcases best-practice approaches that enhance resilience and operational continuity. The session concludes by demonstrating how PFP and fire engineering specialists can add value throughout the design lifecycle, supporting safer, more reliable data center facilities.

Attendees will walk away:

- Understanding the definition of Passive Fire Protection (PFP) in the context of structural performance and compartmentation within data center environments.
- Identifying core code and regulatory requirements governing the design of PFP systems in data centers, with a specific focus on UAE standards and guidelines.
- Recognizing critical and emerging fire risks unique to data centers and how these hazards influence design, layout, and protection strategies.
- Evaluating best-practice approaches through real-world case studies, lessons learned, and example applications of effective PFP in data center projects.
- Understanding how fire engineering and industry experts can contribute value throughout the design process.



11:00 am - 11:30 am

Building the Future - Enabling Safe Adoption of 3D Printing & Modern Methods of Construction

Mohamed Amer, International Code Council

This session examines innovative strategies and regulatory frameworks to enable the safe and widespread adoption of 3D printing and modern methods of construction and how passive fire protection fits into the equation.

11:30 am - 12:00 pm

From Print to Performance: Fire-Resistance and Passive Fire Protection System of 3D-Printed Structures
Laxminarayan Nayak, Liva Group

Additive construction using three-dimensional printed concrete (3DPC) is rapidly transitioning from pilot projects to real-world deployments. While concrete is inherently non-combustible and can achieve robust fire resistance, 3DPC introduces distinctive fire-relevant characteristics — that can alter heat transfer, cracking, spalling propensity, and post-fire residual capacity.

This session synthesizes published research on the fire behavior of 3DPC elements and maps practical passive fire protection (PFP) strategies. The session also reviews existing standards, highlights key research gaps, and discuss emerging developments.

In this session, delegates will learn about:

- Fire risk taxonomy for 3D-printed building.
- System-level Passive Fire Protection strategies.
- Uncertainties associated with residual fire-resistance and compartment integrity following seismic damage.
- Recent standards & emerging guidance in GCC and international context.

12:00 pm - 12:30 pm

Effective Firestopping Management: Risks, Mitigation, and Best Practices
John Sajeev, ALEC

This topic covers the critical challenges faced in firestopping works across construction projects and presents practical mitigation strategies. It emphasizes early planning, proper quantification, design coordination, skilled resources, and digital compliance systems to manage cost, quality, and life safety risks associated with firestopping. By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

1. Understand the importance of early firestopping quantification.
2. Identify cost and compliance risks arising from poor design coordination.
3. Assess and manage Engineering Judgements (EJs) proactively.
4. Recognize the role of skilled resources in firestopping quality.
5. Appreciate the value of digital documentation and traceability.

12:30 pm - 1:00 pm

Closing Plenary: Building the Future of Passive Fire Protection

Abhishek Chhabra, FCIA & NFCA | Gabby Peck, Ph.D., FCIA & NFCA

This closing plenary brings the industry together to explore what's next for Passive Fire Protection and the role each stakeholder plays in advancing safer, more resilient buildings. This session will reflect on key conference insights and challenge the industry to move forward with clarity and purpose.





FM & UL FIRESTOP EXAM SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

14 JANUARY 2026

2:00 pm - 5:15 pm

FCIA Education for the FM & UL Firestop Exams

Bill McHugh, FCIA | Gabby Peck, Ph.D., FCIA

The FM & UL Firestop Exams are based on FCIA's Firestop Manual of Practice (MOP), the FM & UL program guides, and systems selection and analysis. These exams are used for contractor personnel to become FM 4991 Approved Contractor and UL Qualified Contractor Program DRIs.

For Special Inspectors, passing the exam proves firestopping competency to the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ), required by the IBC's Chapter 17. Passing an exam is also a requirement in IAS AC 291 for the Inspector to become a Responsible Person.

The FCIA Education for the FM & UL Firestop Exam education sessions help

prepare individuals and support individual preparation for these rigorous exams, further strengthening and developing firestopping knowledge.

***This program IS NO SUBSTITUTE for reading FCIA's Firestop Manual of Practice and studying the FM & UL program guides and systems selection and analysis before the exams.**

5:15 pm - 6:30 pm

Quality Management System Manual Development Education

Bill McHugh, FCIA | Matthew Schumann, UL Solutions

This session takes an in-depth look at the Quality Management System (QMS) Manual requirements for the FM 4991 Approved, UL Qualified Firestop Contractor, and IAS AC 291 Accreditation programs. The session also provides tips and a framework for structuring and writing a comprehensive QMS Manual.



Amjad Al Hamad, Fire Testing Engineer



Amjad Al Hamad is a Fire Testing Engineer working at the esteemed Thomas Bell Wright International Consultants testing laboratory. He specializes in testing the fire-resistance of separating and non-separating elements, both load-bearing and non-load-bearing.

Mr. Al Hamad worked as a research and teaching assistant at the American University of Sharjah during his master's program in Civil Engineering, and he is currently working on earning a Certified Fire Protection Specialist (CFPS) degree.

Throughout his career, Mr. Al Hamad has always been enthusiastic about testing and research, which allowed him to rapidly grow and gain knowledge in the fire safety field. Today, he is working on a variety of unique projects and continuously thriving to achieve compliance.

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Captain Eng. Mohamed Alahane, Head of Trade License and Civil Protection Systems Registration Section



Mohamed Alahane has been a driving force in fire safety and civil protection since joining the Abu Dhabi Civil Defence Authority (ADCDA) in 2018.

As the Head of the Trade License and Civil Protection Systems Registration Section, Capt. Eng. Alahane leads the registration and regulation of all fire safety systems, including the licensing of suppliers and personnel working in the life safety and fire protection field in Abu Dhabi.

He is an active member on the UAE Fire Code Committee where they contribute to shaping national fire safety regulations.

As an Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ), Mohamed Alahane is committed to prioritizing life safety, ensuring that the highest fire safety practices are implemented in line with the UAE's 2031 vision of becoming the world's most secure and safe country.

Abu Dhabi Civil Defense Authority
Abu Dhabi, UAE



Mohamed Amer, Regional Director of Operations - MENA

Mohamed Amer serves as Managing Director for the MENA region at the International Code Council (ICC). Based in Dubai, he leads ICC's strategic growth and commercial expansion across MENA, overseeing business development, operations, and senior-level engagement with government bodies, Standards Development Organizations (SDOs), manufacturers, design professionals, and other key stakeholders.

With over 15 years of professional experience in oil/gas, project management, and Testing, Inspection, and Certification (TIC) industries, he spearheads ICC's regional initiatives and market outreach through multiple engagement levers and demand drivers, helping deploy, lead and facilitate ICC's service lines for new business offerings across its family of solutions spectrum. His leadership extends across multiple key markets, ensuring ICC's operational efficiency and business continuity throughout the region. A distinguished speaker at conferences and workshops, Mohamed reinforces ICC's mission in building safety/innovation/sustainability, showcasing his commitment to advancing the industry's best practices and standards. His contributions underscore his dedication to fostering a safer and more resilient built environment in the MENA region.

He obtained his Master's in Engineering Systems Management and Bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering with a minor in Applied Mathematics and Computational Methods from the American University of Sharjah.

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Vidur Berry, Assistant Vice President & General Manager

Vidur Berry leads FM Approvals' operations across India, the Middle East, and Africa.

With over 17 years of experience at FM and FM Approvals, Vidur has held diverse roles and is widely recognized for his expertise in risk engineering, fire science, product testing, and loss prevention. He holds a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering and has undergone advanced technical training at FM's research facilities in the United States.

FM Approvals, founded in 1886, is an international leader in third-party testing and certification of products that support property loss prevention in commercial and industrial properties. Its parent company, FM (formerly FM Global), is the world's largest insurance company for commercial and industrial property. FM provides its client-owners with comprehensive solutions in risk management and engineering-driven loss prevention, helping safeguard assets and ensure operational resilience.

Vidur brings a unique blend of technical depth and regional insight, making him a valuable voice in conversations around safety, resilience, and innovation in industrial risk management.

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Abhishek Chhabra, Director - Middle East & Asia

Abhishek Chhabra is an Assurance Industry expert with nearly 20 years of experience in conformity assessment. His career spans a wide range of industries, from consumer electronics and household appliances to machinery, construction materials, and hazardous goods. He has deep knowledge of international compliance standards, including those set by North America, Europe, Britain, ISO, IMO, and Indian authorities.

Abhishek is a passionate advocate for passive fire protection. He has worked in Testing, Inspection & Certification bodies ensuring compliance of various building materials and products and their installation related to Fire Safety. He has also dedicated himself to educating stakeholders across the entire fire safety ecosystem. This includes consultants, contractors, manufacturers, regulators, and accreditation bodies.

His commitment extends beyond compliance industry. Abhishek actively participates in advisory committees for standards development organizations and accreditation bodies. He has had active involvement in development of Standards in India (BIS), Saudi Arabia (SASO), American Standards (UL) and the UAE Fire and Life safety Code of Practice. He shares his expertise through publications, articles, and conference presentations, promoting the effective use of fire safety codes and compliance regimes. His contribution to Independent Review of the Construction Product Testing Regime led by Paul Morrell and Anneliese Day for the UK government's Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has been a recent highlight.

Currently, Abhishek represents two leading industry associations: the Firestop Contractors International Association (FCIA) and the National Fireproofing Contractors Association (NFCA). In this role, he spearheads efforts to raise awareness and understanding of passive fire protection practices across diverse audiences.

Abhishek's dedication goes beyond fire safety. Through his initiative, tic. guru, he offers educational courses that empower professionals with a deeper understanding of the Testing, Inspection, and Certification (TIC) industry. He also undertakes bespoke consulting services to assurance businesses and has a public training program offered via Udemy, called , "Masterclass in Assurance Industry".

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Zahi Daher, Technical Director



Zahi Daher is the Country Manager for NFPA in Saudi Arabia, where he plays a pivotal role in promoting safety standards and advancing fire protection policies across the Kingdom. With extensive experience in the field, he works closely with government authorities and industry leaders to drive the adoption of the NFPA Fire & Life Safety Ecosystem™, deliver technical workshops, and support code implementation.

Before joining NFPA, Zahi held key positions at UL, where he built strategic partnerships with regulatory bodies and contributed to shaping safety initiatives in the region. Recognized for his analytical mindset and trust-based leadership, he is dedicated to bridging global standards with local priorities to strengthen community resilience and safety.

Zahi holds a Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from Beirut Arab University and a Master's in Engineering Management from King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals.

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Vinay Deshpande, Founder, Managing Director



Vinay Deshpande is the Founder and Managing Director of Vitruvius Fire Safety Consulting FZ-LLC, a specialist Fire & Life Safety engineering practice based in the UAE and supporting major aviation, metro, mixed-use, and industrial projects across the Middle East and India.

With over 37 years of experience in fire protection engineering - including senior roles with global consultancies and hands-on delivery of complex airport, hospitality, and high-rise developments - Vinay brings deep expertise in passive and active fire protection, smoke control, evacuation strategy, and regulatory compliance. His work spans concept design, detailed engineering, independent reviews, asset condition assessments, and special studies and fire/explosion risk assessments. He is widely recognized for bridging code requirements with real-world constructability and for advancing practical, performance-based solutions within challenging built environments.

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Bill McHugh, Technical Director

In his 43 years in the construction industry, **Bill McHugh** has been involved in Associations to help improve the reliability of various construction features. He has worked at major construction products manufacturers, a specialist firestop distributor and contractor – even provided independent inspection – prior to being involved in FCIA and NFCA.

Bill participates in Building and Fire, Energy Code Development processes and has served on the ICC's 'Fire Safety' Code Development Committee and serves on the Fire Protection Features Committee at NFPA. He is a past Institute Director, Chapter President, and Region President at the Construction Specifications Institute (CSI) and member at Construction Specifications Canada (CSC), and is a past member of the International Accreditation Services (IAS) Board of Directors.

He served as organizer and moderator for the ASHE/TJC/FCIA/UL Passive Fire Protection Barrier Management Symposiums and has presented at many conferences, effectively educating thousands. In addition to being a published author in many magazines, he also contributes to *Life Safety Digest*.

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Laxminarayan Nayak, Head of Risk Engineering



Eng. Laxminarayan Nayak is an accomplished risk engineering professional with extensive experience in high-hazard technical risk assessments, industrial loss prevention, and resilience consulting across the Middle East and Asia. He currently leads Risk Engineering at Liva Insurance Group.

He holds a bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering and an M.Tech in Chemical Engineering with specialization in Safety Engineering from the National Institute of Technology (NIT), Rourkela, India. His work bridges the practical world of field engineering with the analytical rigor of research-driven risk modelling.

Over the years, Mr. Nayak has contributed to industry knowledge through presentations at respected technical forums, delivering insights on passive fire protection in the built environment, roof-mounted solar PV fire safety strategies, and cyber-resilience frameworks for industrial control systems.

He is deeply engaged in the study of emerging risks related to modern methods of construction. His recent work explores the non-traditional construction materials and geometries, contributing to industry dialogues on future-ready resilience strategies.

At Intersec 2026, he brings his multidisciplinary experience to decode the challenges and opportunities of Passive Fire Protection in 3D-Printed Buildings and Next-Gen Construction Systems—an area vital to the evolving built environment and regional fire safety ambitions.

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Robert Parkinson, Associate Fire Engineer

Robert Parkinson is an Associate Fire Engineering with Joule Group fire safety consultants in Dubai. Rob is a Chartered Fire Engineer and member of the Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE) with over a decade of experience safeguarding mission-critical infrastructure. His work spans the UK and Middle East, delivering fire safety strategies for commercial, residential, and industrial projects, including data centers.

Holding a Master of Science in Fire and Explosion Engineering, Rob has extensive experience with the UAE code and regulatory frameworks for Passive Fire Protection. He collaborates with design teams to balance architectural vision with robust fire safety, providing strategic advice and conducting detailed inspections of active and passive systems during construction and within existing buildings.

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Gabrielle Peck, Ph.D., Technical Director

Dr. Peck obtained her Ph.D. in Fire Chemistry from the UK where her work focused on the design and development of regulatory fire tests for use in the Construction Product Regulations in the EU. Her work has focused on advancing fire testing and guidance for reaction to fire, structural and effective compartmentation passive fire systems, designing and conducting large-scale fire tests globally, and advancing education in the fire industry.

Her work has been used to inform and change building regulations in the UK, and she has worked with a variety of organizations globally, for example, on Government Enquiries, standard bodies, and with various organizations across the world to improve fire safety regulations.

Dr. Peck has recently joined the National Fireproofing Contractors Association (NFCA) and Firestop Contractors International Association (FCIA) as Technical director- advancing the passive fire protection industry globally through advocacy, education, and training.

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Cristina Perez Domper, Senior Regional Manager - EMEA



Cristina Perez Domper is a prominent fire safety professional with a degree in Civil Engineering and a MSc. Structural Engineering. With over a decade of experience, Cristina has made significant contributions to the field of fire sciences and the Testing, Certification and Inspection (TIC) industry both in Europe and the Middle East.

In her current role as the Senior Regional Manager for EMEA at Intertek based out of Dubai, she provides fire safety testing and certification services to clients across the Middle East, ensuring that buildings and structures meet international fire safety standards. Her expertise in TIC and fire safety engineering helps clients to achieve safe and compliant fire safety products and systems for the wider community. She has been a frequent speaker at industry conferences and events, sharing her insights and experiences with others in the field.

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John Sajeev, Head of QA/QC



John Sajeev is an accomplished Senior Manager in the construction industry, renowned for delivering projects on time and exceeding expectations across more than 6 million square meters. With deep expertise in Design & Build, Build, and Defects Liability Period (DLP) phases, he has successfully led iconic developments, including airports, ultra-luxury hotels, and high-rise buildings.

A visionary leader, Mr. Sajeev excels in strategic planning, operational optimization, and AI integration to drive efficiency and innovation. He pioneered an automated predictive risk management system linking EDMS platforms (such as Aconex) with Primavera, enabling real-time program insights and enhanced decision-making. His initiatives have automated site lab testing with AI-powered image recognition, streamlined subcontractor tracking, and generated dynamic dashboards for stakeholder transparency, resulting in significant cost savings, reduced errors, and accelerated timelines.

Mr. Sajeev is committed to sustainability and has aligned projects with global standards like LEED, Estidama, GSAS, and CEEQUAL, while transforming departments into revenue-generating units through in-house specialist teams. He is a strong advocate for people development and he fosters continuous learning and career growth, cultivating experts in data analysis and information management.

Mr. Sajeev is advancing real-time EDMS-BIM integration and AI-driven tools to revolutionize construction practices. His inspiring leadership and innovative approach make him a sought-after voice on tackling industry challenges through technology and collaboration.

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MEET THE FACULTY



Matthew Schumann, Industry Manager, Building Materials

Matthew Schumann has worked for UL Solutions in the Built Environment segment for over twenty-five years. Previously working on various fire containment and fire resistance products as a project engineer, technical reviewer and engineering team leader. Matthew currently works as a Senior Staff Engineer and Subject Matter Expert for Fire Resistance and Fire Containment, concentrating on training, development of new services and support of client relationships. He has been recognized by UL Solution's William Henry Merrill Society as a Distinguished Member of the Technical Staff due to his contributions. Matthew has represented UL Solutions at various activities such as the International Firestop Council, Firestop Contractors International Association, AMCA and various door related industry groups and standards committees such as NFPA, BHMA, SDI, DASMA and NAAMM. Most recently, Matt has helped develop and launch the Technical Evaluation Developer Program for the firestop industry.

Matthew is a graduate of the University of Dayton with a Bachelor's Degree in Mechanical Engineering.

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MVL FIRESTOP

Premier Passive Fire Protection Partner



MVL FIRESTOP
THE SAFEST CHOICE

Why MVL?

- All products manufactured under one roof
- Specialized fireproofing solutions
- Pre & Post Installation Audits
- LEED® & BREEAM Compliant
- Global Project Experience
- 3000+ Projects protected Worldwide

Total Passive Fire Protection Solutions

Product Range

- Linear Joint firestopping
- MEP Penetrations Systems
- Collar, putties and boards
- Fireproof Coatings (Steel, Cable, Wood, FR fabric coating etc)



aramco





Ahmed Taher, Associate Fire and Life Safety Consultant

Ahmed Taher is an Associate Fire & Life Safety Consultant in AESG with over seventeen years of experience, specializing in healthcare facilities and complex life-safety environments across the Middle East. He holds the Certified Life Safety Specialist for Health Care (CLSS-HC) credential from NFPA, alongside the Certified Fire Protection Specialist (CFPS) certification and AIFireE membership, highlighting his advanced expertise in patient-centered fire protection and healthcare regulatory compliance.

His technical background bridges architectural engineering with deep knowledge of NFPA healthcare standards, the UAE Fire & Life Safety Code of Practice, IBC, QCDD, SBC, and broader GCC codes. Ahmed is skilled in developing fire strategy frameworks tailored to hospital operations, including defend-in-place concepts, compartmentation strategies, emergency egress planning, and continuity-of-operations requirements unique to medical facilities.

Throughout his career, he has led multidisciplinary teams, guided life-safety design reviews, and supported authority approvals for high-risk and mission-critical facilities. He is also experienced in delivering training programs that strengthen awareness of healthcare safety codes for engineers, designers, and operational personnel.

Recognized for his methodical approach and strong technical leadership, Ahmed consistently delivers clear, compliant, and practical fire and life-safety solutions that support safe healthcare environments and regulatory excellence.

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Mukesh Tomar, Ph.D., Head of Fire Engineering - London

Dr. Mukesh Tomar is Head of Fire Engineering at Jacobs London, UK office. He is a fire expert with more than 15 years of consulting experience on various types of projects in the UK/ Europe, Middle East / Asia, and Africa. He is well versed with local and international fire standards; he also holds a Ph.D. in fire engineering. His projects include Aviation, Hospitality, Data Centres, high-rise, Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Hospital, Metro/Rail, Tunnels, Stadium, and Nuclear Plants.

His core expertise is in preparing Fire & Life Safety Strategies, Designing Fire Protection and Smoke Control Systems, Performance-based solutions using CFD, and Value Engineering for complex projects. He has worked on some of the most renowned projects in the world such as Heathrow Airport/ King Slaman Airport/ Al Maktoum Airport/ Dubai Airport, Rolls Royce SMR-UK, Neom Trojena-KSA, Neom Oxagon-KSA, High-Speed Rail-UK, Nordhavn Road Tunnel- Denmark to name a few.

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Peter Van Gorp, Principal

Peter Van Gorp has 30 years of experience working as a fire safety engineer. He has provided consultancy, expert witness and advisory services in the Middle East, the UK, Europe and Africa.

Peter leads HKA's global Forensic Technical Services (FTS) fire engineering team. He acts as an independent expert witness on fire safety matters within various industries including Buildings, Infrastructure, Energy and Oil and Gas.

He has been instructed as an independent expert on numerous occasions, for matters in international arbitration, adjudication and litigation. Peter has given evidence for a tribunal and has been cross-examined. Recent expert witness appointments range from providing his independent expert opinion on the compliance of external wall systems on high-rise buildings within the UK to a dispute relating to the design and installation of an LPG system in a major airport in the Middle East.

Peter is highly experienced in the areas of fire, life-safety, and loss prevention and has been engaged on various types of building projects ranging across schools, hotels, hospitals, large shopping malls, multi-occupancy high-rises, and industrial developments. He has operated on projects from initial concept stages to assistance during construction.

Peter has conducted numerous fire safety system inspections, which have involved the verification of correct design, installation, operation, and maintenance. He has also been involved in fire safety system design and engineering, fire safety system construction supervision and site management, and has assisted and witnessed the testing and commissioning of fire and life safety systems.

Specific to safety and loss prevention, Peter has been involved in fire risk assessments ranging from qualitative risk assessments of refinery and chemical processes, to quantitative risk assessments of installations and handling of hazardous materials.

Peter has been an approved Risk Assessment consultant for the Jebel Ali Free Zone Authority for many years and has contributed to the UAE Fire Flammable and Combustible Liquids Chapter. Throughout his career, Peter has Chaired Hazard and Operability (HAZOP) and What-If analysis workshops.

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Daniel Wysokinski, Principal Engineer - Fire-Resistance Testing

Daniel Wysokinski, MSc Eng is a Principal Testing Engineer at Emirates Safety Laboratory (ESL), with over a decade of experience in fire testing across various industries, including civil and maritime sectors.

Until 2021, Daniel was an active member of the European Committee for Standardization (CEN TC127), where he contributed to the development of fire-resistance testing standards. He also served on the National Technical Committee for Smoke and Heat Control Systems in Europe. In addition, he serves as a Technical Auditor for the European Accreditation Body, focusing on fire laboratories.

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