

# Certification Renewal in a Weak Economy

## IMSA Certification Renewal

IMSA

It has been six years since IMSA adopted the certification renewal program. The current state of the economy has affected budgets everywhere. Unfortunately training can be affected by budget cuts. There are ways of receiving training for your certification renewal that are inexpensive and more efficient for your employer.

In-house training can be relatively inexpensive. The training can be given by a safety officer, supervisor, distributor/vendor, etc... For example: The city is updating controllers. The distributor has trained your supervisor on the controller, from installing to troubleshooting. It is now the supervisor's job to train the technicians. (If the distributor does the training directly for the employees, it can also be used for renewal). This in-house training can be used for certification renewal. The way to log these hours is by completing section "A" of the personal log (logs can be found on the IMSA website). When your expiration date is approaching and you have completed the required amount of training, the personal log is sent to the International office along with the appropriate renewal fee.

Technical Sessions are offered at

the Annual International Conference and throughout the year at the Section level. An IMSA member can accumulate TARP points for attending these sessions. As a member benefit, TARP points are logged at the International office upon receiving the TARP paperwork from the Section. Even if you are not an IMSA member, you can participate in these technical sessions, however, the training will not be logged for non-members. It is the responsibility of a non-member to keep track of their training. Be sure to take your personal log with you and have your attendance confirmed by the speaker. Members attending a session where TARP forms are not available should inform the presenter of the IMSA TARP program and will need to log the session. At the time of the members certification renewal it is not necessary to submit proof of training because the information is already recorded. Typically, these sessions are relatively inexpensive. Contact your local Section for dates and times sessions are offered (see pg. 3 for more information on TARP points).

For some employers it is not

realistic to send a large number of employees to a 16-hour certification course for renewal. If you have multiple individuals in need of renewal, most Sections will accommodate the needs of a company, city, municipality, etc... and bring in a moderator to your facility. If this option is of interest, contact your local Section Certification Chair for more information. Please remember, every Section is different in what they offer and how it is offered.

If you have taken training or are considering a training course and are not sure if it applies to the specialty in which you are renewing, please contact Amanda Santell at the International Office for assistance at [ais@imsasafety.org](mailto:ais@imsasafety.org) or 1-800-723-4672.



## How Do I Know When I Am Due For Renewal?

A renewal packet will be sent to you prior to your expiration date. If you do not receive a renewal packet it could be because IMSA does not have your current address in the database. It is very important to update any changes in employment, addresses and name, on the

IMSA website.

To find your expiration date you may refer to your certification certificate and/or card you received from your last renewal or when you received the initial certification. For members, your certification date(s) will also be listed

on the back of your membership card. Expiration is three years from the date listed.

If you are unable to locate your expiration dates please contact Amanda Santell at the International office.



### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

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# What Are My Options For Renewal?

There are three methods for renewal of IMSA certifications; Continuing Educational Units (CEUs), attending the current IMSA certification course or obtaining the next higher certification level. Individuals may choose any one of the options. The renewal requirements must be completed prior to the expiration date of the individual's current certification.

## Educational Units

- College/Technical/Vocational course work
- Continuing Educational Units (CEUs)
- TARP points
- Renewal hours by personal log

When renewing by educational units it is important to remember the following items:

- Be sure the course(s) or training pertains to the certification being renewed.
- Educational units must be completed



within the three (3) years prior to the certification(s) expiration date.

- A combination of the Educational Units can be used for renewal.
- All certifications are required to have

16-hours (1.6 CEUs or 64 TARP points) to renew a certification **except** Work Zone and Flagging; these only require 4 hours (.4 CEUs or 16 TARP points).

- Certificates of completion are recommended for proof of training. However, a personal log may be completed and signed by a supervisor, moderator or speaker and submitted to the International office. Personal logs will be randomly audited.

## Attending the Current IMSA Certification Course

IMSA is aware some individuals are not able to attend technical training sessions as often as others, for those individuals, IMSA recommends attending the current 16-hour certification course. When attending the current 16-hour certification course for renewal you will not be required to take the exam.

It is important to follow these steps when choosing the 16-hour certification course as your renewal option:

- You may only use this option within "one year" prior to the expiration

date on your current certification.

- Contact your local IMSA Section Certification Chair to register for the course (cost of course determined by section).
- Download a personal log at [www.IMSAsafety.org](http://www.IMSAsafety.org). It is your responsibility to bring the log with you to the course and have it signed by the moderator.

- Be sure to sign the class roster as it will be audited.
- Once you have completed the course the personal log must be returned to the International office at the time of renewal with your renewal fee.

*"Follow these steps when choosing the 16-hour certification course as your renewal option"*

## Higher Certification Level

Achieving the next higher certification level in each specialty will result in a new three-year certification; therefore, renewal of your existing certification will not be necessary.

- For example: An individual with a current Traffic Signal I certification who passes a Traffic Signal II certification course will receive a new certification level, which will be due for renewal three-years from the date printed on the certificate and

certification card.

- If an individual does not pass the next higher certification level, renewal will still need to be completed on the last level achieved. *Individuals attending the class will have achieved the required amount of renewal hours.*

- If an individual holds a Traffic Signal I and Signs & Markings I and passes the Traffic Signal II certification course, this will not renew the Signs & Markings I certification.



# Technical Advancement Recognition Program (T.A.R.P.)

The TARP points system was developed as a member benefit to track members efforts in obtaining information and education through attending “Technical Sessions” held in their Section or at International Conferences.

TARP is a points based system for members that attend a “recognized” (approved by the Section) Technical Session, points are assigned and the activity is logged in the IMSA database. TARP points will be given for Section organized sessions, International conferences, sponsored presentations or technical presentations.

TARP points are awarded as such: 2 points for every 30 minutes of a presentation.

Who would gather the points?

The local Section Certification Chair or

Section Secretary will collect sign in sheets from Technical Sessions and submit them to the International office to be logged in the IMSA database.

If a member attends an industry related Technical Session they could submit an outline of the materials presented (including presenters name and contact



number) and the duration of the session to the local Certification Chairman. If after review it is deemed suitable, the local Section Certification Chairman would request points be assigned to that person.

Traffic Signal, Signs & Markings, Roadway Lighting, Fiber Optics, Fire Alarm and Telecommunicator require a total of 64 TARP points (A total of 16 hours of Technical Sessions) to renew.

Work Zone Safety, Flagging and Traffic Regulator require a total of 16 TARP points (4 hours of Technical Sessions) to renew.

## What Courses Are Acceptable For Renewal?

The following is a sample of acceptable training that can be submitted for renewals on a variety of Specialties:

- Electrical License CEUs
- 2070 Controller Training
- NEMA TS2
- Fire Officer I & 2 (NFPA 1021 2003 Edition Curriculum)
- Flagger Training
- Earthing, Surging & Lighting Protection
- Basic Electronics for Traffic Signals
- Roundabout Design Workshop
- Retroreflective Technology
- Confined Space Awareness
- Bucket Truck Safety
- Fall Protection
- Electrical Code Change Course
- Roadway Illumination & Electrical Installations.
- Sign Fabrication Workshop
- Level II - In Fire Protection Engineering Technology Fire Alarm Systems

This is only a small list of what has been used for various renewals.

If you have any questions about acceptable courses for renewal, please contact Amanda Santell at [ais@imsasafety.org](mailto:ais@imsasafety.org)

## FAQ's

**Q. If I hold a Traffic Signal II (field) and Traffic Signal II (bench) do both have to be renewed?**

A. Yes, both certifications need to be renewed. However, the 16 hours of training can be used to renew both certifications. Furthermore, if you hold a Traffic Signal II Bench & Field and a Traffic Signal Inspector all three can be renewed with the same 16 hours of training.

**Q. My certification expires in June but I can't get into a training class until September. What should I do?**

A. If the certification is not renewed by the expiration date it will lapse. The lapsed certification holder will have one year to reinstate their certification by documenting 16 hours of training. If the certification is not reinstated within one-year the individual must take the current certification exam at the highest level previously obtained.

- Have there been product demos at your shop?
- Training on a new installation?
- Weekly safety meetings?

These hours can all be used toward renewal.

**Q. What happens if I take the next higher certification level and fail? How do I renew?**

A. If you currently hold a Traffic Signal I and take Traffic Signal II to fill your renewal requirements, but fail, by participating in the Traffic Signal II course, your required 16 hours of training would be met. Additional paperwork and payment would then need to be sent to renew the Traffic Signal I.



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*Your safety and education is our business.*

**We are on the web!!!**  
**[www.IMSAsafety.org](http://www.IMSAsafety.org)**

**IMSAsafety**

*Dedicated to providing quality certification programs for the safe installation, operation, and maintenance of public safety systems; delivering value for members by providing the latest information and education in the industry.*

**Bellevue, WA to Host 2011 International Conference**

**Join IMSAsafety in Bellevue for the 116th Annual Conference and 34th Annual School; July 7-15. The International Conference is a great opportunity to collect TARP points for Certification Renewal and network with other members. You can find more information at [www.IMSAsafety.org](http://www.IMSAsafety.org) and in the IMSAsafety Journal.**

**Your Opinion Counts**

Is there something you would like to see in this newsletter? Do you have questions that need to be answered? Will others benefit from the answers? that Please submit your ideas and questions to Amanda Santell at [ais@imsasafety.org](mailto:ais@imsasafety.org). Be sure to look for the next newsletter, your submission may be included!

**Become An IMSAsafety Member**

What are the benefits to becoming an IMSAsafety member?

- IMSAsafety Journal
- IMSAsafety Internet Web site Members Only Area
- Membership Certificate
- Membership Label Pin
- Membership Card
- Voting Rights
- Discounts on Merchandise
- Section Membership
- Training and Education
- Discounted IMSAsafety Certification Exam Fees
- **Discounted IMSAsafety Certification Renewal Fees**
- Networking Opportunities
- Scholarship Program
- Committee Membership
- Washington Representation
- Representation to other Associations
- International Conference and Schools
- Career Opportunity Information
- **Technical Advancement Recognition Program (TARP)**

A IMSAsafety Membership application may be found at [www.IMSAsafety.org](http://www.IMSAsafety.org) or contact Sharon Prutsman, the Membership Record Coordinator, at [slp@IMSAsafety.org](mailto:slp@IMSAsafety.org) for more information.

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