

## **TRAINING, QUALIFICATIONS, AND CERTIFICATION**

### **1 Introduction**

The National Park Service is responsible for training and developing employees to implement all aspects of the NPS wildland fire management program. Individuals will not be assigned to duties for which they lack training and/or certified experience. Agency personnel holding wildland fire qualifications must meet position standards identified in the Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide, Publication Management System (PMS) 310-1. The PMS 310-1 may be found at <https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/310-1>.

Minimum requirements for agency specific wildland fire positions not included in the PMS 310-1 can be found in the Federal Wildland Fire Qualifications Supplement. The supplement may be found at: <https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/310-1>. NPS Personnel may not use positions listed in the Supplement which are not endorsed by the NPS. Minimum requirements for “All Hazards” qualifications are found in the DOI Incident Positions Qualification Guide (IPQG).

Certain fire management positions must meet standards identified in the Interagency Fire Program Management Qualifications Standards and Guide, which is available online at <https://www.ifpm.nifc.gov/>.

Employees engaged in fire management activities will comply with all agency-specific training, qualifications, and health and safety policy. NPS standards for training and qualifications may exceed the minimum standards established by National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG). Additional standards will be approved by the Division Chief, Fire and Aviation, and implemented through the Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS). Standards which exceed the minimum standards established by NWCG are identified in the Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations (Red Book) document in the NPS chapter. NWCG-developed direction, if adopted, will be issued as NPS-specific direction, as stated in the NWCG Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide 310-1:

*“National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) is comprised of federal and state representatives from governmental organizations with wildland fire management responsibilities... NWCG is a forum for development of recommended policies, guidelines and standards that can be of benefit to participating bureaus. Policies, guidelines or standards, if adopted by a bureau, are implemented through individual bureau directive systems.”*

## **2 Responsibilities**

The NPS National Fire Training and Workforce Development Program is made up of personnel and groups with roles and responsibilities for programs located at the national, regional, and local levels.

### **2.1 National Organization and Responsibilities**

#### **Division Chief, Fire and Aviation**

- Establish NPS policy for fire training and qualifications.
- Advise the Associate Director, Visitor and Resource Protection on fire program training and workforce development issues.
- Assure compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements and internal program standards.

#### **Branch Chief, Wildland Fire**

- Develop, implement, and evaluate Bureau fire training and workforce development programs.
- Provide fire training assistance and expertise to NPS and interagency partners.

#### **NPS National Wildland Fire Training Program Manager**

- Manage the NPS National Fire Training and Workforce Development Program.
- Provide leadership and technical expertise to Bureau fire programs and interagency partners in all areas of fire training and workforce development, including training systems design, standards development, curriculum development, course delivery, publications management, and qualifications standards.
- Develop and implement long-term strategies for continual evaluation and progressive modification of Bureau fire training and workforce development program in order to keep pace with developments and innovations in the field of training and education.
- Provide leadership and oversight to Bureau and interagency training and workforce development programs and initiatives such as higher education programs and workforce mentoring program.
- Evaluate and adjust fire training and workforce development programs to achieve established objectives in the most cost effective manner possible.

### **Fire Management Leadership Board (FMLB)**

The FMLB consists of each Regional Fire Management Officer, Wildland Fire Branch Chief, an associate Regional Director or Park Superintendent, Wildland Fire Planning and Budget Program Lead, Wildland Fire Operations Program Lead, Wildland Fire Science and Ecology Program Lead and Ad Hoc members, FAM Communications Director and FAM Administrative and Incident Business Lead. The group is chartered under the authority of the Division Chief, Fire and Aviation Management. This group's primary purpose is to provide strategic planning and coordination of the Bureau's wildland fire management policies and programs.

### **NPS Operations Advisory Team (OAT)**

The OAT is chartered under the FMLB. The mission of the OAT is to provide national leadership in all areas of NPS Fire Operations. Related to training and workforce development, the OAT will assist in the coordination of safe, effective, and efficient training in order to accomplish NPS Fire Management objectives. This is done in collaboration with and under the direction of the FMLB in coordination with the NPS National Wildland Fire Training Program Manager.

Each NPS region will provide at least one representative to the OAT. The representative should be familiar with and may have, primary responsibility for fire training issues at the regional level.

The OAT is chaired by the Operations Program Lead.

### **NPS Office of Learning and Development**

The Washington Office Learning & Development Division serves as the headquarters and support offices for the Learning & Development Community (L&D). The L&D community consists of the staffs from the Albright Training Center, Capital Training Center, Historic Preservation Training Center and the Mather Training Center. In addition, the office oversees three training programs: NPS fundamentals, The Career Academies and the Leadership Development Program.

## 2.2 Regional and Geographic Organization and Responsibilities

### Regional Directors

- Provide region-wide leadership in fire training and workforce development.
- Ensure that fire or fire militia employees meet applicable fire training requirements established in this document, the [Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations](#), and the Interagency Fire Program Management Qualifications Standards and Guide (<https://www.ifpm.nifc.gov/>).
- Ensure region-wide capability to delegate fire management duties to principal acting by attaining the Agency Administrator qualification.
- Support local, geographic, and national training efforts by providing instructors, coordinators, and subject matter experts for course development/revision.

### Regional Fire Management Officer

- Provide leadership in fire training and workforce development.
- Ensure that fire or fire militia employees meet applicable fire training requirements established in this document, the [Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations](#) and the Interagency Fire Program Management Qualifications Standards and Guide (<https://www.ifpm.nifc.gov/>), prior to performing fire management duties.
- Maintain fire training and qualifications records.
- Evaluate fire training and workforce development needs to meet current and anticipated needs.

### Regional Fire Training Officers

All regions have a designated Regional Fire Training Officer position; however, this may be assigned as collateral duty by some regions.

- Provide region-wide leadership in fire training and workforce development.
- Assist the Regional Director, Regional Fire Management Officer, and unit fire program managers in meeting all fire training and workforce development requirements.
- Represent the Region on the OAT and help that group meet its national fire training objectives.
- Represent the Region and the NPS on the Geographic Area Training Committee.

- Coordinate fire training efforts with Region counterparts in operations, aviation, and fuels.
- Serve as the Regional IQCS account manager and coordinator.
- Work with the unit fire programs to provide subject matter experts and field reviewers for NPS and NWCG course development projects.
- Meet established fire training documentation and reporting requirements.
- Serve as a regional subject matter expert and assist unit fire programs in complying with Interagency Fire Program Management (IFPM) standards.
- Coordinate and prioritize region-wide NWCG fire training course nominations.
- Assist unit fire programs in identifying and facilitating on-the-job training opportunities.
- Provide leadership in the individual development plan process and mentoring programs.

### **Geographic Area Training Committees/Working Teams**

Geographic area training committees/working teams are chartered under their respective geographic area coordinating groups or boards of authority. Their purpose is to provide coordinated, interagency training programs within their geographic areas. Charters and detailed information pertaining to the geographic area training committees/working teams can be found on the National Wildland Fire Training website (<https://nationalfiretraining.nwcg.gov/>).

### **Geographic Area Training Representatives (GATRs)**

Representatives are interagency regional training center managers or individuals who are responsible for scheduling, coordinating, delivering, and evaluating 300-400 level NWCG courses within their geographic area.

This group is responsible for organizing, coordinating, and managing geographic area or national training programs in the various geographic areas. Information and recommendations associated with training implementation and evaluation will be passed on to the NWCG Operations and Training Committee (OTC). The group also helps to set regional/geographic area nomination priorities and course content for interagency training.

## **2.3 Local Organization and Responsibilities**

### **Park Superintendents**

- Provide park-wide leadership in fire training and workforce development.
- Ensure that Park fire or fire militia employees meet applicable fire training requirements established in this document, the [Interagency Standards for Fire](#)

[and Fire Aviation Operations](#) and the Interagency Fire Program Management Qualifications Standards and Guide (<https://www.ifpm.nifc.gov/>).

- Ensure capability to delegate fire management duties to principal actings by attaining the Agency Administrator qualification.
- Support local, geographic, and national training efforts by providing instructors, coordinators, and subject matter experts for course development/revision.
- Establish and implement fire training and workforce development plans to meet established fire management objectives of the annual work plan.

### **Unit Fire Management Officers (FMO)**

- Provide leadership in fire training and workforce development.
- Ensure that Park fire or fire militia employees meet applicable fire training requirements established in this document, the [Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations](#) Interagency Fire Program Management Qualifications Standards and Guide (<https://www.ifpm.nifc.gov/>) prior to performing fire management duties.
- Evaluate fire training and workforce development needs to meet current and anticipated needs. Report needs upward to the regional fire training officer.
- Ensure all unit IQCS account managers have delegation of authority from the Certifying Official (<https://iqcsweb.nwccg.gov/>).

### **Unit-Level Training Officers**

All units will have designated fire training officers. This is usually a collateral duty.

- Provide unit-level leadership in fire training and workforce development.
- Assist the Park Superintendent and the FMO in all areas of fire training.
- Ensure that employees meet pertinent PMS 310-1 and NPS-specific qualifications requirements.
- Maintain fire training and qualifications records.
- Assess unit training needs and establish training objectives. Develop and implement training schedules to meet those objectives.
- Coordinate fire training efforts with interagency partners and non-fire programs.
- Represent the unit on local, zone, or geographic area fire training committees.
- Manage the unit IQCS account, including inputting training, qualifications, and experience information and producing incident qualifications cards. This responsibility may be delegated to support staff.

- Coordinate the fire qualifications review process for the unit IQCS Qualifications Card Review Committee.
- Assist with IFPM standards compliance.
- Coordinate and prioritize unit-level NWCG fire training course nominations.
- Assist employees in identifying and facilitating on-the-job training opportunities.
- Provide leadership in the individual development plan (IDP) process and mentoring programs.
- Assist the FMO in prioritizing training nominations.
- Work with agency and interagency counterparts to sponsor 100-300 level courses.

### **Employee Responsibilities**

Employees are responsible for their own self-development. While the NPS has a responsibility to ensure that employees are properly trained and equipped to perform their jobs, employees are largely responsible for developing and advancing their own careers. Responsibilities may include:

- Work with immediate supervisor to identify training and development needs.
- Use annual performance plans and/or individual development plans to establish and implement a training and development strategy.
- Participate in and complete training courses and developmental activities.
- Apply knowledge and skills in field situations to gain experience.
- Enhance experience by participating in after action reviews and other activities that assess, analyze, and seek to improve performance.
- Ensure that training and records are accurately entered into the Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS).
- Maintain personal copies of training, qualifications, and experience
- Execute only duties they have been trained and qualified to perform.

## **3 NPS National Fire Training and Workforce Development Program**

The NPS National Fire Training and Workforce Development Program is constantly developing and improving programs that will better develop our future firefighters, leaders, and fire managers. This section addresses workforce development programs managed at the national level.

### **3.1 Workforce Development Grant Program**

The National Wildland Fire Training and Workforce Development program provides opportunities for NPS personnel in the wildland fire career field to secure funding which will advance their career. The service wide call for applications goes out annually on the first Monday in September. The deadline for applications is November 1 annually.

Applications received by this date will be prioritized and successful applicants will be notified by November 30th annually. Applications received after the November 1st deadline will be awarded funding after those applications received by the November 1st deadline. Funding is generally available in three areas, experiential learning, education, and training. Description and area prioritization considerations are as follows:

Experiential Learning consists of activities which allow an individual to gain career competencies through on-the-job experiences or “shadow assignments”. Examples of this include but are not limited to prepositioning for a trainee assignment (ICT3 or RXB2 are common examples), assignment to shadow an FMO on a unit experiencing fire activity or likely to experience fire activity, attending a staff ride, “detail” to a unit or module which allows exposure to unfamiliar module configuration or organization. This area includes funding requested for the Prescribed Fire Training Center (PFTC).

Prioritization criteria includes experience contribution to goals outlined in an IDP, and competency contribution to meeting the home unit’s workforce and fire management goals.

Education consists of attending a college or university to gain competencies in subject matter complementary to the fire management career field. Applications which support gaining 0401 series qualification will be prioritized over other subject matter areas.

Examples of acceptable subject matter areas include but are not limited to leadership and organizational development or business administration.

Training consists of non-education agency or outside training opportunities. Prioritization criteria includes, training contribution to meeting the unit’s workforce and fire management goals and to building capacity in high demand positions in functional areas such as finance, logistics or plans.

The amount of funding awarded in each area and to each individual or group may vary from year to year based on total funding available and will be outlined in the annual announcement.



### **3.2 Wildland Fire Apprenticeship Program (WFAP)**

The Wildland Firefighter Apprentice Program is a training and experience based program designed to enhance and develop future fire and aviation managers. The intent of the program is to take a career-entry firefighter and provide education, training, and paid work experience over a 12- to 48-month period, depending on the individual applicants existing experience. Upon successful completion of all the requirements of the Apprenticeship Program, the apprentice will reach journey-level status as a wildland firefighter (Firefighter Type I).

Applying for WFAP:

Interested employees should visit the WFAP website and work with their Park FMO, Regional OAT Representative and the National Training Program Manager (WFAP NPS National Coordinator) for specific application processes. Funding to support attendance at the academy may be supported through the workforce development grant program, this may include travel and per diem in addition to tuition for the academy.

### **3.3 Prescribed Fire Training Center (PFTC)**

The Prescribed Fire Training Center (PFTC) is a unique program blending maximum field prescribed burning experience with a flexible curriculum of classroom instruction on topics of interest to prescribed fire practitioners. Participants will have the opportunity to complete portions of their NWCG-approved prescribed fire position task books under the guidance of invited training specialists.

Applying for PFTC:

Applications for PFTC will be routed to the National Training Program Manager with a due date of October 1st annually. The National Training Program Manager will work with Regional Operations and Fuels personnel to prioritize the list for submission back to PFTC by the October 15th deadline. A Workforce Development Grant may be used to support attendance.

Prioritization will be based on the following criteria:

- Park and Regional need for a qualification. Is the qualification needed locally or regionally to ensure or enhance accomplishment of fuels program goals?
- Percentage of task book complete. Is this the first assignment or is it possible the individual will receive a final evaluation while at PFTC?

- Individual need for career advancement. Is the qualification being sought an IFPM requirement for the next logical career position?
- Funding contribution by home unit. What level of funding support is the park providing?

## **4 Fire Management Training**

NPS wildland fire management training is based on criteria specified within the training curriculum approved by National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG). This curriculum is supportive of positions described in the Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide (PMS 310-1). Agency-specific position qualification and training requirements beyond those identified in the PMS 310-1 are identified in the Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations in the NPS Chapter. For positions not included in PMS 310-1 (e.g., technical specialist positions), the Federal Wildland Fire Qualifications Supplement serves as NPS policy on training and experience requirements for wildland fire positions. Additional fire management training necessary to improve employee proficiency, but not addressed within the NWCG curriculum, will generally continue to be developed at the geographic area or national level. This training often addresses an agency-specific need or is targeted toward the development of skills for positions that have not yet been adopted by NWCG.

### **4.1 Training-Needs Analysis**

A needs analysis should be developed each year at the park level. The assessment provides the information needed to determine which courses will be required and which employees should attend. Courses identified should be based on position needs and should reflect the goals established in individual employee development plans. The park is the foundation for all lower-level training, and course management is directed by the park's fire management officer. Parks with a significant history of wildland fire should maintain a sufficient number of individuals qualified at the appropriate level to meet the park's wildland fire management needs.

### **4.2 Fire Management Curriculum**

Details relating to course descriptions and trainee/instructor qualifications are provided in the Field Manager's Course Guide (PMS 901-1).

### **4.3 Nomination Process for an NWCG Course**

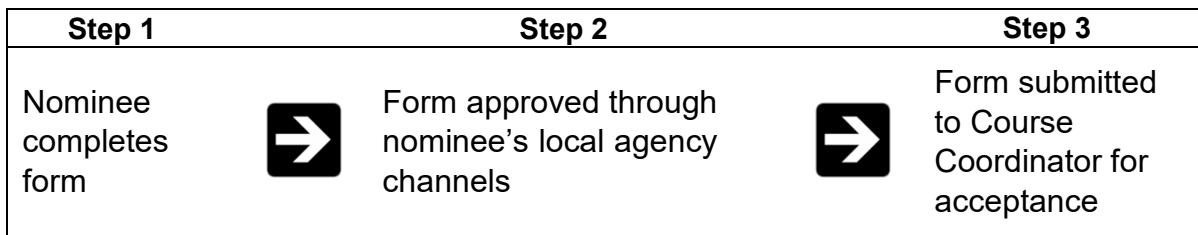
The Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS) is the online training management system for all NWCG and associated fire management training. This

system includes training nominations, course session management, trainees' course completion records, and instructors' histories.

The Unit-Level Training Officer and the employee are responsible for verifying that all agency course and NWCG prerequisites have been met as well as ensuring that all the necessary signatures have been obtained and are on the nomination form. The processes identified below pertain to both wildland fire and non-wildland fire employees.

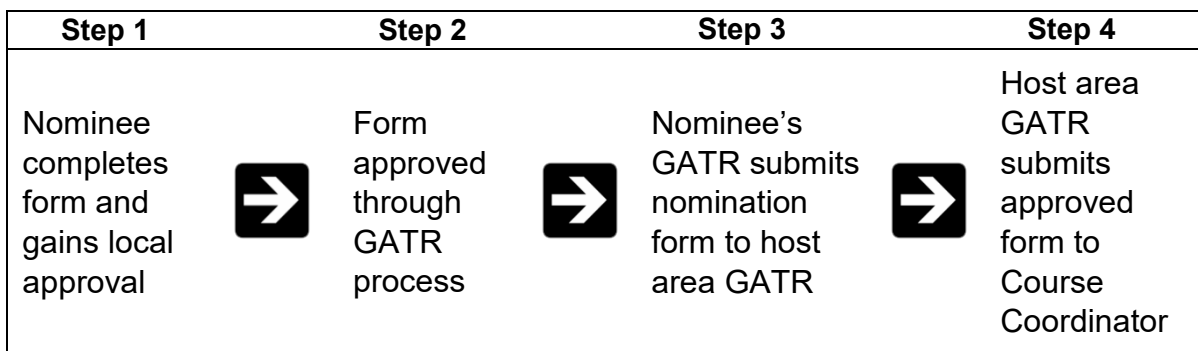
### 4.3.1 100-200 Level Course Nomination Process

Completed NWCG nomination forms for all 100-200 level courses must be routed as follows:



### 4.3.2 300-600 Level Course Nomination Process

Completed NWCG nomination forms for all 300-600 level and other miscellaneous courses must be routed as follows:



All geographic areas have agreed to a single point of contact, the GATRs, for the most efficient coordination of courses. This process allows for prioritization and tracking of nominations. Some individual units and zones may have a slight variation from the above workflow.

### 4.3.3 Course Nomination Process Using IQCS

For information on the IQCS nomination process, visit the National Wildland Fire Training website (interagency) at [https://nationalfiretraining.nwcg.gov/national\\_nom\\_process](https://nationalfiretraining.nwcg.gov/national_nom_process)

#### **4.4 FEMA National Incident Management System (NIMS) Training**

The National Training Program for NIMS has developed a common national foundation for training and qualifying emergency management/response personnel. Adequately trained and qualified emergency management/response personnel are critical to the national implementation of NIMS.

The NIMS document describes the National Integration Center's (NIC) responsibility to develop "a national program for NIMS education and awareness," and to facilitate common national standards for personnel qualification. The NIMS Training Program was mandated by the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006. The NIMS curriculum is managed under FEMA by the Emergency Management Institute (EMI). Information on NIMS courses accepted by NWCG and the NPS, the process for delivering FEMA NIMS training courses, and instructor requirements and process can be found at: <https://www.nwcg.gov/fema-nims-training>

#### **4.5 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training**

Refer to the Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide (PMS 310-1) or the Federal Wildland Fire Qualifications Supplement to determine those positions requiring annual fireline safety refresher training.

There is no minimum training time for the annual fireline safety refresher training. Fire Management Officers will ensure the core topics found in the Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations, Training and Qualifications chapter are covered adequately. Annual fireline safety refresher training will have a 12-month currency. Training information and resources are available at the Wildland Fire Safety Training Annual Refresher website.

#### **4.6 Training Certification Process**

Training is certified when requirements identified in the Field Manager's Course Guide (PMS 901-1) are met. The requirements include instructor qualifications, course length (recommended hours), and course prerequisites. It is the responsibility of the lead instructor to issue certificates of completion to successful trainees. Fire management officers are responsible for ensuring that appropriate training completion data are entered into IQCS. For those parks without access to IQCS, the responsibility for entries reverts to the regional fire management officer or other designated IQCS account

manager. If fire training is received from non-NPS sources, the park fire management officer is responsible for ensuring the training course meets NWCG requirements and objectives and for entering training completion data.

#### **4.7 Training Materials**

All NWCG-approved training packages and course materials are readily available through the Publications Management System. NWCG National Fire Equipment System Catalog Part 2: Publications identifies all materials and ordering procedures.

#### **4.8 Fire Management Curriculum Instructors**

Each region is responsible for the selection, training, and certification of an adequate number of National Park Service instructors for fire management training. Instructor qualification criteria can be found in the Field Manager's Course Guide (PMS 901-1). Certification of instructors is the responsibility of lead instructors, not of managers or supervisors. The Field Manager's Course Guide (PMS 901-1) defines the requirements for the Lead, Unit and Adjunct instructor. Instructor experience should be recorded in IQCS to maintain a database of qualified instructors.

#### **4.9 Fire Management Officer Training**

The NPS requires that all components of the M-581, Fire Program Management – An Overview course (M-581) be successfully completed by all full-time fire management officers (FMOs). It is also highly recommended that collateral duty FMOs, park chief rangers, and others with acting FMO duties attend this course.

#### **4.10 Supervisors of Park Fire Management Officer Qualifications**

The NPS requires that the Agency Administrator Qualification (AADM) be attained by supervisors of Park Fire Management Officers. The qualification will be tracked in the IQCS application. Training and experience requirements which support the AADM qualification may be found in the most recent version of the Federal Wildland Fire Qualifications Supplement.

#### **4.11 Park Superintendent Qualifications**

The NPS requires that the Agency Administrator Qualification (AADM) be attained by superintendents with fire management responsibilities within their park. The qualification will be tracked in the IQCS application. Training and experience requirements which support the AADM qualification may be found in the most recent version of the Federal Wildland Fire Qualifications Supplement.

## **5 Interagency Fire Training Program Organizations**

The NPS National Fire Training and Workforce Development Program functions within and outside of the interagency environment. This section provides an overview of the National Wildland Fire Coordinating Group (NWCG) and the interagency committees under its direction and how the NPS National Fire Training and Workforce Development Program interfaces in the interagency environment.

### **5.1 National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG)**

NWCG is made up of the USDA Forest Service; four Department of the Interior (DOI) bureaus: Bureau of Land Management (BLM), National Park Service (NPS), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS); and State forestry agencies through the National Association of State Foresters, US Department of Homeland Security: Federal Emergency Management Agency and US Fire Administration; the Intertribal Timber Council and the International Association of Fire Chiefs. The purpose of NWCG is to coordinate programs of the participating wildland fire management agencies to avoid wasteful duplication and to provide a means of constructively working together. Its goal is to provide more effective execution of each agency's fire management program. The group provides a formalized system to agree upon standards of training, equipment, qualifications, and other operational functions. NWCG provides national leadership to develop, maintain, and communicate interagency standards, guidelines, qualifications, training, and other capabilities that enable interoperable operations among federal and non-federal entities. NWCG will facilitate implementation of approved standards, guidelines, qualifications and training.

NPS provides a representative to the NWCG Executive Board and representatives to various NWCG committees and subcommittees. These representatives are responsible for accomplishing tasks as directed by the NWCG Executive Board, ensuring proposed policies, guidelines, or standards are reviewed by pertinent agency personnel prior to implementation by NWCG, and providing a consolidated NPS position during NWCG decision-making processes.

NWCG policies, guidelines or standards, if adopted by NPS, are implemented through the NPS directive system.

### **5.2 NWCG Operations and Training Committee**

The Operations and Training Committee (OTC) provides national leadership to establish and disseminate standards for wildland fire management operations, qualifications, and training. Primary objectives include:

- In coordination with NWCG committees and other SMEs, develop, approve and disseminate standards and best practices for wildland fire incident management.
- Establish the structure and business processes by which NWCG position standards are established and maintained.
- Establish the structure and business processes by which the NWCG committees, NWCG training Development Program and others, develop revise and deliver NWCG Training.
- In coordination with NWCG committees and other SMEs, develop, approve and disseminate minimum requirements for training, experience, physical fitness level, and currency standards for wildland fire positions to support successful position performance.
- Ensure that NWCG ICS position standards are compliant with NIMS requirements.
- Work with Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS) and Incident Qualification System (IQS) leads to ensure these business systems support and maintain established standards.

### **5.3 NWCG Training Development Program**

The NWCG Training Development Program provides national leadership in the development and delivery of the NWCG wildland fire training curriculum. The NWCG training curriculum is one of the primary vehicles by which NWCG standards are transmitted to the wildland fire community. The training curriculum includes classroom, online, and on-the-job training components. Primary objectives include:

- Develop and disseminate high quality, relevant wildland fire training in a cost-effective manner to support the needs of the wildland fire community.
- Develop and disseminate wildland fire position task books based on established position competencies and behaviors.
- Ensure that qualification requirements, training courses, and position task books are aligned.
- Establish and implement an effective and efficient curriculum management process.
- Provide guidance and support to NWCG subgroups with curriculum maintenance responsibilities.
- Work with the NWCG Operations and Training Committee, Geographic Area Training Representatives, FEMA, National Advanced Fire and Resource Institute, the Wildland Fire Lessons Learned Center, and other pertinent entities to maximize effectiveness and efficiency in all areas of wildland firefighter training.

#### **5.4 NWCG Leadership Subcommittee**

The NWCG Leadership Subcommittee administers the Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program (WFLDP). The mission of the program is to promote cultural change in the workforce and to emphasize the vital importance of leadership concepts in the wildland fire service by providing educational and leadership development opportunities. The program focuses on formal curriculum providing leadership skills in training at all stages of an individual's career. The program develops non-traditional leadership development opportunities that allow individuals to strive for a higher performance level as a leader through self-directed continuous learning.

Program components include but are not limited to the L-course curriculum, staff rides, tactical decision games, and sand table exercises, Leadership in Cinema, Professional Reading Program, and social media networks including the program website, the Wildland Fire Leadership blog and Facebook.

#### **5.5 Interagency Fire Program Management Group**

The Interagency Fire Program Management (IFPM) Group is chartered under the federal Fire Management Board (FMB). The purpose of the IFPM Group is to develop, maintain, and implement Fire Program Management Qualifications Standards (Qualification Standards) for key fire management positions utilized by the Federal land management agencies. The IFPM Group is primarily responsible for:

- Maintenance of Interagency Fire Program Management Qualification Standards (Qualification Standards) for key fire program positions.
- Ensure consistent interagency application of the Qualification Standards.
- Integrate Qualification Standards into agency workforce development and succession planning efforts.
- Establish and maintain a process for reporting issues and concerns related to the maintenance of the Qualification Standards.
- Communicate with fire management and human resources management staff on qualification Standards utilizing the IFPM website, status reports, FAQ's and decision papers.
- Coordinate with the Incident Qualification and Certification (IQCS) Change Management Board to maintain the qualification requirements for key fire management positions in IQCS for tracking and reporting purposes.
- Coordinate with the interagency classification group on the development and maintenance of interagency standard position descriptions for key fire management positions.



- Collect data, develop reports and present findings to FMB as requested.
- Maintain DOI Policy on Qualification Requirements for GS-0401 Fire Program Management Positions

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Qualification Standard for the 0401 series includes a “positive” education requirement. OPM has also established the GS-0401 Supplemental Qualification Standard for Fire Program Management. Applicants are responsible for providing documentation or proof that they have met the applicable educational provisions described in the supplemental standard. No applicant may be placed in a position covered by the GS-0401 Supplemental Qualification Standard for Fire Program Management without meeting these requirements.

Training officers must work closely with human resources personnel to ensure that the coursework meets the requirements of the GS-0401 supplemental standard.

The directive DOI Policy for Qualification Requirements for GS-0401 Fire Program Management is located at [https://www.ifpm.nifc.gov/standard/standard/DOI\\_PB\\_07-13.pdf](https://www.ifpm.nifc.gov/standard/standard/DOI_PB_07-13.pdf).

Website: <https://www.ifpm.nifc.gov/>.

## **5.6 NWCG Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS) Change Management Board**

The IQCS Change Management Board is chartered under the OTC. IQCS is utilized to certify and manage individual qualifications as defined by the NWCG, PMS 310-1, and agency specific direction. The partnering agencies have selected representatives to participate, review, and make recommendations in development, implementation, and maintenance of IQCS.

## **5.7 National Advanced Fire and Resource Institute (NAFRI)**

The National Advanced Fire and Resource Institute (NAFRI) is responsible for course maintenance and delivery of 500-600 level NWCG courses and other national training courses as endorsed by NWCG. NAFRI manages course development and delivery through course steering committees. The NWCG OTC has stewardship for all 100 thru 600 level NWCG training.

## **5.8 NWCG Curriculum Management Plan**

The NWCG OTC has stewardship for all 100 thru 600 level NWCG training. Maintenance responsibilities for the NWCG training curriculum are assigned by course to one of three primary entities/groups:

- NWCG Training Unit Steering committees
- National Advanced Fire Resource Institute (NAFRI)
- NWCG committees (may be delegated down to their subcommittees or task groups)

### **5.9 NWCG Course Development/Revision**

The NWCG Training Development Unit solicits annually for subject matter experts (SMEs) and field reviewers on an as-needed basis. Typically, SMEs join the project teams when courses move from the analysis and design phases into the development phase. Email solicitations, including a nomination form, will be sent out through relevant NWCG committees, Geographic Area Training Specialists, and special interest groups when SMEs are needed for courses.

SMEs participate in approximately three one-week workshops conducted over a one-year time period. The initial workshop determines the extent of the revision.

### **5.10 NPS Process for NWCG Course Development SME Application and Field Review**

Requests for SME's and field reviewers are distributed primarily through the GATRs. Request may also be forwarded through the NPS "all FMO" mailing list by the National Training Program Manager. All applications for course development SMEs will be submitted through the Regional OAT Representative. All applications will then be collected by the NPS National Fire Training Program Manager and forwarded to the NWCG Training Development Unit Leader. All funding for NPS SMEs will be funded by the local unit unless otherwise agreed to with the National Training Program Manager. Those not selected as SMEs will be expected to be Field Reviewers for the final product.

### **5.11 NWCG Guidance for Course Equivalency (Field Manager's Course Guide)**

An equivalent course is determined by agency identified "evaluators" to be equal to an NWCG-approved course. Awarding course equivalency is an agency-specific responsibility. Only agencies have the authority to certify their employees meet NWCG training requirements when alternative course offerings are used. Individual agencies

will set guidelines for equivalency determination and may grant credit for courses they deem equivalent. Equivalent fire training courses must meet two criteria: An evaluation team has determined that the courses are equivalent to courses identified in the NWCG's approved curriculum, and the NPS Process for Evaluating and Establishing Course Equivalency (see below) has been completed.

## **6 NPS Process for Evaluating and Establishing Course Equivalency**

The appropriate Regional Office (RO) fire management staff or national committee identifies the need for an equivalency analysis of a specific course. The RO fire management staff or national committee can assemble an evaluation team (see Evaluation Team Composition) to conduct the analysis, document their findings, and submit recommendations through agency channels to the OAT for an equivalency review. If assistance is needed in assembling the appropriate evaluation team it can be requested from the NPS National Fire Training Program Manager.

If the OAT determines that the equivalent course analysis is sufficient and the proposed course meets the NWCG certified course standards, the NPS Division Chief, Fire & Aviation Management shall issue a memorandum stating that the course is equivalent.

The NPS IQCS Agency Lead will issue a course number for the equivalent course and enter it into IQCS with a competency for the NWCG course. The NPS National Fire Training Program Manager will provide the equivalency information to the OTC and the GATRs, other agencies and/or the states for information-sharing purposes.

The OAT may utilize analyses conducted by other agencies when making course equivalency determinations.

### **6.1 Evaluation Team Composition**

The evaluation team shall be comprised of at least a lead instructor, cadre member, and course developer or subject matter expert for the respective NWCG course. The evaluators shall be individuals who have either been involved within the past three years instructing the course that is being evaluated, and/or who are familiar with the course development and revision process.

### **6.2 Evaluation Methodology for Equivalency**

The evaluation team shall consider, at a minimum, the following items when attempting to determine whether or not a course is equivalent to an NWCG course:

- Comparison of course objectives. The learning objectives of the two courses must be thoroughly analyzed and found to be substantially similar, both at the unit level and at the course level.
- Comparison of course content. There should be no omissions of major topics, procedures, or concepts that are contained in the NWCG course.
- Testing. Tests administered to trainees to measure content learned must be similar in terms of information tested, length of test, and percentage required for a passing grade.
- Documentation of findings. The evaluation team shall document its analysis and findings and forward them to the NPS National Fire Training and Workforce Development Program Manager with its recommendation.
- Equivalent course material may have more, not less, in-depth subject matter content than the NWCG course.

### 6.3 NPS Equivalency for NWCG Courses

The NPS has determined that the courses listed in the table below are equivalent to the associated NWCG courses. Persons who have successfully completed the identified equivalent course do not need to attend the corresponding NWCG course and should receive credit in IQCS.

<b>NWCG-APPROVED CURRICULUM</b>	<b>APPROVED EQUIVALENT COURSE(S)</b>
Facilitative Instructor (M-410)	National Fire Protection Association, Fire Service Instructor I (NFPA 1041)
Introduction to Fire Effects (RX-310)	Successful completion of Technical Fire Management (TFM)
Human Factors on the Fireline (L-180)	Firefighter Training (S-130, 2004 version). The 2004 version of S-130 incorporated L-180 into the course package.
Leadership and Organizational Development (S-301, obsolete course)	Fireline Leadership (L-380)
Situation Unit Leader (S-346)	NIMS ICS AH Situation Unit Ldr (L964)
Resources/Demob Unit Leader	NIMS ICS AH Resource Unit Ldr (L965)
Supply Unit Leader (S-356)	NIMS ICS AH Supply Unit Ldr (L970)

<b>NWCG-APPROVED CURRICULUM</b>	<b>APPROVED EQUIVALENT COURSE(S)</b>
Finance/Admin Unit Leader (S-360)	NIMS ICS AH Fin/Admin Unit Ldr (L975)
Incident Commander (S-400)	NIMS ICS AH Incident Commander (E950 or L950)
Incident Information Officer (S-403)	NIMS ICS AH Public Info Officer (L952)
Logistics Section Chief (S-450)	NIMS ICS AH Log Section Chief (L967)
Finance/Admin Section Chief (S-460)	NIMS ICS AH Fin/Admin Sec Chief (L973)
Advanced Incident Management (S-520)	Complex Incident Mgmt. Course (CIMC)

## **7 Qualifications Program Management**

The NWCG Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS) is the interagency fire qualifications and certification system of record. The responder master record report provided by the IQCS meets agency requirements for maintaining fire qualifications records. The IQCS is a tool to assist managers in certification decisions; it does not replace the manager's responsibility to verify that employees meet all requirements for position performance based on bureau standards. Employees with responsibility for maintaining qualification and training management records must attend IQCS training prior to receiving access to the system. Additional information can be found on the IQCS website.

### **7.1 Recognition of Prior Learning**

See the Red Book for guidance on the use of a Recognition of Prior Learning Process.

### **7.2 Qualifications Records**

Hard copy files of position task books, training certificates, work capacity test records, the employee master record report and any documentation supporting historical recognition of qualifications must be maintained for each employee. An approved alternate to the hard copy record is a secure electronic record. The recommended file structure is Training Folders-employee name-Position Task Books-Training Certificates-Work Capacity Fitness Test records- master record-other supporting documentation.

Hard copy and electronic records are subject to the Privacy Act, so they must be kept in locked files and access must be limited. When employees leave the unit, these hard copy and/or electronic records should be given to them for personal maintenance (see 43 CFR 2.56).

### **7.3 Incident Qualifications Review Committee**

It is strongly recommended that each park establish an incident qualifications review committee (QRC) to review individual qualifications and performance and make recommendations to the certifying official or their delegate. These committees should be interdivisional and should include interagency involvement whenever possible. This committee may also review All Hazards related qualifications. When the review of All Hazards qualifications is included as a responsibility of a QRC, appropriate subject matter experts should be included as members of the QRC.

### **7.4 Certification responsibilities of NPS Personnel**

Generally, the agency administrator (or delegate) is responsible for the entry, maintenance, accuracy, and annual certification of all data, including incident qualification cards. The regional fire management officer is responsible for monitoring the accuracy of field input, determining and addressing region-wide qualifications and training needs, and assisting those field units not having IQCS access.

### **7.5 Position Task books**

Review and certification of Area Command, Type 1 Command and General Staff position task books is the responsibility of the Branch Chief, NPS Branch of Wildland Fire (or delegate); certification of Type 2 Command and General Staff and park fire management officer position task books is the responsibility of the Regional Fire Management Officer (or delegate). All other position task books may be certified at the local unit level.

### **7.6 Incident Qualification Card**

The Branch Chief, NPS Branch of Wildland Fire (or delegate) is responsible for the accuracy and certification of the regional fire management officer's incident qualification card. The regional fire management officer (or delegate) is responsible for the accuracy and annual certification of their parks' fire management officers' incident qualification cards.

### **7.7 Certification of Non-NPS Personnel**

Refer to the current edition of the Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations, Training and Qualifications chapter.

## 7.8 Performance

A key concept of the NWCG Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide (PMS 310-1) is that it is performance-based—that is, based on the skills of the employee, rather than based solely on training. An individual becomes qualified for a position through a combination of experience and education. This process includes a subjective evaluation by fire management staff of an employee's job performance. Even though an employee may be technically qualified in the IQCS system, agency administrators (or their designees such as the fire management staff) may withhold a job certification if the employee has demonstrated inadequate performance.

When a certified employee's performance of fire management duties does not reflect full compliance with Servicewide policies, directives, guidelines, or established standards of conduct, supervisors must take prompt and effective corrective action through counseling, training, trainee assignments, suspension of certifications, or disciplinary action, as appropriate.

The NPS policy on employee advancement to higher incident management positions is as follows:

The employee must experience at least two assignments after completing a position task book (PTB) and receiving certification before moving to the next higher level.

Exceptions to this policy should be rare and well-founded. The fire management officer is responsible for ensuring these criteria are met. IQCS does not check to ensure these requirements have been met during the automated qualification review process. Any deviation from this policy should be documented and included in the employee training folder or electronic record.

## 7.9 Loss of Currency

If an employee loses currency in an incident command system position, IQCS will convert that person back to trainee status. In order to regain full qualification, the employee will need to demonstrate an ability to perform the job by completing a performance assignment. The NPS recertification evaluation form (*RM 18 Chapter 10, Exhibit 1*) is required to be used to guide and document the recertification process. The completed form will be included in a responder's hard copy or electronic file. A current

position task book will be used as a guide during performance assignments. The fire management officer should use discretion in requiring the employee to complete the entire position task book or only a specified portion as a trainee. The following items should be considered when making this determination:

- The position in question
- The complexity and duration of the training assignment
- Changes in position duties and prerequisites since the duties were last performed
- The employee's past experiences

### **7.10 Physical Fitness Levels**

Refer to the Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide (PMS 310-1) or Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations for information on medical standards and physical fitness requirements for wildland fire positions.

### **7.11 Interagency Fire Program Management (IFPM).**

Standards, guidelines and processes for the administration of IFPM are found at <https://www.ifpm.nifc.gov/>.

Responsibilities for review and revision of the Unit Complexity Analysis are as follows:

#### **7.11.1 Unit Fire Program Manager**

Each Fire Program Manager at the unit level will complete the Unit Complexity Analysis for all units under their responsibility. The IFPM Guide, instructions, supporting documents and worksheet to complete the analysis can also be found at: <http://ifpm.nifc.gov/>. The Unit Fire Program Manager is the lead for completing the unit's complexity analysis. It is recommended that additional fire staff be included/consulted when completing the analysis as well as a cooperator (USFS, BLM, FWS, BIA or other cooperator). Unit Fire Program Managers assigned to support more than one unit should complete just one complexity analysis covering all units under their responsibility, not a separate complexity analysis for each unit. Any change to the complexity level of an element in the complexity analysis will require a brief written explanation for the change in rating. This summary will be provided to the Geographic Fire Program Manager.

#### **7.11.2 Regional/State Geographic Area Fire Program Manager (GFPM)**



The GFPM is responsible for reviewing and leveling the complexity analysis from each unit, to ensure that no glaring errors or discrepancies exist, and that each unit's score is realistic in comparison with other adjacent units. Reviewed Individual complexity analysis worksheets and summary ratings (high, moderate or low) will be sent to National Fire Program Manager with the unit level explanation for change(s), for review and approval.

### **7.11.3 National Fire Program Manager**

The National Fire Program Manager will receive, review, approve and post all revised complexity analysis ratings (high, moderate or low) for each fire program management unit from all the regions, and maintain a spreadsheet for analysis and review. The spreadsheet will be available to all servicing human resource offices for reference during recruitment. The objective of a national level review is to ensure that the complexity analysis has been applied consistently across the regions.

Exhibit 1

## NPS Recertification Evaluation

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This document is used to determine the agency's minimum requirements for position recertification.

Trainee name:	Unit ID:
Trainee's supervisor:	Trainee's phone number:
Position to be recertified:	Date of last assignment:

**Certifying Official:** In addition to the mandatory evaluation assignment, the Certifying Official may request additional training or coursework. If the Certifying Official chooses to have the trainee complete a new position task book (PTB), then the recertification evaluation form is unnecessary.

- Mandatory - Satisfactory performance on at least one evaluation assignment by a qualified evaluator. The evaluation assignment should be documented on the Incident Personnel Performance Rating form, NFES 1576 (ICS 225).

Check the box next to any optional requirements the trainee needs to perform prior to being considered for recertification (work with the local Qualification Review Committee or Certifying Official and refer to PMS 310-1):

- Open and complete all tasks in the current PTB as outlined by the local Qualification and Certification Committee. (Note: The trainee will not need to complete the evaluation assignment if the Certifying Official chooses to have the trainee complete a PTB.)
- Complete any new "required training" courses based on the current PMS 310-1 or agency policies that have been added to the position since losing currency.
- Retake all "required training" relevant to the position based on current agency policies.
- Attend the following course(s) prior to certification:

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Trainee Signature

Date

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Certifying Official Signature

Date

Exhibit 1

**Final Agency Certification**

I certify that (trainee name) \_\_\_\_\_ has met all requirements for recertification in the above position and qualification has been reissued.

Certifying Official – Signature of Approval

Date

**Evaluator:** The above individual has lost currency for the stated position. The trainee’s Certifying Official is asking the evaluator to assess the individual’s skills and abilities to assist them in determining if the trainee should be considered for recertification.

Assignment Information:

Incident name:
Dates of evaluation:
Evaluator qualification:

Incident number:
Incident complexity:
Fuel type:

What, if any, significant job tasks, competencies, or behaviors were you unable to evaluate on this assignment?

Provide additional comments related to the individual’s ability to perform the position.

Do you recommend the individual for recertification?

If no, what recommendation do you have for improving tasks, competencies, and/or behaviors (e.g., more experience is needed in logistic support)?

\_\_\_\_\_  
Evaluator (name, home unit, and phone contact)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Trainee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date