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Chapter 13 Firefighter Training and Qualifications

Introduction

National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) sanctioned firefighters are trained and qualified according to the NWCG and other standards, as outlined below.

Policy

Firefighters must meet standards identified in the NWCG publication *PMS 310-1 National Interagency Incident Management System Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide*. The *PMS 310-1* may be found at <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/docs/docs.htm>

Certain firefighters must meet standards identified in the *Interagency Fire Program Management Qualifications Standards and Guide*. The *Interagency Fire Program Management Qualification Standards and Guide* may be found at <http://www.ifpm.nifc.gov>

Agency standards for training and qualifications may exceed the minimum standards established by National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG). Such additional standards will be approved by the Fire Directors, and implemented through the Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS). Standards which may exceed the minimum standards established by NWCG are identified in:

- **BLM**- *BLM Standards for Fire Training and Workforce Development*, available at http://www.blm.gov/nifc/st/en/prog/fire/training/fire_training.html.
- **FWS** - *The Fire Management Handbook*.
- **FS** – *The Fire and Aviation Qualification Guide (FAQG)*. AD hires sponsored by the Forest Service will also meet FAQG position qualification standards.

Qualification and Certification Process

Each unit with fire management responsibilities will establish an Incident Qualification Card qualification and certification process, which may include a qualification and certification committee. In areas cooperating with other federal, state, or local agencies, an interagency qualification and certification committee should be established and include representatives from each unit.

These qualification and certification committees provide management oversight and review of the wildland and prescribed fire positions under their jurisdiction.

1 The committee:

- 2 • Ensures that qualifications generated by IQCS or other agency systems for
3 employees are valid by reviewing the training and experience of each
4 employee.
- 5 • Determines whether each employee possesses the personal characteristics
6 necessary to perform the wildland and prescribed fire positions in a safe and
7 efficient manner.
- 8 • Makes recommendations to the appropriate Agency Administrator or
9 designee who is responsible for final certification signature.
- 10 • Develops interagency training needs and sponsors courses that can be
11 offered locally.
- 12 • Ensures training nominees meet minimum requirements for attending
13 courses.

14

15 **Non-NWCG Agency Personnel Qualifications**

16 Personnel from non-NWCG agencies meeting NWCG *PMS 310-1* prerequisites
17 can participate in and receive certificates for successful completion of NWCG
18 courses. Agency employees can complete the Task Blocks, Evaluation Record
19 and Verification/Certification sections of a cooperating organizations employee
20 Position Task Book. Agency employees will not initiate or complete the
21 Agency Certification sections of Position Task Book for non-agency employees.

22

23 Personnel from agencies that do not subscribe to the NWCG qualification
24 standards may be used on agency managed fires. Agency fire managers must
25 ensure these individuals are only assigned to duties commensurate with their
26 competencies, agency qualifications, and equipment capabilities.

27

28 **Non-NWCG Agency Personnel Use on Prescribed Fire**

29 The NWCG *PMS 310-1 Wildland Fire System Qualifications Guide* establishes
30 the minimum qualifications for personnel involved in prescribed fires on which
31 resources of more than one agency are utilized - unless local agreements specify
32 otherwise. This guide may be found at:
33 <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/docs/docs.htm>

34

35 **Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS)**

36

37 The Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS) is the fire
38 qualifications and certification record keeping system. The Responder Master
39 Record report provided by the IQCS meets the agency requirement for
40 maintaining fire qualification records. The system is designed to provide
41 managers at the local, state/regional, and national levels with detailed
42 qualification, experience, and training information needed to certify employees
43 in wildland fire positions. The IQCS is a tool to assist managers in certification
44 decisions. However, it does not replace the manager's responsibility to validate
45 that employees meet all requirements for position performance based on their
46 agency standards.

1 A hard copy file folder will be kept for each employee. The contents will
2 include, but are not limited to: training records for all agency required courses,
3 evaluations from assignments, position task book verification, yearly updated
4 IQCS forms, and the Responder Master Record (RPTC028) from IQCS. All
5 records will be stored and/or destroyed in accordance with agency policies.

- 6 • **BLM** - *These policies can be found at:*
7 *[http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/info/regulations/combined_record_schedules.](http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/info/regulations/combined_record_schedules.html)*
8 *html*
- 9 • **NPS** - *IQCS Account Managers should have an IQCS Delegation of*
10 *Authority if they are serving as the Certifying Official. Delegation of*
11 *Authority can be found at: <http://iqcs.nwcg.gov/main/requestAccount.html>*

13 **Certification of Non-Agency Personnel**

14 Non-agency firefighters will be certified by state or local fire departments, or
15 private training providers approved by a Memorandum of Understanding
16 (MOU) through their local GACC. Agencies will not assist in the
17 administration, or sponsor the Work Capacity Test (WCT), as the certifying
18 agency.

20 **Incident Qualification Card**

21 The Agency Administrator (or delegate) is responsible for annual certification of
22 all agency and Administratively Determined (AD) personnel serving on wildfire,
23 prescribed fire, and all hazard incidents. This responsibility includes monitoring
24 medical status, fitness, training, performance, and ensuring the responder meets
25 all position performance requirements.

26
27 Training, medical screening, and successful completion of the appropriate WCT
28 must be accomplished and documented. All Incident Qualification Cards issued
29 to agency employees, with the exception of Emergency Firefighter (EFF-paid or
30 temporary employees at the FFT2 level), will be printed using the IQCS.

31 Incident Qualification Cards issued to EFF or temporary employees at the FFT2
32 level may be printed without use of the IQCS.

33
34 Each agency will designate employees at the national, regional/state, and local
35 levels as Fire Qualifications Administrators, who ensure all incident experience,
36 incident training, and position Task Books for employees within the agency are
37 accurately recorded in the IQCS. All records must be updated annually or
38 modified as changes occur.

- 39 • **NPS**- *Certification for Area Command and Type 1 Command and General*
40 *Staff (C&GS) position task books will be done at the national office level;*
41 *Type 2 C&GS, and any position task books issued to park fire management*
42 *officers will be certified at the regional office level. All other position task*
43 *books may be certified at the local unit level.*
- 44 • **NPS**- *It is NPS policy that two or more assignments be accomplished after*
45 *completing a Position Task Book, and receiving certification, before an*
46 *individual begins movement to the next higher level. It is also NPS policy to*

- 1 *require two or more qualified assignments be accomplished in a position*
2 *before an individual may become a position performance evaluator. The*
3 *only exceptions to this policy are unit leader positions leading to Planning*
4 *Section Chief, Logistics Section Chief, or Finance Section Chief.*
5 *Subordinate unit leader positions require a minimum of one assignment*
6 *after the PTB completion and position certification.*
- 7 ● **FS-** *Refer to FSH 5109.17, chapter 10, and the FAQG.*
 - 8 ● **BLM-** *BLM Recertification Policy: If an employee (including an agency-*
9 *sponsored AD) has lost currency in a position, the employee is converted to*
10 *trainee status for that position. In order to regain full qualification for the*
11 *position, the employee must demonstrate the ability to perform in the*
12 *position as determined by the Certifying Official. Prior to recertification,*
13 *the employee must:*
 - 14 ○ *Complete the BLM Recertification Evaluation found at:*
15 *http://www.blm.gov/nifc/st/en/prog/fire/training/fire_training.html*
 - 16 ○ *Complete one or more evaluation assignments.*
 - 17 ○ *Complete any additional requirements as determined by the Certifying*
18 *Official (e.g. additional assignments and/or courses).*
- 19 *NOTE: This policy only applies to positions for which a task book is*
20 *required.*

22 **Incident Qualification Card Expiration Dates**

23 Incident Qualification Cards for responders that possess qualifications requiring
24 Work Capacity Tests (WCT) and the Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training
25 course (RT-130) are valid through the earliest expiration date (either fitness or
26 refresher) listed on the card. Incident Qualification Cards for responders that
27 possess qualifications that do not require WCT or RT-130 for issuance are valid
28 for 12 months from the date the card is signed by a certifying official.

- 29 ● **FS-** *the WCT is considered effective for 13 months from the date passed. If*
30 *an employee is on an emergency assignment on the date their*
31 *WCT/refresher expires, they will complete their assignment including any*
32 *extensions. Upon return to their duty station, they must complete the*
33 *WCT/refresher and acquire a new Incident Qualification Card prior to*
34 *accepting any new assignments.*

36 **Universal Training Requirements**

37
38 All personnel filling NWCG recognized positions on the fireline must have
39 completed:

- 40 ● S-130 Firefighter Training (including the required field exercises);
 - 41 ● S-190 Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior;
 - 42 ● L-180 Human Factors on the Fireline;
 - 43 ● ICS-100 Introduction to ICS; and
 - 44 ● IS-700A NIMS: An Introduction (or current version).
- 45

Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training

Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training is required for those positions identified in the *Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide* (NWCG 310-1). Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training must include the following core components:

- **Entrapment Avoidance-** Use training and reference materials to study the risk management process as identified in the *Incident Response Pocket Guide* (IRPG) as appropriate to the participants, e.g., LCES, Standard Firefighting Orders, Watch Out Situations, Wildfire Decision Support System (WFDSS) direction, Fire Management Plan priorities, etc.;
- **Current Issues-** Review and discuss current topics which could be based on the new modules or areas of concern identified by your agency or geographic area. Review forecasts and assessments for the upcoming fire season and discuss implications for firefighter safety;
- **Fire Shelter-** Review and discuss last resort survival including escape and shelter deployment site selection. Conduct “hands-on” fire shelter inspections. Practice shelter deployments in applicable crew/module configurations (wearing fireline personal protective equipment during fire shelter practice can enhance the learning experience for students); and
- **Other Hazards and Safety Issues-** Choose additional hazard and safety subjects, which may include SAFENET, current safety alerts, site/unit specific safety issues and hazards.

These core components must be sufficiently covered to ensure that personnel are aware of safety concerns and procedures and can demonstrate proficiency in fire shelter deployment. The minimum refresher training hour requirements for each agency is identified below. Training time may be extended in order to effectively complete this curriculum or to meet local training requirements.

- **BLM** - 4 hours
- **FWS/FS** - No minimum hourly requirement; core topics as shown above will be covered.
- **NPS** - 8 hours

The Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training course (RT-130) is not a self-study course. Minimum requirements have been established for instructors for Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training. These requirements will ensure that an appropriate level of expertise and knowledge is available to facilitate refresher training exercises and discussions.

- Lead instructors must be a qualified single resource boss;
- Unit instructors must be a qualified firefighter type one (FFT1); and
- Adjunct instructors may be utilized to provide limited instruction in specialized knowledge and skills at the discretion of the lead instructor. They must be experienced, proficient and knowledgeable of current issues in their field of expertise.

- 1 • All instructors will need the knowledge and skills to utilize current
2 educational technology as it relates to the Wildland Fire Safety Training
3 Annual Refresher (WFSTAR) website, such as video streaming,
4 downloading interactive videos, and use of mobile applications and devices.
5
- 6 For additional information please refer to the current *NWCG Field Manager's*
7 *Course Guide* (PMS 901-1) at:
8 <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/training/fmcg.pdf>.
9
- 10 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training will have a 12-month currency.
11 Firefighters who receive initial fire training are not required to take Annual
12 Fireline Safety Refresher Training in the same calendar year. A web site,
13 <http://www.nifc.gov/wfstar/index.htm>, titled *Wildland Fire Safety Training*
14 *Annual Refresher (WFSTAR)* is available to assist in this training.
15
- 16 Entrapment avoidance and deployment protocols are identified in the *Incident*
17 *Response Pocket Guide (IRPG)* (PMS No. 461/NFES No.1077). The guide
18 contains a specific “Risk Management Process” and “Last Resort Survival
19 Checklist”.
- 20 • *BLM - The “Do What’s Right” training is required annual training but is*
21 *not a prerequisite for issuance of an Incident Qualification Card.*
22

23 Physical Fitness

24 Physical Fitness and Conditioning

- 25 Agency Administrators are responsible for ensuring the overall physical fitness
26 of firefighters. Employees serving in wildland fire positions that require a
27 fitness rating of arduous as a condition of employment are authorized one hour
28 of duty time each work day for physical fitness conditioning. Employees
29 serving in positions that require a fitness rating of moderate or light may be
30 authorized up to three hours per week.
31
- 32
- 33 Fitness conditioning periods may be identified and structured to include aerobic
34 and muscular exercises. Team sports are not authorized for fitness conditioning.
35 Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 and appendices F, G, and H of *Fitness and Work*
36 *Capacity 2009 ed.* (PMS 304-2, NFES 1596) and the FireFit Program
37 (<http://www.nifc.gov/FireFit/index.htm>) provide excellent guidance concerning
38 training specifically for the pack test, aerobic fitness programs, and muscular
39 fitness training.
- 40 • *FS - Forest Service direction is found in FSH 5109.17 and the FAQG.*
41 *NFFE Partnership bargaining unit employees may only be required to*
42 *successfully complete the WCT once per year.*
- 43 • *NPS – A fitness plan is required for all NPS personnel participating in a*
44 *fitness program (DO-57). For health and fitness purposes, those who are*
45 *fire-qualified at less than the arduous fitness level are not required to meet*
46 *the mandatory fitness program requirements of DO-57 for wildland fire*

1 *management. They are strongly encouraged to participate in the voluntary*
2 *fitness program, and must still meet physical fitness/work capacity*
3 *requirements as outlined in the Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide*
4 *(310-1) for positions with Moderate and Light fitness requirements.*
5

6 **Medical Examinations and Work Capacity Tests**

7
8 Agency Administrators and supervisors are responsible for the occupational
9 health and safety of their employees performing wildland fire activities, and may
10 require employees to take a medical examination at any time.

11 Established medical qualification programs, as stated in 5 CFR 339, provide
12 consistent medical standards in order to safeguard the health of employees
13 whose work may subject them or others to significant health and safety risks due
14 to occupational or environmental exposure or demand.

15
16 Information on any medical records is considered confidential and must be kept
17 in the employee's medical file.

18 19 **Department of Interior Wildland Firefighter Medical Standards Program** 20 **(DOI/MSP) - Arduous Fitness Level**

21 All permanent, career-seasonal, temporary, Student Career Experience Program
22 (SCEP) employees, and AD/EFF who participate in wildland fire activities
23 requiring a fitness level of *arduous* must participate in the DOI-MSP at the
24 appropriate level (see Examination Matrix on the MSP website) and must be
25 cleared prior to attempting the WCT. Additional information regarding the
26 DOI-MSP can be obtained at http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/.

- 27 • **FS** - Refer to current agency direction:
28 http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/safety/wct/wct_index.html

29
30 If the HSQ or Annual Exam results in a status of "cleared", but the Servicing
31 Human Resource Officer (SHRO) or FMO has a direct concern about an
32 employee's/applicant's capacity to meet the physical or medical requirements of
33 a position, the agency may require the employee/applicant to report for a
34 specific medical evaluation. For more information, contact your SHRO or
35 agency Wildland Fire Safety Program Manager.

36
37 If any "yes" answer is indicated on the HSQ, an annual exam is required prior to
38 the employee taking the Arduous WCT. Cost of the exam will be covered at the
39 National level.

40
41 If an examining clinician believes diagnostic testing beyond what is required by
42 the Wildland Firefighter Medical Standards Program is needed to determine
43 medical clearance, then agency approval is required before the tests are
44 conducted. If the agency approves the clinician request, or requests further
45 testing themselves, then the agency is responsible for payment. Additional

1 testing or treatment requested by the employee/applicant shall be at their own
2 expense.
3 Employees or applicants who fail to meet the Federal Interagency Wildland
4 Firefighter Medical Qualification Standards as a permanent, seasonal/temporary,
5 or term employee may not perform as an AD/EFF for arduous duty positions.

6
7 If a Department of the Interior arduous duty wildland firefighter (WLFF)
8 develops a change in medical status (injury or illness) between yearly medical
9 exams or HSQs that prevents them from performing arduous duty lasting longer
10 than three consecutive weeks, the WLFF is required to report this change to
11 his/her supervisor who can request additional medical information and
12 reevaluate the WLFF clearance status.

- 13 • *NPS - The law enforcement medical exam for NPS rangers, who are*
14 *collateral duty wildland firefighters, will suffice for MSP clearance.*
- 15 • *NPS - Medical clearance must be entered into IQCS.*
- 16 • *FWS- Periodicity requirements for Refuge law enforcement examinations*
17 *will be applied to arduous duty wildland fire positions. Law enforcement*
18 *officers wishing to perform in NWCG PMS 310-1 or USFWS agency*
19 *specific wildland fire positions with an arduous fitness requirement must*
20 *pass the arduous work capacity test on an annual basis. The HSQ will be*
21 *used for off exam years prior to arduous work capacity testing.*

22 **Medical Exam Process for Light and Moderate Fitness Levels**

24 This section applies to employees who are only required to complete the WCT
25 at the light or moderate fitness level.

26
27 If any “Yes” answer is indicated on the HSQ, a medical examination is required
28 prior to the employee taking the WCT.

29
30 Medical examinations will be performed utilizing the *Certificate of Medical*
31 *Exam, U.S. Office of Personnel Management OF-178*. Stress EKGs are not
32 required as part of the medical examination and will only be approved if
33 recommended and administered by the medical examining physician. Cost for
34 exams will be borne by the home unit. If medical findings during exam require
35 further evaluation, then the cost of any further evaluation or treatment is borne
36 by the employee/applicant. Costs for additional tests specifically requested by
37 the agency will be borne by the home unit.

- 38 • *FS- Medical exams will be paid from a Washington Office fund code.*

39
40 If the SHRO or FMO has a direct concern about an employee’s/applicant’s
41 capacity to meet the physical or medical requirements of a position, the agency
42 may require the employee/applicant to report for a specific medical evaluation.
43 For more information, contact your SHRO or agency Wildland Fire Safety
44 Program Manager.

45

1 Standards for medical examinations using the OF-178 for light and moderate
2 positions are available at:

3 http://www.blm.gov/nifc/st/en/prog/fire/more/human_resources/forms.html

4
5 The examining physician will submit the completed OF-178 (and applicable
6 supplements) to the employee's servicing human resources office, where it will
7 be reviewed and retained in the employee's medical file.

8 • **NPS**- *The law enforcement medical exam for NPS rangers, who are
9 collateral duty wildland firefighters, will suffice for arduous, moderate, and
10 light fitness level clearance.*

11 • **FWS**- *Periodicity requirements for Refuge law enforcement examinations
12 will be applied to light or moderate. Law enforcement officers wishing to
13 perform in NWCG PMS 310-1 or USFWS agency-specific wildland fire
14 positions with a light or moderate fitness requirement must pass the
15 appropriate level work capacity test on an annual basis. The HSQ will be
16 used for off exam years prior to light or moderate work capacity testing.*

17 18 **Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ)**

19 Title 5 CFR Part 339 - Medical Qualification Determinations, which provides a
20 determination of an individual's fitness-for-duty, authorizes solicitation of this
21 information.

22
23 The approved OMB Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ) may be found at:

24 [http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/documents/NewExamProcess/5100-
25 31.pdf](http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/documents/NewExamProcess/5100-31.pdf)

26
27 The information on the HSQ is considered confidential and once reviewed by
28 the test administrator to determine if the WCT can be administered, it must be
29 kept in the employee's medical file (EMF). This file may only be viewed by
30 Human Resource Management (HRM) or Safety personnel.

31 • **FS** - *See Work Capacity Tests for Wildland Fire Qualifications
32 Implementation Guide, see website:
33 http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/safety/wct/wct_index.html*

34 35 **Work Capacity Test (WCT) Categories**

36 The *NWCG Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide, PMS 310-1* identifies
37 fitness levels for specific positions. There are three fitness levels - Arduous,
38 Moderate, and Light - which require an individual to demonstrate their ability to
39 perform the fitness requirements of the position. Positions in the "no fitness
40 level required" category are normally performed in a controlled environment,
41 such as an incident base.

42
43 Law Enforcement physical fitness standard is accepted as equivalent to a "light"
44 WCT work category.

Work Capacity Test Categories

WCT Category	Distance	Weight	Time
Arduous Pack Test	3 miles	45 lb	45 min.
Moderate Field Test	2 miles	25 lb	30 min
Light Walk Test	1 mile	None	16 min

2

- 3 • **Arduous** - Duties involve field work requiring physical performance with
 4 above average endurance and superior conditioning. These duties may
 5 include an occasional demand for extraordinarily strenuous activities in
 6 emergencies under adverse environmental conditions and over extended
 7 periods of time. Requirements include running, walking, climbing,
 8 jumping, twisting, bending, and lifting more than 50 pounds; the pace of the
 9 work typically is set by the emergency conditions.
- 10 • **Moderate** - Duties involve field work requiring complete control of all
 11 physical faculties and may include considerable walking over irregular
 12 ground, standing for long periods of time, lifting 25 to 50 pounds, climbing,
 13 bending, stooping, twisting, and reaching. Occasional demands may be
 14 required for moderately strenuous activities in emergencies over long
 15 periods of time. Individuals usually set their own work pace.
- 16 • **Light** - Duties mainly involve office type work with occasional field
 17 activity characterized by light physical exertion requiring basic good health.
 18 Activities may include climbing stairs, standing, operating a vehicle, and
 19 long hours of work, as well as some bending, stooping, or light lifting.
 20 Individuals can usually govern the extent and pace of their physical activity.

21

Work Capacity Test (WCT) Administration

22 The Work Capacity Test (WCT) is the official method of assessing wildland
 23 firefighter fitness levels. General guidelines can be found in the “*Work*
 24 *Capacity Tests for Wildland Firefighters, Test Administrator’s Guide*” PMS
 25 307, NFES 1109.

- 26 • **FS-** for FS direction on WCT administration, refer to “*FS Work Capacity*
 27 *Tests for Wildland Fire Qualifications Implementation Guide*” at:
 28 http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/safety/wct/wct_index.html
 29

30

31 WCT Administrators must ensure that WCT participants have been medically
 32 cleared, either through Wildland Firefighter Medical Qualification Standards or
 33 agency specific medical examination.

34

35 WCTs are administered annually to all employees, including AD/EFF who will
 36 be serving in wildland fire positions that require a fitness level. The currency
 37 for the WCT is 12 months.

- 38 • **FS-** Currency for WCT is 13 months.

39

1 The WCT results shall be documented on the WCT Record available online as
2 Appendix O at http://www.nifc.gov/policies/policies_main.html. The WCT
3 Record captures information that is covered under the Privacy Act and should be
4 maintained in accordance with agency Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)
5 guidelines.

6
7 Administration of the WCT of non-federal firefighters is prohibited for liability
8 reasons. Potential emergency firefighters who would be hired under Emergency
9 Hire authority by the agency must be in AD pay status or sign an agency
10 specific volunteer services agreement prior to taking the WCT.

11
12 A Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) or Risk Assessment (RA) shall be developed and
13 approved for each field unit prior to administering the WCT. Administer the
14 test using the JHA/RA as a briefing guide.

- 15 • **BLM** - *A risk assessment shall be developed and approved for each field*
16 *unit prior to administering the WCT. A RA for the WCT can be found at:*
17 *[http://web.blm.gov/portal/employeeresources/allemployees/safety/riskmana](http://web.blm.gov/portal/employeeresources/allemployees/safety/riskmanagement.php)*
18 *gment.php*

19
20 The local unit shall prepare a medical response plan (such as an ICS-206 form),
21 evaluate options for immediate medical care and patient transport, and identify
22 closest emergency medical services. A minimum of a qualified Medical First
23 Responder/Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) must be on site during WCT
24 administration. Based upon a thorough evaluation of potential medical
25 treatment and evacuation scenarios, a higher level of on-site emergency medical
26 qualifications and equipment may be warranted (e.g. Emergency Medical
27 Technician (EMT) or paramedic).

28
29 An Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) is required on-site during all WCTs.

30
31 Personnel taking the WCT will only complete the level of testing (Pack, Field,
32 Walk) required by the highest fitness level identified for a position on their
33 Incident Qualification Card. Employees shall not take the WCT unless they
34 have an Incident Qualification Card qualification that requires it, and only at the
35 fitness level required by that position as identified in the NWCG 310-1 or
36 agency specific guidance or policy.

37
38 Treadmills are not approved for Work Capacity Testing.

39
40 WCT results must be entered into the IQCS annually to update the fitness level
41 and date that will appear on the Incident Qualification Card. WCT dates entered
42 in IQCS will reflect the date the employee passed the fitness test. The results of
43 the most recent WCT will always supersede the results of any previous WCT,
44 even if previous WCTs were within the currency period.

- 45 • **FWS/NPS**- *Law Enforcement Officers are required to provide a copy of the*
46 *medical clearance for verification and tracking purposes to the appropriate*

1 *incident qualifications and certifications system (IQCS) account manager.*
2 *Account managers will reflect the appropriate examination type and*
3 *currency for the Law Enforcement Officer examinations in the physical*
4 *examinations portion of the IQCS system.*

5

6 **WCT Retesting**

7 Those who do not pass the WCT will be provided another opportunity to retest.
8 Employees will have to wait at least 48 hours before retaking the WCT. If an
9 employee sustains an injury (verified by a licensed medical provider) during a
10 test, the test will not count as an attempt. Once an injured employee has been
11 released for full duty, the employee will be given time to prepare for the test (not
12 to exceed 4 weeks). The numbers of retesting opportunities that will be allowed
13 include:

- 14 • Three opportunities for permanent employees required to pass a test for
15 duties in the fire program.
- 16 • One opportunity for temporary employees required to pass a test (a second
17 chance maybe provided at the discretion of fire management).

18

19 **Minimum Age Requirements for Hazardous Duty Assignments on Federal** 20 **Incidents**

21

22 Persons under 18 years old will not perform hazardous duties during wildland
23 fire management operations on federal jurisdictions.

24

25 **Engine Modules**

26

27 Staffing levels and specific requirements for engine personnel may be found in
28 Chapter 14, Fire Fighting Equipment.

29

30 **Helicopter Modules**

31

32 Staffing levels and specific requirements for helicopter personnel may be found
33 in Chapter 16, Aviation.

34

35 **Smokejumpers (SMKJ)**

36

37 Smokejumpers provide professional and effective fire suppression, fuels
38 reduction, and fire management services to help land managers meet objectives.

39

40 **SMKJ Policy**

41 Smokejumper operations are guided by direction in the interagency section of
42 the *Interagency Smokejumper Operations Guide (ISOG)*.

43

44 Each base will comply with smokejumper operations standards. The arduous
45 duties, specialized assignments, and operations in a variety of geographic areas

1 require smokejumpers to have uniform training, agency approved equipment,
 2 communications, organization, and operating procedures.

3

4 **SMKJ Communications**

5 All smokejumpers carry programmable radios and are proficient in their use and
 6 programming procedures.

7

8 **SMKJ Training**

9 To ensure proficiency and safety, smokejumpers complete annual training that
 10 covers aspects of aviation, parachuting, fire suppression tactics, administrative
 11 procedures, and safety related to the smokejumper mission and fire operations.
 12 The training program for first-year smokejumpers is four weeks long.

13 Candidates are evaluated to determine:

- 14 • Level of physical fitness;
- 15 • Ability to learn and perform smokejumper skills;
- 16 • Ability to work as a team member;
- 17 • Attitude; and
- 18 • Ability to think clearly and remain productive in a stressful environment.

19

20 **SMKJ Target Qualifications**

Position	IQCS Target	SMKJ Training Target
Dept Managers	T1 and T2 C&G	
Spotter	ICT3, DIVS, ATGS RXB2, SOFR	
Lead Smokejumper	STLD, TFLD	Senior Rigger, FOBS
Smokejumper	ICT4, CRWB, FIRB	FEMO
Rookie Smokejumper	ICT5, FFT1	

21

22 **SMKJ Physical Fitness Standards**

23 The national minimum standards for smokejumpers are:

- 24 • 1.5 mile run in 11:00 minutes or less;
- 25 • 45 sit-ups;
- 26 • 25 pushups;
- 27 • 7 pull-ups;
- 28 • 110 lb. packout over 3 miles/level terrain/90 minutes*; and
- 29 • Successful completion of the WCT at the arduous level.

30 *This element is tested during Smokejumper Rookie Training.

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Interagency Hotshot Crews (IHC)

Interagency Hotshot Crews provide an organized, mobile, and skilled hand crew for all phases of wildfire suppression. IHCs are comprised of 18-25 firefighters and are used primarily for wildfire suppression, fuels reduction, and other fire management duties. IHC's are capable of performing self-contained initial attack suppression operations, and commonly provide incident management capability at the Type 3 or 4 levels.

IHC Policy

IHC standards provide consistent planning, funding, organization, and management of the agency IHCs. The sponsoring unit will ensure compliance with the established standards. The arduous duties, specialized assignments, and operations in a variety of geographic areas required of IHCs dictate that training, equipment, communications, transportation, organization, and operating procedures are consistent for all agency IHCs.

As per agency policy, all IHCs will be managed under the *Standards for Interagency Hotshot Crew Operations (SIHCO)*.

- *BLM/NPS - BLM Preparedness Review Checklist #18 (Hotshot Crew) supersedes the checklist found in the SIHCO.*

IHC Certification

The process for IHC certification is found in the *Standards for Interagency Hotshot Crews (SIHCO)*.

Annual Crew Pre-Mobilization Process

The superintendent of crews holding IHC status the previous season are required to complete the Annual IHC Mobilization Checklist (SIHCO Appendix C) and send the completed document to the local GACC prior to making the crew available for assignment each season.

Annual IHC Readiness Review

On an annual basis the superintendent of crews holding IHC status the previous season are required to complete the Annual IHC Preparedness Review (SIHCO Appendix B). This process is designed to evaluate crew preparedness and compliance with SIHCO. The annual review will be conducted while the crew is fully staffed and operational. The review is not required prior to a crew being made available for incident assignment at the beginning of their availability period. When a review document is completed, the document is kept on file at the local (host) unit fire management office.

IHC Organization

Individual crew structure will be based on local needs using the following standard positions: Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Squad Leader, Skilled Firefighter, and Crewmember.

- 1 • *BLM/NPS- IHCs have the option of traveling with 25 personnel when on*
2 *incident assignments as authorized by the local unit. IHC superintendents*
3 *will obtain prior approval from the dispatching GACC when the assignment*
4 *requires fixed wing transport and the crew size is greater than 20.*
5

6 **IHC Availability Periods**

7 IHCs will have minimum availability periods as defined in the *SIHCO*.
8 Availability periods may exceed the required minimum availability period. The
9 Crew Superintendent will inform the local supervisor and the GACC of any
10 changes in the crew's availability.
11

12 **National IHC Status Reporting System**

13 IHCs will report status through the National IHC Status Reporting System. IHC
14 superintendents will regularly update the system with any change in crew status
15 and/or current utilization when on assignment.
16

17 IHCs may report status by three methods:

- 18 • Via e-mail to BLM_FC_Crews@blm.gov (preferred method);
19 • Via the internet to the Hotshot Status submission form (link available from
20 the Crew page of the NICC website); or
21 • Contacting the NICC Crew Desk at 208-387-5400.
22

23 **IHC Communications**

24 IHCs will provide a minimum of five programmable multi-channel radios per
25 crew as stated in the *SIHCO*.
26

27 **IHC Transportation**

28 Crews will be provided adequate transportation. The number of vehicles used to
29 transport a crew should not exceed five. All vehicles must adhere to the
30 certified maximum Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) limitations.
31

32 **Other Hand Crews**

34 **Policy**

35 All crews must meet minimum crew standards as defined below as well as any
36 additional agency, state, or contractual requirements. Typing will be identified
37 at the local level with notification made to the local GACC.
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1 **MINIMUM CREW STANDARDS FOR NATIONAL MOBILIZATION**

Minimum Standards	Type 1	Type 2 with IA Capability	Type 2
Fireline Capability	Initial attack/can be broken up into squads, fireline construction, complex firing operations(backfire)	Initial attack/can be broken up into squads, fireline construction, firing to include burnout	Initial attack, fireline construction, firing as directed
Crew Size	18-20		
Leadership Qualifications	Permanent Supervision Supt: TFLD, ICT4,FIRB Asst Supt: STCR, ICT4 3 Squad Bosses: ICT5 2 Senior Firefighters: FFT1	Crew Boss: CRWB 3 Squad Bosses: ICT5	Crew Boss: CRWB 3 Squad Bosses: FFT1
Language Requirement	All senior leadership including Squad Bosses and higher must be able to read and interpret the language of the crew as well as English.		
Experience	80% 1 season	60% 1 season	20% 1 season
Full Time Organized Crew	Yes (work and train as a unit 40 hrs per week)	No	No
Communications	5 programmable radios	4 programmable radios	
Sawyers	3 agency qualified	3 agency qualified	None
Training	As required by the SIHCO or agency policy prior to assignment	Basic firefighter training and/or annual firefighter safety refresher prior to assignment	Basic firefighter training and/or annual firefighter safety refresher prior to assignment
Logistics	Crew level agency purchasing authority	No purchasing authority	No purchasing authority
Maximum Weight	5300 lbs		
Dispatch Availability	Available nationally	Available nationally	Variable
Production Factor	1.0	.8	.8
Transportation	Own transportation	Transportation needed	Transportation needed
Tools & Equipment	Fully equipped	Not equipped	Not equipped
Personal Gear	Arrives with: Crew First Aid kit, personal first aid kit, headlamp, 1 qt canteen, web gear, sleeping bag		
PPE	All standard designated fireline PPE		
Certification	Must be annually certified by the local host unit Agency Administrator or designee prior to being made available for assignment.	N/A	N/A

- 2 • **BLM-** for additional standards and certification requirements, refer to
3 Chapter 2.

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Wildland Fire Modules

The primary mission of WFM's is to provide an innovative, safe, highly mobile, logistically independent, and versatile fire crew with a primary commitment to support fire's role as a natural ecological process to restore and maintain resilient landscapes while providing for fire-adapted communities.

WFMs are comprised of 7 – 10 firefighters. The WFM program facilitates the use of fire and other management techniques involving planned and unplanned wildland fire events. WFMs are highly skilled and versatile fire crews, which provide technical and ecological based expertise in the areas of long term planning, ignitions, holding, and suppression, and fire effects monitoring. For more information please refer to PMS – 430: *Interagency Standards for Wildland Fire Module Operations (ISWFMO)*.

WFM Policy

All WFM operations will be conducted adhering to the *Interagency Standards for Wildland Fire Module Operations (ISWFMO) PMS 430*. Sponsoring units in conjunction with the appropriate Geographic Area Coordination Center will ensure compliance of all WFMs according to the standards set within the ISWFMO. The arduous duties, specialized assignments, and operations in a variety of geographic areas require WFMs to have uniform training, agency approved equipment, communications, organization, and operating procedures.

WFM Types and Certification

WFMs ready for assignment will be certified as Type 1 WFM (WFM1) or Type 2 WFM (WFM2). Refer to the *Interagency Standards for Wildland Fire Module Operations (ISWFMO) – PMS 430* for additional information.

WFM Availability Periods

WFMs will have minimum availability periods as defined in the ISWFMO. Availability for Type 1 WFMs may exceed the minimum period defined. Type 1 WFMs will be available for off unit assignment during the designated 90 day availability period. The module leader will inform the local supervisor and the GACC of any changes to the modules availability.

WFM Organization

Individual module structures vary based on local and agency needs using the following standard positions: Module Leader/ Foreman, Assistant Leader/ Foreman, Lead Firefighter, Senior Firefighter, Crewmember.

1 Minimum WFM Standards for Interagency Mobilization		
Minimum Standards	Type 1	Type 2
Fireline Capability	Ability to form separate logistically self-sufficient independent groups, fire line construction, complex firing operations(backfire), monitoring, strategic planning, fire reconnaissance, public information.	Monitoring, fireline construction, firing to include burnout.
Crew Size	7-10	
Leadership Qualifications	- Qualifications are not tied to a particular position within the WFM. All modules will have the following qualifications: TFLD, RXB2*, ICT4, CRWB, FIRB, FOBS - Module Lead: TFLD, CRWB - Asst. Module Lead: ICT4, FEMO - 1 Squad Boss: ICT5 - 2 Senior Firefighters: FFT1 *RXB2 (1) could be any of the module members	- Crew Boss: CRWB - 1 Squad Boss: ICT5
Language Requirement	All senior leadership, including Squad Bosses and higher, must be able to read and interpret the language of the crew as well as English.	
Experience	90% > 1 season	60% > 1 season
Full Time Organized Crew	Yes (work and train as a unit 40 hrs. per week, 90 continuous days)	No
Communications	5 programmable radios	4 programmable radios
Sawyers	2 agency qualified	1 agency qualified
FEMO	2	2 (1 of 2 can be trainee)
Training	As required by the <i>ISWFM</i> O prior to assignment	Basic firefighter training or RT-130 prior to assignment
Medical First Responder Training	Yes	No
Logistics	Multiple crew level agency purchasing authorities	Generally no purchasing authority, may need assistance by incident logistics
Dispatch Availability	Availability determined by sponsoring agency	Availability variable by sponsoring agency
Mobilization Time	Within 2 hours of receipt of resource order when on duty, 8 hours when off duty	Within 24 hours of receipt of resource order.
Transportation	Own transportation	Transportation needed
Tools & Equipment	Fully equipped for each geographic region.	May need assistance by incident logistics
Specialized Digital, Remote Operations, Monitoring, Equipment	Yes	No
Personal Gear	Arrives with: Crew First Aid kit, personal first aid kit, headlamp, 1 quart canteen, web gear, sleeping bag	
PPE	All standard designated fireline PPE	
Certification	Must be annually certified by the Regional or State Office of the host unit agency administrator or designee prior to being made available for assignment.	Must complete the mobilization checklist by the local host unit or agency administrator or designee prior to being made available for assignment.

- 1 • **BLM-** BLM WFMs will meet standards identified in the Interagency
2 Standards for Wildland Fire Module Operations (PMS 430). In addition,
3 BLM WFMs will meet the following requirements:
- 4 ○ All BLM WFMs will meet the standards for Type 1 WFMs identified in
5 the Interagency Standards for Wildland Fire Module Operations. Type
6 2 WFMs will not be formed, sponsored, or statused in the Resource
7 Ordering and Status System (ROSS) by BLM units.
 - 8 ○ Approval from the Assistant Director, Fire and Aviation is required
9 prior to establishing and/or statusing new Type 1 WFMs.
 - 10 ○ Any BLM unit may provide personnel to WFMs sponsored by another
11 agency. All BLM personnel must meet the standards outlined in the
12 Interagency Standards for Wildland Fire Module Operations, and the
13 Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations.
 - 14 ○ Units may utilize Type 1 and/or Type 2 WFMs for BLM incidents.
15 Incident commanders will order the appropriate resource to
16 accomplish incident objectives.
 - 17 ○ Fire Suppression Modules and WFMs are separate and distinct
18 resources. The BLM has established standards for fire suppression
19 modules in chapter 2 of this publication. Fire managers and incident
20 commanders should order the appropriate resource to accomplish
21 incident objectives.
- 22 • **NPS-** Modules are coordinated regionally and mobilized/demobilized
23 through established ordering channels through the GACCs.

24 Agency Certified Positions

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26
27 As a supplement to the qualifications system, certain agencies have identified
28 the additional positions of Prescribed Fire Burn Boss 3 (RXB3) - see Chapter
29 17; Engine Operator (ENOP) - see Chapter 2; and Chainsaw Operators and
30 Fallers listed below.

- 31 • **BLM-** Personnel hired by the BLM must meet requirements established in
32 the position description. If the position description requires Incident
33 Command System qualifications, only qualifications and minimum
34 requirements specified in the NWCG Wildland Fire Qualifications Systems
35 Guide (PMS 310-1) will be applied as selective factors and/or screen-out
36 questions. To avoid reducing candidate pools, BLM-specific requirements
37 that are supplemental to the PMS 310-1 may not be used as selective
38 placement factors/screen-out questions. Supplemental BLM-specific
39 training or qualification requirements may only be used as selective factors
40 and/or screen-out questions when requested and justified by the selecting
41 official, and approved by human resources. Impacts to the candidate pool
42 must be addressed in the justification. As with all other BLM or DOI-
43 specific training/experience requirements (e.g. Do What's Right training,
44 purchase card training) that newly hired employees from other agencies
45 may not have, the supervisor and IQCS certifying official are responsible
46 for reconciling that employee's training and IQCS record after the

1 *employee has entered on duty. This may be accomplished by providing*
2 *additional training/experience or by manually awarding competencies as*
3 *per established IQCS protocol.*
4

5 **Chainsaw Operators and Fallers**

6 The agencies have established the following minimum qualification and
7 certification process for Chainsaw Operators (Incident Qualification Card
8 certified as Faller A):

- 9 • Agency employees who are chainsaw operators and fallers must be
10 minimally qualified as a FFT2 and meet the arduous fitness standards.
- 11 • Successful completion of S-212, including the field exercise, or those
12 portions of S-212 appropriate for Faller A duties;
- 13 • Agency Administrator (or delegate) certification of qualifications after
14 verification that training is successfully completed;
- 15 • Documentation must be maintained for individuals;
- 16 • The individual tasks required for completion of the “A” Task Book and the
17 final evaluation for the “A” level saw operators must be verified or signed
18 by a qualified “B” or “C” level saw operator;
- 19 • The individual tasks required for completion of the “B” Task Book must be
20 evaluated by a qualified “B” or “C” level operator. The Final Evaluator
21 Verification for “B” level operators must be signed by a “C” level saw
22 operator;
- 23 • The individual tasks required for completion of the “C” Task Book must be
24 evaluated by a qualified “C” level operator. The Final Evaluator
25 Verification for “C” level operators must be signed by an approved “C”
26 level evaluator;
- 27 • Each of the states/regions will certify and maintain a list of their current “C”
28 class saw operators who they approve to be “C” class evaluators;
- 29 • The certification of “C” class evaluators will remain the responsibility of
30 the Agency Administrator or delegate; and
- 31 • All fire related (Incident Qualification Carded) saw operation qualifications
32 are maintained through the IQCS system and will have a currency of five
33 years.
- 34 • **BLM/NPS/FWS** - *Position task book found at:*
35 <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/taskbook-agency/index.htm>
- 36 • **FS** - *FS direction can be found in FSH 5109.17, FAQG, and FSH 6709.11.*
- 37 • **NPS/FWS** - *Exceptions to the above policy are:*
 - 38 ○ *Size classes used in the Faller A, Faller B, and Faller C Position Task*
39 *Book are guidelines and are not the determining factor in the*
40 *complexity of a tree felling operation. The size classes are to be used as*
41 *an evaluation tool during trainee evaluation. Chainsaw operators are*
42 *expected to conduct a thorough size up of each individual tree and*
43 *determine the extent of qualification required to safely perform a*
44 *felling operation;*

- 1 ○ *The individual tasks required for completion of the “B” Task Book and*
- 2 *the final evaluation for the Class “B” saw operations must be verified*
- 3 *by a qualified Class “B” or “C” saw operator; and*
- 4 ○ *The individual tasks required for completion of the “C” Task Book*
- 5 *must be verified by a qualified “C” level operator.*
- 6 ○ ***NPS Only-*** *Final evaluation of “C” level operators must be completed*
- 7 *by a regionally-approved “C” level evaluator.*