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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.

Standards

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>

Federal agencies have consolidated minimum standards and information for frequently used positions not included in the PMS 310-1. The *Federal Wildland Fire Qualifications Supplement* can be found on the NWCG Qualifications web site 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)*.

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.

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

3

4 The committee:

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

17

18 **Non-NWCG Agency Personnel Qualifications**

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

25

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

30

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

32 The NWCG *PMS 310-1 Wildland Fire System Qualifications Guide* establishes
33 the minimum qualifications for personnel involved in prescribed fires on which
34 resources of more than one agency are utilized - unless local agreements specify
35 otherwise. This guide may be found at:

36 <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/docs/docs.htm>

37

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

39

40 The Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS) is the fire
41 qualifications and certification record keeping system. The Responder Master
42 Record report provided by the IQCS meets the agency requirement for
43 maintaining fire qualification records. The system is designed to provide
44 managers at the local, state/regional, and national levels with detailed
45 qualification, experience, and training information needed to certify employees
46 in wildland fire positions. The IQCS is a tool to assist managers in certification

1 decisions. However, it does not replace the manager's responsibility to validate
2 that employees meet all requirements for position performance based on their
3 agency standards.

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

- 9 • **BLM** - *These policies can be found at:*
10 *[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)*
11 *html*
- 12 • **NPS** - *IQCS Account Managers should have an IQCS Delegation of*
13 *Authority if they are serving as the Certifying Official. Delegation of*
14 *Authority can be found at: <http://iqcs.nwcg.gov/main/requestAccount.html>*

15 **Certification of Non-Agency Personnel**

16 Non-agency firefighters will be certified by state or local fire departments, or
17 private training providers approved by a Memorandum of Understanding
18 (MOU) through their local GACC. Agencies will not assist in the
19 administration, or sponsor the Work Capacity Test (WCT), as the certifying
20 agency.
21

22 **Incident Qualification Card**

23 The Agency Administrator (or delegate) is responsible for annual certification of
24 all agency and Administratively Determined (AD) personnel serving on wildfire,
25 prescribed fire, and all hazard incidents. This responsibility includes monitoring
26 medical status, fitness, training, performance, and ensuring the responder meets
27 all position performance requirements.
28

29 Training, medical screening, and successful completion of the appropriate WCT
30 must be accomplished and documented. All Incident Qualification Cards issued
31 to agency employees, with the exception of Emergency Firefighter (EFF-paid or
32 temporary employees at the FFT2 level), will be printed using the IQCS.
33 Incident Qualification Cards issued to EFF or temporary employees at the FFT2
34 level may be printed without use of the IQCS.
35

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

- 41 • **NPS**- *Certification for Area Command and Type 1 Command and General*
42 *Staff (C&GS) position task books will be done at the national office level;*
43 *Type 2 C&GS, and any position task books issued to park fire management*
44 *officers will be certified at the regional office level. All other position task*
45 *books may be certified at the local unit level.*

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

24

25 Incident Qualification Card Expiration Dates

- 26 Incident Qualification Cards for responders that possess qualifications requiring
27 Work Capacity Tests (WCT) and the Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training
28 course (RT-130) are valid through the earliest expiration date (either fitness or
29 refresher) listed on the card. Incident Qualification Cards for responders that
30 possess qualifications that do not require WCT or RT-130 for issuance are valid
31 for 12 months from the date the card is signed by a certifying official.
- 32 • **FS-** *the WCT is considered effective for 13 months from the date passed. If*
33 *an employee is on an emergency assignment on the date their*
34 *WCT/refresher expires, they will complete their assignment including any*
35 *extensions. Upon return to their duty station, they must complete the*
36 *WCT/refresher and acquire a new Incident Qualification Card prior to*
37 *accepting any new assignments.*

38

39 Universal Training Requirements

- 40
- 41 All personnel filling NWCG recognized positions on the fireline must have
42 completed:
- 43 • S-130 Firefighter Training (including the required field exercises);
 - 44 • S-190 Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior;
 - 45 • L-180 Human Factors on the Fireline;

- 1 • ICS-100 Introduction to ICS; and
- 2 • IS-700A NIMS: An Introduction (or current version).

3

4 **Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training**

5

6 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training is required for those positions
7 identified in the *Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide* (NWCG 310-1).

8 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training must include the following core
9 components:

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

27

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

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

37

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

- 43 • Lead instructors must be a qualified single resource boss;
- 44 • Unit instructors must be a qualified firefighter type one (FFT1); and

- 1 • Adjunct instructors may be utilized to provide limited instruction in
2 specialized knowledge and skills at the discretion of the lead instructor.
3 They must be experienced, proficient and knowledgeable of current issues
4 in their field of expertise.
 - 5 • All instructors will need the knowledge and skills to utilize current
6 educational technology as it relates to the Wildland Fire Safety Training
7 Annual Refresher (WFSTAR) website, such as video streaming,
8 downloading interactive videos, and use of mobile applications and devices.
9
- 10 For additional information please refer to the current *NWCG Field Manager's*
11 *Course Guide* (PMS 901-1) at:
12 <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/training/fmcg.pdf>.
13
- 14 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training will have a 12-month currency.
15 Firefighters who receive initial fire training are not required to take Annual
16 Fireline Safety Refresher Training in the same calendar year. A web site,
17 <http://www.nifc.gov/wfstar/index.htm>, titled *Wildland Fire Safety Training*
18 *Annual Refresher (WFSTAR)* is available to assist in this training.
19
- 20 Entrapment avoidance and deployment protocols are identified in the *Incident*
21 *Response Pocket Guide (IRPG)* (PMS No. 461/NFES No.1077). The guide
22 contains a specific "Risk Management Process" and "Last Resort Survival
23 Checklist".
- 24 • **BLM** - The "Do What's Right" training is required annual training but is
25 not a prerequisite for issuance of an Incident Qualification Card.
26

27 **Physical Fitness**

28 **Physical Fitness and Conditioning**

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

- 1 • *FWS- When an arduous fitness rating is not a condition of employment, and*
2 *employee who has a documented requirement or written agreement to*
3 *maintain an arduous fitness level will be authorized three hours per week of*
4 *duty time for fitness conditioning. All other wildland fire personnel who*
5 *maintain qualifications that require a fitness level of moderate or arduous*
6 *may be authorized by their supervisor for up to three hours per week for*
7 *fitness conditioning. Employees and supervisors must agree in writing on*
8 *approved activities and details regarding when and where they will occur.*
- 9 • *NPS – A fitness plan is required for all NPS personnel participating in a*
10 *fitness program (DO-57). For health and fitness purposes, those who are*
11 *fire-qualified at less than the arduous fitness level are not required to meet*
12 *the mandatory fitness program requirements of DO-57 for wildland fire*
13 *management. They are strongly encouraged to participate in the voluntary*
14 *fitness program, and must still meet physical fitness/work capacity*
15 *requirements as outlined in the Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide*
16 *(310-1) for positions with Moderate and Light fitness requirements.*

18 **Medical Examinations and Work Capacity Tests**

19
20 Agency Administrators and supervisors are responsible for the occupational
21 health and safety of their employees performing wildland fire activities, and may
22 require employees to take a medical examination at any time.

23
24 Established medical qualification programs, as stated in 5 CFR 339, provide
25 consistent medical standards in order to safeguard the health of employees
26 whose work may subject them or others to significant health and safety risks due
27 to occupational or environmental exposure or demand.

- 28
29 • *BLM/FWS/NPS- If the HSQ or Annual Exam results in a status of*
30 *“cleared”, but the Servicing Human Resource Officer (SHRO) or FMO has*
31 *a specific concern about an employee’s/applicant’s capacity to meet the*
32 *physical or medical requirements of a position, the agency may require the*
33 *employee/applicant to report for a specific medical evaluation. For more*
34 *information, contact your SHRO or agency Wildland Fire Safety Program*
35 *Manager.*

36
37 Any employee with an active worker’s compensation (OWCP) case or other
38 medical limitations must disclose any limiting factors/restrictions as part of the
39 medical examination process.

40
41 Information on any medical records is considered confidential and must be kept
42 in the employee’s medical file.

1 **Department of Interior Wildland Firefighter Medical Standards Program**
2 **(DOI/MSP) - Arduous Fitness Level**

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

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

11

12 If any “yes” answer is indicated on the HSQ, an annual exam is required prior to
13 the employee taking the Arduous WCT. Cost of the exam will be covered at the
14 National level.

15

16 If an examining clinician believes diagnostic testing beyond what is required by
17 the Wildland Firefighter Medical Standards Program is needed to determine
18 medical clearance, then agency approval is required before the tests are
19 conducted. If the agency approves the clinician request, or requests further
20 testing themselves, then the agency is responsible for payment. Additional
21 testing or treatment requested by the employee/applicant shall be at their own
22 expense.

23

24 Employees or applicants who fail to meet the Federal Interagency Wildland
25 Firefighter Medical Qualification Standards as a permanent, seasonal/temporary,
26 or term employee may not perform as an AD/EFF for arduous duty positions.

27

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

- 34 • *NPS - The law enforcement medical exam for NPS rangers, who are*
35 *collateral duty wildland firefighters, will suffice for MSP clearance.*
- 36 • *NPS - Medical clearance must be entered into IQCS.*
- 37 • *FWS- Periodicity requirements for Refuge law enforcement examinations*
38 *will be applied to arduous duty wildland fire positions. Law enforcement*
39 *officers wishing to perform in NWCG PMS 310-1 or USFWS agency*
40 *specific wildland fire positions with an arduous fitness requirement must*
41 *pass the arduous work capacity test on an annual basis. The HSQ will be*
42 *used for off exam years prior to arduous work capacity testing.*

43

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

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

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

3
4 Medical examinations will be performed utilizing the *Certificate of Medical*
5 *Exam, U.S. Office of Personnel Management OF-178*. Stress EKGs are not
6 required as part of the medical examination and will only be approved if
7 recommended and administered by the medical examining physician. Cost for
8 exams will be borne by the home unit. If medical findings during exam require
9 further evaluation, then the cost of any further evaluation or treatment is borne
10 by the employee/applicant. Costs for additional tests specifically requested by
11 the agency will be borne by the home unit.

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

13
14 If the SHRO or FMO has a direct concern about an employee’s/applicant’s
15 capacity to meet the physical or medical requirements of a position, the agency
16 may require the employee/applicant to report for a specific medical evaluation.
17 For more information, contact your SHRO or agency Wildland Fire Safety
18 Program Manager.

19
20 Standards for medical examinations using the OF-178 for light and moderate
21 positions are available at:

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

23
24 The examining physician will submit the completed OF-178 (and applicable
25 supplements) to the employee’s servicing human resources office, where it will
26 be reviewed and retained in the employee’s medical file.

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

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

36 **Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ)**

37
38 Title 5 CFR Part 339 - Medical Qualification Determinations, which provides a
39 determination of an individual’s fitness-for-duty, authorizes solicitation of this
40 information.

41
42 The approved OMB Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ) may be found at:
43 [http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/documents/NewExamProcess/5100-](http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/documents/NewExamProcess/5100-31.pdf)
44 [31.pdf](http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/documents/NewExamProcess/5100-31.pdf)

45

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

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

9 **Work Capacity Test (WCT) Categories**

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

16 Law Enforcement physical fitness standard is accepted as equivalent to a "light"
 17 WCT work category.

18
 19
 20 **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

- 21
- 22 • **Arduous** - Duties involve field work requiring physical performance with
 23 above average endurance and superior conditioning. These duties may
 24 include an occasional demand for extraordinarily strenuous activities in
 25 emergencies under adverse environmental conditions and over extended
 26 periods of time. Requirements include running, walking, climbing,
 27 jumping, twisting, bending, and lifting more than 50 pounds; the pace of the
 28 work typically is set by the emergency conditions.
- 29 • **Moderate** - Duties involve field work requiring complete control of all
 30 physical faculties and may include considerable walking over irregular
 31 ground, standing for long periods of time, lifting 25 to 50 pounds, climbing,
 32 bending, stooping, twisting, and reaching. Occasional demands may be
 33 required for moderately strenuous activities in emergencies over long
 34 periods of time. Individuals usually set their own work pace.
- 35 • **Light** - Duties mainly involve office type work with occasional field
 36 activity characterized by light physical exertion requiring basic good health.
 37 Activities may include climbing stairs, standing, operating a vehicle, and
 38 long hours of work, as well as some bending, stooping, or light lifting.
 39 Individuals can usually govern the extent and pace of their physical activity.

40

1 **Work Capacity Test (WCT) Administration**

2 The Work Capacity Test (WCT) is the official method of assessing wildland
3 firefighter fitness levels. General guidelines can be found in the “*Work*
4 *Capacity Tests for Wildland Firefighters, Test Administrator’s Guide*” PMS
5 307, NFES 1109.

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

9
10 WCT Administrators must ensure that WCT participants have been medically
11 cleared, either through Wildland Firefighter Medical Qualification Standards or
12 agency specific medical examination.

13
14 At a minimum, WCTs are administered annually to all employees, including
15 AD/EFF who will be serving in wildland fire positions that require a fitness
16 level. The currency for the WCT is 12 months.

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

18
19 The WCT results shall be documented on the WCT Record available online as
20 Appendix O at http://www.nifc.gov/policies/policies_main.html. The WCT
21 Record captures information that is covered under the Privacy Act and should be
22 maintained in accordance with agency Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)
23 guidelines.

24
25 Administration of the WCT of non-federal firefighters is prohibited for liability
26 reasons. Potential emergency firefighters who would be hired under Emergency
27 Hire authority by the agency must be in AD pay status or sign an agency
28 specific volunteer services agreement prior to taking the WCT.

29
30 A Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) or Risk Assessment (RA) shall be developed and
31 approved for each field unit prior to administering the WCT. Administer the
32 test using the JHA/RA as a briefing guide.

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

37
38 The local unit shall prepare a medical response plan (such as an ICS-206 form),
39 evaluate options for immediate medical care and patient transport, and identify
40 closest emergency medical services. A minimum of a qualified Medical First
41 Responder/Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) must be on site during WCT
42 administration. Based upon a thorough evaluation of potential medical
43 treatment and evacuation scenarios, a higher level of on-site emergency medical
44 qualifications and equipment may be warranted (e.g. Emergency Medical
45 Technician (EMT) or paramedic).

46

1 An Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) is required on-site during all WCTs.
2
3 Personnel taking the WCT will only complete the level of testing (Pack, Field,
4 Walk) required by the highest fitness level identified for a position on their
5 Incident Qualification Card. Employees shall not take the WCT unless they
6 have an Incident Qualification Card qualification that requires it, and only at the
7 fitness level required by that position as identified in the NWCG 310-1 or
8 agency specific guidance or policy.

9
10 Treadmills are not approved for Work Capacity Testing.

11
12 WCT results must be entered into the IQCS annually to update the fitness level
13 and date that will appear on the Incident Qualification Card. WCT dates entered
14 in IQCS will reflect the date the employee passed the fitness test. The results of
15 the most recent WCT will always supersede the results of any previous WCT,
16 even if previous WCTs were within the currency period.

- 17 • *FWS/NPS- Law Enforcement Officers are required to provide a copy of the*
18 *medical clearance for verification and tracking purposes to the appropriate*
19 *incident qualifications and certifications system (IQCS) account manager.*
20 *Account managers will reflect the appropriate examination type and*
21 *currency for the Law Enforcement Officer examinations in the physical*
22 *examinations portion of the IQCS system.*

23 24 **WCT- Retesting**

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

- 32 • Three opportunities for permanent employees required to pass a test for
33 duties in the fire program.
- 34 • One opportunity for temporary employees required to pass a test (a second
35 chance maybe provided at the discretion of fire management).

36 37 **Minimum Age Requirements for Hazardous Duty Assignments on Federal** 38 **Incidents**

39
40 Persons under 18 years old will not perform hazardous duties during wildland
41 fire management operations on federal jurisdictions.

42 43 **Engine Modules**

44
45 Staffing levels and specific requirements for engine personnel may be found in
46 Chapter 14, Fire Fighting Equipment.

1 **Helicopter Modules**

2
3 Staffing levels and specific requirements for helicopter personnel may be found
4 in Chapter 16, Aviation.

5
6 **Smokejumpers (SMKJ)**

7
8 Smokejumpers provide professional and effective fire suppression, fuels
9 reduction, and fire management services to help land managers meet objectives.

10
11 **SMKJ Policy**

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

14
15 Each base will comply with smokejumper operations standards. The arduous
16 duties, specialized assignments, and operations in a variety of geographic areas
17 require smokejumpers to have uniform training, agency approved equipment,
18 communications, organization, and operating procedures.

19
20 **SMKJ Communications**

21 All smokejumpers carry programmable radios and are proficient in their use and
22 programming procedures.

23
24 **SMKJ Training**

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

29 Candidates are evaluated to determine:

- 30 • Level of physical fitness;
- 31 • Ability to learn and perform smokejumper skills;
- 32 • Ability to work as a team member;
- 33 • Attitude; and
- 34 • Ability to think clearly and remain productive in a stressful environment.

35
36 **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	

1 SMKJ Physical Fitness Standards

2 The national minimum standards for smokejumpers are:

- 3 • 1.5 mile run in 11:00 minutes or less;
- 4 • 45 sit-ups;
- 5 • 25 pushups;
- 6 • 7 pull-ups;
- 7 • 110 lb. pack-out over 3 miles/level terrain/90 minutes*; and
- 8 • Successful completion of the WCT at the arduous level.

9 *This element is tested during Smokejumper Rookie Training.

10

11 Interagency Hotshot Crews (IHC)

12

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

19

20 IHC Policy

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

27

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

- 30 • **BLM/NPS - BLM Preparedness Review Checklist #18 (Hotshot Crew)**
31 *supersedes the checklist found in the SIHCO.*
- 32 • **BLM – Additional guidance for BLM IHCs is contained in chapter 2.**

33

34 IHC Certification

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

37

38 Annual Crew Pre-Mobilization Process

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

43

44

45

1 Annual IHC Readiness Review

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

10

11 IHC Organization

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

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

19

20 IHC Availability Periods

21 IHCs will have minimum availability periods as defined in the *SIHCO*.
22 Availability periods may exceed the required minimum availability period. The
23 Crew Superintendent will inform the local supervisor and the GACC of any
24 changes in the crew's availability.

25

26 National IHC Status Reporting System

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

30

31 IHCs may report status by three methods:

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

36

37 IHC Communications

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

40

41 IHC Transportation

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

45

46

1 **Other Hand Crews**

2

3 **Policy**

4 All crews must meet minimum crew standards as defined below as well as any
5 additional agency, state, or contractual requirements. Typing will be identified
6 at the local level with notification made to the local GACC.

7

8 **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

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

4 **Wildland Fire Modules (WFM)**

5
6 The primary mission of WFM's is to provide an innovative, safe, highly mobile,
7 logistically independent, and versatile fire crew with a primary commitment to
8 support fire's role as a natural ecological process to restore and maintain
9 resilient landscapes while providing for fire-adapted communities.

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

19 **WFM Policy**

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

28 **WFM Types and Certification**

29 WFM's ready for assignment will be certified as Type 1 WFM (WFM1) or Type
30 2 WFM (WFM2). Refer to the *Interagency Standards for Wildland Fire Module*
31 *Operations (ISWFMO) – PMS 430* for additional information.

33 **WFM Availability Periods**

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

40 **WFM Organization**

41 Individual module structures vary based on local and agency needs using the
42 following standard positions: Module Leader/ Foreman, Assistant Leader/
43 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> 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
25

26 **Agency Certified Positions**

27
28 As a supplement to the qualifications system, certain agencies have identified
29 the additional positions of Prescribed Fire Burn Boss 3 (RXB3) - see Chapter
30 17; Engine Operator (ENOP) - see Chapter 2.
31

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

1 for reconciling that employee's training and IQCS record after the
2 employee has entered on duty. This may be accomplished by providing
3 additional training/experience or by manually awarding competencies as
4 per established IQCS protocol.

6 Chainsaw Operators and Fallers

7
8 In 2014, NWCG established faller qualifications in the PMS 310-1. Agencies
9 have established additional evaluation and certification requirements:

- 10 ● **BLM/NPS-**Use of the NWCG position task books is required. The
11 requirements for final evaluators for each position are as follows:
 - 12 ○ The individual tasks required for completion of the FAL3 PTB must be
13 evaluated by a qualified FAL2 or FAL1. The Final Evaluator's
14 Verification for a FAL3 trainee must be completed by a qualified FAL2
15 or FAL1;
 - 16 ○ The individual tasks required for completion of the FAL2 PTB must be
17 evaluated by a qualified FAL2 or FAL1. The Final Evaluator's
18 Verification for a FAL2 trainee must be completed by a qualified
19 FAL1;
 - 20 ○ The final certification of all wildfire faller positions will remain the
21 responsibility of the IQCS Certifying Official.
 - 22 ○ All wildfire saw operation qualifications are maintained through the
23 IQCS system and displayed on the Incident Qualification Card.
 - 24 ■ **BLM-** The individual tasks required for completion of the FAL1 PTB
25 must be evaluated by a qualified FAL1. The Final Evaluator's
26 Verification for a FAL1 trainee must be completed by a qualified
27 FAL1 Evaluator. Each BLM State Fire Management Officer will
28 certify and maintain a list of their current FAL1 Evaluators;
 - 29 ■ **NPS-** The individual tasks required for completion of the FAL1 PTB
30 must be evaluated by a qualified FAL1. The Final Evaluator's
31 Verification for a FAL1 trainee must be completed by a qualified
32 FAL1;
- 33 ● **FS-** Use of the NWCG combined position task book for FAL1, FAL2, and
34 FAL3 is not authorized for Forest Service use. Forest Service sawyers will
35 continue to use agency specific certification processes outlined in Forest
36 Service Handbook FSH 6709.11, section 22.48. A new Forest Service
37 manual (FSM 2358) is anticipated for released in early 2015 and will
38 restructure Forest Service crosscut and chain saw policy. In the interim:
 - 39 ○ Sawyers shall not use saws outside the limits of their certification or
40 qualifications, except during formal evaluation proceedings or under
41 the immediate supervision of a higher qualified sawyer.
 - 42 ○ All sawyers must comply with FS policy and the FSFAQG requirements
43 for FAL3, FAL2, or FAL1 to operate a chainsaw or crosscut saw on a
44 wildland fire incident. Requirements include:
 - 45 ■ Possess a current first aid and CPR certification (FSH 6709.11, sec
46 52.3).

- 1 ▪ *Initially complete a Nationally Recognized Sawyer Training Course*
- 2 *(Wildland Fire Chain Saw S-212 –or- MTDC Chain Saw or*
- 3 *Crosscut Saw Training Course 0667-2805).*
- 4 ▪ *Completion of a field proficiency evaluation with appropriate saw*
- 5 *operator skill level along with restrictions (if any) noted on their*
- 6 *National Sawyer Certification Card.*
- 7 ○ *The National Sawyer Certification Card is valid for 3 years and is*
- 8 *subject to review any time prior to expiration. Minimum requirements*
- 9 *for sawyer training and field proficiency reevaluation include:*
- 10 ▪ *Completion of a knowledge refresher (classroom or field) and a field*
- 11 *proficiency evaluation equivalent to the initial evaluation.*
- 12 ▪ *Sawyer Instructors are required to be recertified by instructing at*
- 13 *least one NRSTC or refresher NRSTC every three years.*
- 14 ○ *FS sawyers may function as evaluators for partner agencies using the*
- 15 *FAL3 and FAL2 position task book.*
- 16 ○ *Fallers who are certified or recertify after October 1, 2014 will be*
- 17 *required to be certified in progression (i.e. must be FAL3 to be FAL2).*
- 18 *However if the initial evaluation is FAL2 the account manager shall*
- 19 *grant the position competency for FAL3. Those certified initially as*
- 20 *FAL1 will have position competencies for FAL2 and FAL3 granted.*
- 21 ○ *FS will accept other agency chainsaw certifications on incidents*
- 22 *occurring on FS lands provided they meet NWCG minimum standards.*
- 23 ○ *FS will accept a transferring employee’s faller qualification if it was*
- 24 *certified following the PMS 310-1 standard.*