

NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP
ANNUAL FIRELINE SAFETY REFRESHER TRAINING
STRATEGIC PLAN
2006-2010

**Prepared By The Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Fireline Safety Refresher Task Group (FSRTG), under the direction of NWCG, analyzed previous refresher training reviews and their recommendations and scoped additional refresher opportunities.

The following Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training Strategy is targeted at NWCG member agency employees holding Incident Command System qualifications requiring annual fireline safety refresher training per the 2006, PMS 310-1, Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide. Agencies may determine the need for training for positions outside those identified in the PMS 310-1.

There are two phases to this strategy. Phase I focuses on immediate implementation requirements. Phase II provides long term leadership and accountability.

In order to encourage an engaging refresher class three areas will be promulgated annually. These are the Wildland Fire Safety Training Annual Refresher (WFSTAR) website, an annual video, and experiential training. Development and maintenance of these three diverse training tools will be maintained by their current hosts. The Wildland Fire Lessons Learned Center will provide support to all three product areas. Current financial support will increase incrementally over a five year period. One position will be added to the NWCG Instructional Media Unit in Fiscal Year 2006 and a coordination position will be added to the NWCG Training Development Unit in Fiscal Year 2008.

Annual fireline safety refresher training may be completed in a manner and timeframe deemed acceptable by the agency. However, minimum core topics should be covered and are outlined in this strategy. Instructors are responsible for tailoring each class and the core topics in such a manner as to engage the course participants. In order to lead an effective refresher the lead instructor must be single resource boss qualified and unit instructors qualified at the firefighter type one level.

BACKGROUND

For several years there have been discussions and work centered on annual fireline safety refresher training. Many groups have been involved including NWCG, the Safety and Health Working Team, the Incident Operations Standards Working Team, the Training Working Team, the Federal Fire and Aviation Safety Team, a task group developed by the Federal Fire and Aviation Safety Team (FFAST), and the National Fire and Aviation Executive Board. The Bureau of Land Management Training Unit has developed an annual refresher video product since 2001 with the assistance of the NWCG Instructional Media Unit. While this product has been well received by the field, support for production has been limited. Confusion has persisted around issues such as who is required to take annual fireline refresher training, whether the production of refresher training material is a local, federal, or NWCG responsibility, and what the best types of refresher products are. In order to alleviate this confusion the IOSWT has identified those positions requiring annual refresher training in the revision of PMS 310-1, Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide, scheduled for release in January 2006. At the 92nd meeting of the NWCG it was clarified that refresher training is an NWCG

responsibility and is a priority training need. It was decided a task group should be chartered to design an organizational strategy for annual refresher training using current resources. The Fireline Safety Refresher Training Task Group (FSRTG) was chartered by NWCG on May 9, 2005 (see Appendix B).

This NWCG task group considered the recommendations originally developed by the Refresher Training Task Group and endorsed by FFAST in April 2004. As directed by NWCG, the FSRTG addressed the following bulleted items taken from 12/2/04 SHWT letter to NWCG, “Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training—Rebuilding Through NWCG”.

- Continue efforts regarding web based dissemination of information to instructors of annual safety refresher training with initiatives such as WFSTAR. (<http://www.nifc.gov/wfstar/index.htm>)
- Continue with a video training package produced on an annual basis that addresses current issues and updates in wildland fire safety.
- Develop a curriculum of experiential training such as staff rides, sand table exercises, tactical decision games and other simulations for annual refresher training.

The FSRTG also discussed other refresher training opportunities as outlined in the FFAST Refresher Training Task Group report dated March 26, 2004 and determined the three bulleted items above are the most efficient for the immediate future.

STRATEGY

This strategy will be reviewed in five years for necessary revisions. Annual reviews of the attached Action Plan (Appendix A) will occur for validation and revision as needed.

There are two phases to this strategy. Phase I focuses on immediate implementation requirements and requires NWCG to continue funding production at \$60,000 and add one position to the NWCG Instructional Media Unit. Phase II provides long term leadership and accountability by adding a coordination position to the NWCG Training Development Unit. During Phase II production costs will rise by \$5,000 annually to a total of \$75,000 and a position will be added to the NWCG Training Development Unit to coordinate all facets of Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training production including strategy review, budgeting, component coordination and prioritization, and acting as the liaison to the Training Working Team.

This strategy on annual fireline safety refresher training is targeted at those positions identified in the 2006 version of PMS 310-1, Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide, which require annual fireline safety training. Agencies which determine that other positions, such as support personnel, need some type of initial fire safety training may use some or all of the products produced under this strategy but are not constrained to this material. This will be done on an agency by agency basis.

Agencies will maintain the autonomy to determine the length of annual fireline safety refresher training courses. Likewise, the material provided for use during refresher is not

required training. However, no matter the length of the course or if provided resources are used or not, the following core topics shall be addressed at the appropriate detail to match individual course participant experience levels:

- **Entrapment Avoidance**-Use training and reference materials to study the risk management process (as identified in the Incident Response Pocket Guide) and rules of engagement (as appropriate to the participants, e.g. LCES, Standard Firefighting Orders, Eighteen Watch Out Situations, WFSA direction, Fire Management Plan priorities, etc.)
- **Current Issues**-Review and discuss identified hot topics and national emphasis topics as found on the current WFSTAR website. Review forecasts and assessments for the upcoming fire season and discuss implications for firefighter safety.
- **Fire Shelter**-Review and discuss last resort survival. Conduct hands on fire shelter inspections. Practice shelter deployments in applicable crew/module configurations and while wearing typical fireline personal protective equipment. When possible practice shelter deployments should be conducted in rough terrain and windy conditions. No live fire exercises for the purpose of fire shelter deployment training will be conducted.
- **Other Hazards and Safety Issues**-Choose additional hazard and safety subjects, which could include SAFENET, current safety alerts, site/unit specific safety issues and hazards.

DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

The crux of annual fireline safety refresher training has been ownership, development, and maintenance. At the 92nd meeting of the NWCG it was clarified that refresher training is an NWCG responsibility and is a priority training need. However, this does not require that the NWCG Training Development Unit have sole responsibility for annual fireline safety refresher training. Currently the NWCG Training Development Unit develops or revises ten to twelve courses per year. In order to avoid postponing two NWCG courses per year in the development/revision process the NWCG Training Development Unit will not initially be assigned the development or maintenance of annual fireline safety refresher training. Three entities will have responsibility for separate refresher components as outlined below.

Current resources allocated to training development are not adequate to meet the increased demands placed on the NWCG Instructional Media Unit. The NWCG Instructional Media Unit is a key contributor to both NWCG course development/revision and to the annual fireline safety refresher video. In order to avoid postponing two NWCG courses per year with the increased workload incurred by the development of an annual fireline safety refresher video, one position will be added to the NWCG Instructional Media Unit during the winter of FY06. Specifics of this addition can be found in the Resource Needs section of this document.

Cooperation among NWCG Training Development Unit, Bureau of Land Management Training Unit, the NWCG Instructional Media Unit, the Leadership Committee of the Training Working Team, the Wildland Fire Lessons Learned Center, and the Federal Fire and Aviation Safety Team is critical.

A multidimensional approach will be maintained for refresher training. This will ensure a diversity of products annually that will better meet the needs of various agency field units, the diverse geographic areas, and fire management philosophies. Organizationally this three prong approach will be:

- WFSTAR website maintained by the Federal Fire and Aviation Safety Team
- Annual video development led by the Bureau of Land Management Training Unit with support from NWCG Instructional Media Unit, NWCG Training Development Unit, and Wildland Fire Lessons Learned Center.
- Experiential training development (Tactical Decision Games and Staff Rides) led by the Leadership Committee of the Training Working Team with delivery support from the Geographic Area Training Representatives.
- Wildland Fire Lessons Learned Center Interagency Incident Review Database reports, containing learning material from recent and historical wildland fire incidents, will be used in all three areas as needed.

Therefore, an Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training Steering Committee shall be chartered under the NWCG Training Working Team with representatives from the following entities:

- Federal Fire and Aviation Safety Team (WFSTAR lead)
- TWT Leadership Committee (Experiential lead)
- BLM Training Unit (transferring to NWCG coordination lead when the position is filled) (Video lead)
- Wildland Fire Lessons Learned Center

As a minimum this Steering Committee shall meet via conference call twice yearly to determine the major emphasis areas for the upcoming refresher cycle and how to gather the most strength in implementation through a diverse array of products. Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training falls under the purview of the NWCG Training Working Team who should therefore request in their annual budget funds to cover travel expenses of any non-federal employees who are selected as a representative to the Steering Committee.

RESOURCE NEEDS

The WFSTAR website has been able to function within the resources of the FFAST and support of FFAST by the NIFC External Affairs Unit. The FFAST should be able to continue to host the WFSTAR website, with NIFC External Affairs support, in light of its connection with field representatives, its involvement on the Steering Committee, and the recognition garnered in this Strategic Plan. No additional resources are needed at this time.

The Leadership Committee of the Training Working Team has continued to develop and support the Fire Leadership Development program via their website (www.fireleadership.gov). Most products on this website are formulated by field level employees and agency support must continue in order for future growth to occur. Opportunity for development and submission of tactical decision games and staff rides currently exist as part of the website. In FY05 a detailer was brought to NIFC to coordinate Sand Table Exercise (STEX) Train the Trainer sessions. While such a detailer

would continue to be an asset this strategy is not approving any additional permanent resources at this time.

Video production funding will maintain at the Fiscal Year 2005 level of \$60,000 through Fiscal Year 2007. It will then increase in \$5,000 increments over the course of Fiscal Years 2008, 2009, and 2010 to a total of \$75,000, to cover increasing costs. While FY05 funding was granted by NFAEB, future allocations will be part of the NWCG Training Working Team’s annual budget request.

The NWCG Instructional Media Unit has lost two positions since 1988. While technology has increased tremendously, so has product demand and the skills required to operate the new technology. Based on the decrease in workforce size and the increase in workload one additional position is required in this NWCG unit to avoid a two course per year delay in the NWCG curriculum development/revision. A GS-11, permanent full time employee, will be added to the NWCG Instructional Media Unit. Their priority work will be to expedite all facets of the Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training and then overall NWCG course development.

In Fiscal Year 2008 a position will be added to the NWCG Training Development Unit. It is estimated this will be a GS-12 position. The duties will be to coordinate all facets of Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training production including strategy review, budgeting, component coordination and prioritization, and acting as the liaison to the Training Working Team.

Estimated annual costs for the five year life span of this strategy can be found in Table 1.

Table 1. Resource Needs Summary

	Phase I GS-11 Position* (*Additional Funding)	Production** (** \$60,000 previously from NFAEB but going to NWCG)	Phase II GS-12 Position* (*Additional Funding)	Total FY Funding Projection
FY06	\$79,850	\$60,000		\$139,850
FY07	\$82,500	\$60,000		\$142,500
FY08	\$85,150	\$65,000	\$95,700	\$245,850
FY09	\$87,825	\$70,000	\$98,900	\$256,725
FY10	\$90,500	\$75,000	\$102,100	\$267,600

DELIVERY

No Annual Fireline Safety Refresher product will be successful without a dedicated, experienced, and knowledgeable person leading the delivery. Traditionally there has been no level of experience required by most agencies to be a refresher training instructor. In keeping with the instructor requirements for S-130, Firefighting Training, Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training **lead instructors must at least be single resource boss qualified and unit instructors must at least be firefighter type one qualified or a subject matter expert on the material in the unit.** This requirement will ensure that an appropriate level of expertise and knowledge is available to facilitate exercises and lead discussions.

It is incumbent upon instructors to be prepared to facilitate a quality refresher that engages all students no matter their ICS qualification or experience background. No product should be produced that is simply a plug and play with no student interaction. The core topics should be addressed in such a manner that is appropriate for the audience. Classes with a wide array of experience and qualification can be an excellent opportunity for the less experienced to be mentored and for the more experienced to rethink old habits.

Appendix A. Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training Strategic Action Plan.

Strategic Goal	Strategy	Objective	Responsibility	Timeline
1. Provide an annual Fireline Safety Refresher to NWCG members that enhances firefighter safety.	1.1 Appoint an Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Steering Committee.	1.1.1 Provide yearly direction and oversight to the development of annual fireline refresher products.	NWCG	Winter 2005
	1.2 Add a permanent, full time position to the NWCG Instructional Media Unit.	1.2.1 Increase staffing in order to create a refresher video annually without compromising two other NWCG courses.	NWCG Instructional Media Unit	Winter 2005/2006
	1.3 Develop initial national emphasis items and topic areas for upcoming year's WFSTAR site and training video.	1.3.1 Give focus areas to the video development group to allow them to collect appropriate footage. 1.2.2 Provide an array of reference material for instructors via the WFSTAR website.	Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Steering Committee	April 15 th Annually
	1.4 Use the WFSTAR website to provide reference material on issues that arise and are not covered in the video.	1.4.1 Keep the videographers on track with major items without constantly shifting focus.	FFAST	February 1 st Annually
	1.5 Ensure the video is available for all geographic area fire seasons.	1.5.1 Give up to date information to geographic areas early in the first fire season of the calendar year.	BLM Training Unit NWCG Instructional Media Unit	February 1st Annually
	1.6 Develop and deliver Tactical Decision Games and Staff Rides.	1.6.1 Continually increase the type and amount of experiential training available.	Leadership Committee Geographic Area Training Representatives	Ongoing

Appendix A. Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training Strategic Action Plan
(Continued).

Strategic Goal	Strategy	Objective	Responsibility	Timeline
1. Provide an annual Fireline Safety Refresher to NWCG members that enhances firefighter safety.	1.7 Adapt each refresher class to the target audience.	1.7.1 Ensure annual fireline refresher training sessions are tailored appropriately to the attendees.	Individual annual fireline refresher training instructors	As appropriate
	1.8 Annual Action Plan review	1.8.1 Validate and revise as needed.	Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Steering Committee	April 15 th Annually
	1.9 Add a permanent, full time position to the NWCG Training Development Unit.	1.9.1 Provide leadership, coordination, and direction to refresher training development.	NWCG Training Development Unit	Winter FY08
	1.10 Review NWCG Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training Strategic Plan, 2006-2010	1.10.1 Validate and revise as needed.	NWCG Training Working Team	May 2010

National Wildfire Coordinating Group
(NWCG)

Fireline Safety Refresher Task Group Charter
(FSRTG)

April 6, 2005

BACKGROUND

For several years there have been discussions and work centered on annual fireline safety refresher training. Many groups have been involved including NWCG, the Safety and Health Working Team, the Incident Operations Standards Working Team, the Training Working Team, the Federal Fire and Aviation Safety Team, a task group developed by the FFAST, and the National Fire and Aviation Executive Board. The Bureau of Land Management Training Unit has developed an annual refresher video product since 2001 with the assistance of the NWCG Instructional Media Unit. While this product has been well received by the field, support for production has been limited. Confusion has persisted around issues such as who is required to take annual fireline refresher training, whether the production of refresher training material is a local, federal, or NWCG responsibility, and what the best types of refresher products are. In order to alleviate this confusion the IOSWT has identified those positions requiring annual refresher training in the revision of PMS 310-1, Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide, scheduled for release in January 2006. At the 92nd meeting of the NWCG it was clarified that refresher training is an NWCG responsibility and is a priority with other training needs. It was decided a task group should be chartered to design an organizational strategy for annual refresher training using current resources.

PURPOSE

This NWCG task group will consider the recommendations originally developed by the Refresher Training Task Group and endorsed by FFAST in April 2004. The task group will address the following bulleted items taken from 12/2/04 SHWT letter to NWCG, “Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training—Rebuilding Through NWCG”.

- Continue efforts regarding web based dissemination of information to instructors of annual safety refresher training with initiatives such as WFSTAR.
- Continue with a video training package produced on an annual basis that addresses current issues and updates in wildland fire safety.
- Develop a curriculum of experiential training such as staff rides, sand table exercises, tactical decision games and other simulations for annual refresher training.

OBJECTIVE

1. The Task Group will develop an annual fireline safety refresher training organizational strategy (defined below) to be adopted by NWCG for those positions identified as requiring annual refresher training in the PMS 310-1, Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide, 2006 revision.

DELIVERABLES TO THE NWCG

1. Organizational Strategy For Implementation of Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training
 - Provide status update for NWCG Spring (May) 2005 meeting.
 - Develop an annual fireline refresher training organizational strategy which defines the NWCG customer group, appropriate training products, training product development responsibilities and required resources, and annual availability date.
 - Report by NWCG Fall (October) 2005 meeting.

BUDGET

Funds are not available to cover salary, travel, per diem, or meeting room rental. It is expected that the task group will utilize conference calls and other appropriate means to accomplish this task. If it becomes necessary for the group to travel to meet, each agency is responsible to cover the costs of its participants.

MEMBERSHIP

NWCG Liaison	Larry Hamilton, BLM
Task Group Leader	Chad Fisher, NPS
IOSWT representative	Vince Mazzier, BLM
TWT representative	Don Johnson, MI DNR
FFAST representative	John Gould, BIA
LLC representative	Paula Nasiatka
Director, NAFRI	TBD upon selection per current Acting
SHWT representative	Al King, NPS

TIME ESTIMATE

Beginning date, May 2005
Ending date, November 2005

/s/: Kirk Rowdabaugh
Kirk Rowdabaugh, Chair NWCG

Date: 05/09/05

/s/: A. Chad Fisher
Chad Fisher, Task Group Leader

Date: 05/05/05