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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 310-1 may be found at <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/docs/docs.htm>

- **FS** - See *FSH 5109.17* for additional requirements.

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 Fire and Aviation Training Information Job Aid* which can be found at : http://www.blm.gov/nifc/st/en/prog/fire/training/fire_training/publications/job_aid.html
- **FWS** - *The Fire Management Handbook*.
- **FS** - *The FSH 5109.17. AD hires sponsored by the Forest Service will meet FSH 5109.17 position qualification standards.*
- **NPS** - *L380 Fireline Leadership is recommended training for single resource bosses; L-381 Incident Leadership is recommended training for RXB1.*

Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS)

The Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS) is the fire qualifications and certification record keeping system. The Responder Master Record report provided by the IQCS meets the agency requirement for maintaining fire qualification records. The system is designed to provide managers at the local, state/regional, and national levels with detailed qualification, experience, and training information needed to certify employees in wildland fire positions. The IQCS is a tool to assist managers in certification decisions. However, it does not replace the manager's responsibility to validate

1 that Employees meet all requirements for position performance based on their
2 agency standards.

3

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

13 **Certification of Non-Agency Personnel**

14 Non-agency firefighters will be certified by state or local fire departments, or
15 private training providers are 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.

19

20 **Incident Qualification Card**

21 The agency administrator (or delegate) is responsible for annual certification of
22 all agency and Administrative Determined (AD) personnel serving in wildland
23 and prescribed fire positions. Agency certification is issued annually in the form
24 of an Incident Qualification Card (formerly the Red Card) certifying the
25 individual is qualified to perform in a specified position. The Incident
26 Qualification Card must be reviewed for accuracy and signed by the agency
27 administrator or delegated official. The agency administrator, fire manager, and
28 individual are responsible for monitoring medical status, fitness, training,
29 performance, and for taking appropriate action to ensure the employee meets all
30 position performance requirements.

31

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

38

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

- 44 • **NPS** - *Certification for Area Command and Type 1 Command and General*
45 *Staff (C&GS) position task books will be done at the national office level;*
46 *Type 2 C&GS and FUM1 position task books, and any position task books*

1 *issued to park fire management officers will be certified at the regional*
2 *office level. All other position task books may be certified at the local unit*
3 *level.*
4

5 **Incident Qualifications Card Expiration Dates**

6 Red Card positions requiring Work Capacity Tests (WCT) are valid through the
7 fitness expiration date listed on the card. Incident Qualification Card positions
8 that do not require WCT for issuance are valid for 12 months from the date the
9 card was signed by a certifying official.

10

11 **Universal Training Requirements**

12 All personnel filling Incident Command System (ICS) positions on the fireline
13 must have completed:

- 14 • S-130 Firefighter Training
- 15 • S-190 Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior
- 16 • L-180 Human Factors on the Fireline
- 17 • I-100 Introduction to ICS
- 18 • *NPS - It is NPS policy that two or more assignments be accomplished after*
19 *completing a Position Task Book, and receiving certification, before an*
20 *individual begins movement to the next higher level. It is also NPS policy to*
21 *require two or more qualified assignments be accomplished in a position*
22 *before an individual may become a position performance evaluator.*
23 *Exceptions to this should be rare and well founded. The only exceptions to*
24 *this policy are unit leader positions leading to Planning Section Chief,*
25 *Logistics Section Chief, or Finance Section Chief. Subordinate unit leader*
26 *positions require a minimum of one assignment after the PTB completion*
27 *and position certification.*
- 28 • *FS - Forest Service direction is found in FSH 5109.17.*

29

30 **Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training**

31 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training is required for all positions as
32 identified in the *Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide* (NWCG 310-1)
33 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training must include the following core
34 topics

- 35 • **Avoiding Entrapments** - Use training and reference materials to study the
36 risk management process as identified in the Incident Response Pocket
37 Guide as appropriate to the participants, e.g., LCES, Standard Firefighting
38 Orders, Eighteen Watch Out Situations, Wildland Fire Situation Analysis
39 (WFSA) direction, Fire Management Plan priorities, etc.
- 40 • **Current Issues** - Review and discuss identified “hot topics” as found on the
41 current Wildland Fire Safety Training Annual Refresher (WFSTAR)
42 website. Review forecasts and assessments for the upcoming fire season and
43 discuss implications for firefighter safety.
- 44 • **Fire Shelter** - Review and discuss last resort survival including escape and
45 shelter deployment site selection. Conduct “hands-on” fire shelter

- 1 inspections. Practice shelter deployments in applicable crew/module
2 configurations. No “live fire” exercises for the purpose of fire shelter
3 deployment training will be conducted.
- 4 ● **Other Hazards and Safety Issues** - Choose additional hazard and safety
5 subjects, which may include SAFENET, current safety alerts, site/unit
6 specific safety issues and hazards.
- 7
- 8 These core topics must be sufficiently covered to ensure that personnel are
9 aware of safety concerns and procedures and can demonstrate proficiency in fire
10 shelter deployment. The minimum refresher training hour requirements for each
11 agency is identified below. Training time may be extended in order to
12 effectively complete this curriculum or to meet local training requirements.
- 13
- 14 The Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training course (RT-130) is not a self-
15 study course. Minimum requirements have been established for instructors for
16 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training. These requirements will ensure that
17 an appropriate level of expertise and knowledge is available to facilitate
18 refresher training exercises and discussions.
- 19 ● Lead instructors must be a qualified single resource boss.
 - 20 ● Unit instructors must be qualified firefighter type one (FFT1).
 - 21 ● Adjunct instructors may be utilized to provide limited instruction in
22 specialized knowledge and skills at the discretion of the lead instructor.
23 They must be experienced, proficient and knowledgeable of current issues
24 in their field of expertise.
- 25
- 26 For additional information please refer to the September 2007 *NWCG Field*
27 *Manager’s Course Guide* (PMS 901-1) at
28 <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/training/fmcg.pdf>.
- 29 ● **BLM** - 4 hours
 - 30 ● **FWS** - No minimum hourly requirement; core topics as shown above will
31 be covered.
 - 32 ● **NPS** - 8 hours
 - 33 ● **FS** - No minimum time requirement. Content dictated by National Fire
34 Program Managers.
- 35
- 36 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training will have a 12-month currency.
37 Firefighters who receive initial fire training are not required to take Annual
38 Fireline Safety Refresher Training in the same calendar year. A web site,
39 <http://www.nifc.gov/wfstar/index.htm>, titled *Wildland Fire Safety Training*
40 *Annual Refresher (WFSTAR)* is available to assist in this training.
- 41 ● **BLM** - The “Do What’s Right” training is required annual training but is
42 not a prerequisite for issuance of a Incident Qualification Card.
- 43
44
45

1 Entrapment avoidance and deployment protocols are identified in the *Incident*
2 *Response Pocket Guide (IRPG) (PMS No. 461/NFES No.1077)*. The guide
3 contains a specific “Risk Management Process” and “Last Resort Survival
4 Checklist”.

5
6 An *IRPG* will be issued to every fireline supervisor.

8 **Qualification and Certification Process**

9 Each unit with fire management responsibilities will establish an Incident
10 Qualification Card qualification and certification process. In areas cooperating
11 with other federal, state, or local agencies, an interagency qualification and
12 certification committee should include representatives from each unit. These
13 qualification and certification committees provide management oversight and
14 review of the wildland and prescribed fire positions under their jurisdiction. The
15 committee also:

- 16 • Ensures that qualifications generated by IQCS or other agency systems for
17 employees are valid by reviewing the training and experience of each
18 employee.
- 19 • Determines whether each employee possesses the personal characteristics
20 necessary to perform the wildland and prescribed fire positions in a safe and
21 efficient manner.
- 22 • Makes recommendations to the appropriate agency administrator or
23 designee who is responsible for final certification signature.
- 24 • Develops interagency training needs and sponsors courses that can be
25 offered locally.
- 26 • Ensures training nominees meet minimum requirements for attending
27 courses.

28 29 **Non-NWCG Agency Personnel Qualifications**

30 Personnel from non-NWCG agencies meeting *NWCG 310-1* prerequisites, can
31 participate in and receive certificates for successful completion of agency taught
32 courses. Agency employees can complete the Task Blocks, Evaluation Record
33 and Verification/ Certification sections of a cooperating organizations employee
34 Position Task Book. Agency employees will not initiate or complete the
35 Agency Certification sections of Position Task Book for non-agency employees.

36
37 Personnel from agencies that do not subscribe to the NWCG qualification
38 standards may be used on agency managed fires. Agency fire managers must
39 ensure these individuals are only assigned to duties commensurate with their
40 competencies agency qualifications and equipment capabilities.

41 42 **Non-NWCG Agency Personnel Use on Prescribed Fire**

43 For prescribed fires evaluated to have low complexity, the agency and its local
44 cooperators will jointly agree on qualification requirements. An agency can also
45 establish its own qualifications for higher complexity prescribed fires where the
46 resources of other agencies are not utilized. For prescribed fires which are of

1 moderate complexity or higher and on which resources of more than one agency
2 are utilized, the minimum qualifications established in *NWCG 310-1 Wildland*
3 *Fire System Qualifications Guide* are required. This guide may be found at:
4 <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/docs/docs.htm>

5

6 **Physical Fitness**

7

8 **Physical Fitness and Conditioning**

9 Agency administrators are responsible for ensuring the overall physical fitness
10 of firefighters. Employees serving in wildland fire positions that require a
11 fitness rating of arduous as a condition of employment are authorized one hour
12 of duty time each work day for physical fitness conditioning. Employees
13 serving in positions that require a fitness rating of moderate or light may be
14 authorized up to three hours per week.

15

16 Fitness conditioning periods may be identified and structured to include aerobic
17 and muscular exercises. Team sports are not authorized for fitness conditioning.
18 Chapters 7, 8, and 9 of *Fitness and Work Capacity, 2nd ed. (1997)* and the
19 FireFit Program (<http://www.nifc.gov/FireFit/index.htm>) provide excellent
20 guidance concerning training specifically for the pack test, aerobic fitness
21 programs, and muscular fitness training.

- 22 • **FS** - Forest Service direction is found in FSH 5109.17. NFFE Partnership
23 bargaining unit employees may only be required to successfully complete
24 the WCT once per year.
- 25 • **FWS** - See the *Fire Management Handbook* for specific direction.
- 26 • **NPS** - For health and fitness purposes, those who are fire-qualified at less
27 than the Arduous fitness level are not required to meet the mandatory
28 fitness program requirements of DO-57 for wildland fire management.
29 They are strongly encouraged to participate in the voluntary fitness
30 program, and must still meet physical fitness/work capacity requirements as
31 outlined in *Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide (310-1)* for positions
32 with Moderate and Light fitness requirements.

33

34 **Medical Examinations**

35 Agency administrators and supervisors are responsible for the occupational
36 health and safety of their employees performing wildland fire activities, and may
37 require employees to take a medical examination at any time.

38

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

43

44 Information on any medical records is considered confidential and must be kept
45 in the employee's medical file.

46

1 **Federal Interagency Wildland Firefighter Medical Qualification Standards**
2 **Program (IMSP)**

3 The Federal Interagency Wildland Firefighter Medical Qualification Standards
4 has been fully implemented by the DOI agencies and continues to be
5 implemented throughout the FS. Those units who have not yet implemented the
6 new standards must continue to comply with the current agency standards as
7 stated under Agency Specific Medical Examinations section below until
8 implementation of the new standards is accomplished. Additional information
9 regarding the IMSP can be obtained at http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/.

10
11 All permanent, career-seasonal, temporary, Student Career Experience Program
12 (SCEP) employees, and AD/EFF who participate in wildland fire activities
13 requiring a fitness level of arduous must participate in the IMSP at the
14 appropriate level (see Medical Examination Requirements appendix N) and
15 must be medically cleared prior to attempting the WCT.

16
17 Under the IMSP the Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ) will only be required
18 for arduous duty AD/EFF hires less than 45 years of age. If the AD/EFF
19 answers "yes" to a HSQ question and is determined to be "agency mission
20 critical" (e.g. single resource boss) an annual exam may be requested through
21 the medical standards program. The HSQ is not required prior to taking the
22 WCT at the arduous level for all other employment categories (e.g. permanent,
23 seasonal/temporary, term).

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

29
30 If for any reason, a change in a firefighter's medical status emerges
31 between yearly exams, and that change prevents the firefighter from meeting
32 any of the *Wildland Firefighter Medical Standards*, then the firefighter and
33 his/her supervisor are required to report this change to the IMSP through the
34 customer service representatives at wlfcsr@blm.gov or call 888-286-2521.
35 Upon receipt of the information, a determination regarding the firefighter's
36 status will be made e.g. pending or cleared.

37
38 **Agency Specific Medical Examinations**

39 This section applies only to those units who have not yet implemented the MSP
40 for arduous duty and for all employees and AD/EFF who participate in wildland
41 fire activities requiring a fitness level of moderate or light.

42
43 The Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ) will be utilized as a means to identify
44 individuals who may be at risk in taking the Work Capacity Test (WCT) and
45 recommend a medical examination prior to taking the WCT.

46

1 If any “Yes” answer is indicated on the HSQ, a medical examination is required
2 prior to the employee taking the WCT. If there is a known pre-existing medical
3 condition that is already being monitored under medical care (e.g., high blood
4 pressure), a medical clearance statement will be provided by the physician in
5 lieu of a medical examination prior to taking WCT.

6
7 Medical examinations will be performed utilizing the U.S. Civil Service
8 Commission Certificate of Medical Examination Form, SF-78. Stress EKGs are
9 not required as part of the medical examination and will only be approved if
10 recommended and administered by the medical examining physician. Cost for
11 exams will be borne by the home unit. If medical findings during exam require
12 further evaluation, then the cost of any further evaluation or treatment is borne
13 by the employee/applicant.

14
15 The examining physician will submit the completed SF-78 (and applicable
16 supplements) to the employee’s servicing human resources office, where it will
17 be reviewed and retained in the employee’s medical file.

- 18 • *NPS - The law enforcement medical exam for NPS rangers, who are*
19 *collateral duty wildland firefighters, will suffice for MSP clearance.*

21 **Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ)**

22 Title 5 CFR Part 339 - Medical Qualification Determinations, which provides a
23 determination of an individual’s fitness-for-duty, authorizes solicitation of this
24 information.

25
26 The approved OMB Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ) may be found at:
27 <http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/safety/wct/2006/5100-31.pdf>.

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

- 33 • *FS - See Work Capacity Test Implementation Guide, see website:*
34 *<http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/>.*

35 36 **Work Capacity Test (WCT) Administration**

37 The Work Capacity Test (WCT) is the official method of assessing wildland
38 firefighter fitness levels. General guidelines can be found in the “*Work*
39 *Capacity Tests for Wildland Firefighters, Test Administrator’s Guide*” PMS
40 307, NFES 1109.

41
42 WCT Administrators must ensure that WCT participants have been medically
43 cleared, either through Wildland Firefighter Medical Qualification Standards or
44 agency specific medical examination.

45

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

4
5 The WCT Record (see appendix M) captures information that is covered under
6 the Privacy Act and should be maintained in accordance with agency Freedom
7 of Information Act (FOIA) guidelines.

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

13
14 A Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) shall be developed and approved for each field
15 unit prior to administering the WCT. See the sample JHA found in appendix U.
16 Administer the test using the JHA/RA as a briefing guide.

17 • **BLM** - *A risk assessment shall be developed and approved for each field*
18 *unit prior to administering the WCT. An RA for the WCT can be found at:*
19 *[http://web.blm.gov/internal/wo-700/wo740/tools/RAWorksheets/](http://web.blm.gov/internal/wo-700/wo740/tools/RAWorksheets/RAWorksheet_Library.html)*
20 *RAWorksheet_Library.html*

21
22 Field units need to prepare a medical response plan (such as ICS-206 form) and
23 evaluate options for immediate medical care and transport and identify closest
24 emergency medical services. A minimum of a qualified EMT must be on site
25 during WCT administration. Based upon your specific evaluation a higher level
26 of emergency medical qualifications on scene may be warranted e.g. Paramedic.

27
28 Document using the WCT Record (see appendix M). This document must be
29 retained until the next testing. Units may also be requested to provide data from
30 these records to assist in the evaluation of the WCT process.

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

38
39 Test results must also be entered in the IQCS annually to update the fitness level
40 and date that will appear on the Incident Qualification Card. Physical fitness
41 dates entered in IQCS will reflect the date the employee passed the fitness test.

42 43 **WCT Retesting**

44 Those who do not pass the WCT will be provided another opportunity to retest.
45 Employees will have to wait at least 48 hours before retaking the WCT. If an
46 employee sustains an injury (verified by a licensed medical provider) during a

1 test, the test will not count as an attempt. Once an injured employee has been
 2 released for full duty, the employee will be given time to prepare for the test (not
 3 to exceed 4 weeks). The numbers of retesting opportunities that will be allowed
 4 include:

- 5 • Three opportunities for permanent employees required to pass a test for
 6 duties in the fire program.
- 7 • One opportunity for temporary employees required to pass a test (a second
 8 chance maybe provided at the discretion of fire management).
- 9 • *FS - The Forest Service also uses the WCT as the official method of*
 10 *assessing wildland firefighter fitness levels. The specific direction,*
 11 *Implementation Guide, Health Screen Questionnaire, and required*
 12 *processes can be found at the following web site: <http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/>.*

13

14 **WCT Categories**

15 The *NWCG Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide, 310-1* identifies fitness
 16 levels for specific positions. There are three fitness levels - Arduous, Moderate,
 17 and Light - which require an individual to demonstrate their ability to perform
 18 the fitness requirements of the position. Positions in the “no fitness level
 19 required” category are normally performed in a controlled environment, such as
 20 an incident base.

- 21 • *BLM/FWS - Law Enforcement physical fitness standard is accepted as*
 22 *equivalent to a “light” WCT work category.*

23

24

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

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

1 long hours of work, as well as some bending, stooping, or light lifting.
2 Individuals can usually govern the extent and pace of their physical activity.
3

4 **Minimum Age Requirements for Hazardous Duty Assignments on Federal** 5 **Incidents**

6 Persons under 18 years old will not perform hazardous duties during wildland
7 fire management operations on federal jurisdictions.
8

9 **Engine Modules**

10 Staffing levels and specific requirements for engine personnel may be found in
11 Chapter 14, Fire Fighting Equipment.
12

13 **Helicopter Modules**

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

17 **Smokejumpers (SMKJ)**

18 Smokejumpers provide professional and effective fire suppression, fuels
19 reduction, and fire management services to help land managers meet objectives.
20

21 **SMKJ Policy**

22 Smokejumper operations are guided by direction in the *Interagency*
23 *Smokejumper Operations Guide (ISMOG)*.
24

25 Each base will comply with smokejumper operations standards. The arduous
26 duties, specialized assignments, and operations in a variety of geographic areas
27 require smokejumpers to have uniform training, equipment, communications,
28 organization, and operating procedures.
29

30 **SMKJ Smokejumper Organization**

31 The operational unit for smokejumpers is “one load.” A load is typically 8-20
32 smokejumpers and varies as per aircraft type.
33

34 **SMKJ Coordination & Dispatch**

35 Smokejumpers are a national resource and are ordered according to geographic
36 area or national mobilization guides.
37

38 **SMKJ Communications**

39 All smokejumpers carry programmable radios and are proficient in their use and
40 programming procedures.
41

42 **SMKJ Transportation**

43 Smokejumper retrieval is accomplished by coordinating with the requesting
44 dispatch center. More detailed information can be found in the guides mentioned
45 above.
46

1 **SMKJ Safety**

2 All aviation and parachute operations will be accomplished in accordance with
3 standard operating procedures and regulations.

4 **SMKJ Training**

5 To ensure proficiency and safety, smokejumpers complete annual training that
6 covers aspects of aviation, parachuting, fire suppression tactics, administrative
7 procedures, and safety, related to the smokejumper mission and fire operations.

8 The training program for first-year smokejumpers is four weeks long.

9 Candidates are evaluated to determine:

- 10 • Level of physical fitness
- 11 • Ability to learn and perform smokejumper skills
- 12 • Ability to work as a team member
- 13 • Attitude
- 14 • Ability to think clearly and remain productive in a stressful environment

15

16 **SMKJ Qualifications**

Smokejumper Position	Target ICS Qualification
Department Managers	T2 & T1 Command & General Staff, FUMA
Spotter	ICT3, DIVS ATGS, RXB2, SOFR
Lead Smokejumper	STLD, TFLD, FOBS
Smokejumper	ICT4, CRWB, FIRB
Rookie Smokejumper	ICT5, FFT1, FEMO

17

18 **SMKJ Physical Fitness Standards**

19 The national minimum standards for smokejumpers are:

- 20 • 1.5 mile run in 11:00 minutes or less
- 21 • 45 sit-ups
- 22 • 25 pushups
- 23 • 7 pull-ups
- 24 • 110 lb. packout over 3 miles/level terrain/90 minutes
- 25 • Successful completion of the WCT at the arduous level.

26

27 **Interagency Hotshot Crews (IHC)**

28 Interagency Hotshot Crews provide an organized, mobile, and skilled hand crew
29 for all phases of wildfire suppression.

30

31 **IHC Policy**

32 IHC standards provide consistent planning, funding, organization, and
33 management of the agency IHCs. The sponsoring unit will ensure compliance
34 with the established standards. The arduous duties, specialized assignments, and
35 operations in a variety of geographic areas required of IHCs dictate that training,

1 equipment, communications, transportation, organization, and operating
2 procedures are consistent for all agency IHCs.

3

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

6 • **BLM/NPS - BLM Preparedness Review Checklist #12 (Hotshot Crew)**
7 *supersedes the checklist found in the SIHCO.*

8

9 **IHC Certification**

10 Annual certification of IHCs is required prior to being made available for
11 assignment as an IHC. For certification the crew superintendent will:

- 12 • Complete an appendix C from the *Standards for Interagency Hotshot Crew*
13 *Operations* with their local FMO and local agency administrator.
 - 14 • The extent of the preparedness review required every 12 months will be
15 at the discretion of the Fire Management Officer, and crew
16 superintendent.
- 17 • Send the completed appendix C to the local GACC.

18

19 **IHC Organization**

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

23

24 **IHC Availability Periods**

25 The Crew Superintendent is responsible to inform local supervisor and the local
26 GACC of any required changes in the crew's typing. IHCs will be available to
27 meet or exceed availability periods specified in *SIHCO 2001 (Revised 2008)*.

- 28 • **BLM - IHC crewmembers will receive 40 hours of basic or refresher**
29 *training before their first fire assignment in a fire season. Refresher*
30 *training will include, but is not limited to, crew safety, risk management,*
31 *firefighter safety, fire behavior, communications, and organization. The*
32 *final responsibility for crew availability will rest with the Superintendent's*
33 *certification to local unit management that all training is complete. The*
34 *minimum tour of availability excluding required training periods for BLM*
35 *IHCs will be 130 calendar days for crews in the lower 48 states and 90*
36 *calendar days for crews in Alaska.*
- 37 • **NPS/FS - IHCs follow the SIHCO, including minimum tours. In some**
38 *regions, tours may exceed the minimum based on preparedness and fuels*
39 *funding levels, or non-fire funding for these resources.*

40

41 **IHC Communications**

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

44

45

46

1 IHC Transportation

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

6 Other Hand Crews**8 Policy**

9 All crews must meet minimum crew standards as defined in appendix T as well
10 as any additional agency, state, or contractual requirements. Typing will be
11 identified at the local level with notification made to the local GACC.

13 Crew Types**14 • Agency Crews**

15 Agency hand crews consist of qualified agency personnel and are organized
16 on a local basis. These crews are designated as Type 2 or Type 2 IA.

17 • State Crews

18 State crews are organized under the auspices of individual states. These
19 crews may be designated as Type 1, Type 2, or Type 2 IA. These crews
20 include organized state inmate crews.

21 • Emergency Firefighter Crews (EFF)

22 These crews are usually Type 2 crews consisting of agency sponsored on
23 call personnel who meet the requirements for Type 2 IA or Type 2 as
24 defined in appendix T.

25 • Contract Crews

26 These organized crews consist of personnel trained, equipped, and certified
27 by a private contractor and must meet the contractual specifications as
28 stated in their state or national crew contracts.

29 • *FS - The FS endorses the National Minimum Standards for crews and
30 applies FSH 5109.17 for training requirements.*

32 Fire Use Modules

33 Information on fire use modules can be found at:

34 <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/pubs/pubs317/PMS-317.pdf>.

35 • *NPS - The National Park Service has Fire Use Modules. The primary
36 mission and priority of the modules is to provide skilled and mobile
37 personnel to assist with Wildland Fire Use (WFU) in the areas of planning,
38 fire behavior monitoring, ignition, and holding. Secondary priorities follow
39 in the order below:*

- 40 • Support burn unit preparation.
- 41 • Assist with fire effect plot work.
- 42 • Support mechanical hazardous fuel reduction projects.

43 • *NPS - As an interagency resource, the modules are available nationally
44 throughout the fire season. Each module is comprised of a module leader,
45 assistant leader and three to eight module members. See the Fire Use*

1 *Module Operation Guide for specifics. Modules are mobilized and*
2 *demobilized through established ordering channels through the GACCs.*

3

4 **Agency Certified Positions**

5 As a supplement to the qualifications system, certain agencies have identified
6 the additional positions of Prescribed Fire Burn Boss 3 (RXB3) - see Chapter
7 17; Engine Operator (ENOP) - see Chapter 2; and Chainsaw Operators and
8 Fallers listed below.

9

10 **Chainsaw Operators and Fallers**

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

- 14 • Agency employees who are chainsaw operators and fallers must meet the
15 standards at the arduous fitness level.
- 16 • Successful completion of S-212, including the field exercise, or those
17 portions of S-212 appropriate for Faller A duties.
- 18 • Agency administrator (or delegate) certification of qualifications after
19 verification that training is successfully completed.
- 20 • Documentation must be maintained for individuals.
- 21 • The individual tasks required for completion of the “A” Task Book and the
22 final evaluation for the “A” level saw operators must be verified or signed
23 by a qualified “B or C” level saw operator.
- 24 • The individual tasks required for completion of the “B” Task Book must be
25 evaluated by a qualified “B” or “C” level operator. The Final Evaluator
26 Verification for “B” level operators must be signed by a “C” level saw
27 operator.
- 28 • The individual tasks required for completion of the “C” Task Book must be
29 evaluated by a qualified “C” level operator. The Final Evaluator
30 Verification for “C” level operators must be signed by a state approved “C”
31 level certifier.
- 32 • Each of the states/regions will certify and maintain a list of their current “C”
33 class saw operators who they approve to be “C” class certifiers.
- 34 • The certification of “C” class certifiers will remain the responsibility of the
35 agency administrator or delegate.
- 36 • All fire related (Incident Qualification Carded) saw operation qualifications
37 are maintained through the IQCS system and will have a currency of five
38 years.
- 39 • **BLM/NPS** - *Position task book found at:*
40 *<http://www.fire.blm.gov/training/blmtrng/PDFs/Faller/PTBFallerABC.pdf>*
- 41 • **FWS** - *See the Fire Management Handbook for additional direction.*
42 *Information regarding FWS required annual chainsaw refresher can be*
43 *found at: <https://fii.fws.gov/nclogon.html>*
- 44 • **FS** - *FS direction can be found in FSH 5109.17 and FSH 6709.11.*
- 45 • **NPS** - *Exceptions to the above policy are:*

- 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.
- 4 • The individual tasks required for completion of the “C” Task Book and
5 the final evaluation for the Class “C” saw operators must be verified by
6 a region approved Class “C” Final Evaluator.
- 7 • Each of the regions will certify and maintain a list of current, qualified
8 Class “B” and “C” saw operators, approved as Class “B” or “C” Final
9 Evaluators.
- 10 • The certification of “C” class evaluators will remain the responsibility
11 of the regional agency administrator or delegate.