

National Wildfire Coordinating Group

Communication, Education, and Prevention Committee



News from the Communication, Education, and Prevention Committee May 31, 2011

Proposed Changes to Public Information Officer Qualifications

On June 1, 2011, changes in qualifications for public information officer positions will become effective to improve fire management information, efficiency, and safety. Most of the changes pertain to PIOF (Public Information Officer) and PIO2 (Public Information Officer Type 2) positions, but a requirement to attend an annual safety refresher will also affect the PIO1 (Public Information Officer Type 1) position. Below are changes and transition information for all currently qualified PIOs and trainees who have an open PIOF or PIO2 task book. The National Wildfire Coordinating Group's Operations and Workforce Development Committee (OWDC) approved these changes and the effective date coincides with the annual release of the Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide (PMS 310-1). Note that other courses may be needed to satisfy National Incident Management System or other agency requirements for PIOs. Please contact your agency for details.

Major changes on June 1, 2011 include:

- PIOF will require training in incident information and basic fire management
- Being fully qualified as a PIOF will be required before opening a PIO2 task book
- Annual fireline safety refresher training will be required for all PIO positions

Please see "Transition Guidance" below.

Changes for PIOF

	Old	New
Required Training	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• S-203 Introduction to Incident Information• S-130 Firefighter Training• S-190 Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior• I-100 Introduction to ICS• L-180 Human Factors in the Wildland Fire Service• RT-130 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher

Changes for PIO2

	Old	New
Required Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PIOF not a prerequisite for PIO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fully-qualified PIOF a prerequisite for PIO2
Required Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• S-190 Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior• S-420 Command and General Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• S-190 Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior now required for PIOF; current PIO2 trainees will still need to take S-190• S-420 Command and General Staff• RT-130 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher

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Change for PIO1

	Old	New
Required Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• S-520 Advanced Incident Management or Complex Incident Management Course	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• S-520 Advanced Incident Management or Complex Incident Management Course• RT-130 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher

Transition Guidance

PIOF trainees:

Before 6/1/2011 – All current PIOF trainees who complete their taskbook before this date will not be required to complete S-203, S-130, S-190, I-100 and L-180.

After 6/1/2011 – S-203, S-130, S-190, I-100, L-180 will become a requirement for PIOF and will have to be completed by new or current trainees before an individual is considered qualified for the PIOF position.

PIO2 trainees:

All individuals with an open PIO2 position taskbook will not be required to be qualified as PIOF.

After 6/1/2011 – Being a fully-qualified PIOF will become a prerequisite for PIO2; PIOF will have to be completed before a PIO2 position taskbook can be initiated.

Currently qualified PIOFs, PIO2s, and PIO1s:

Before 6/1/2011 – RT-130 is not required for fire assignments.

After 6/1/2011 – RT-130 will be required for PIO fire assignments.

The OWDC decided to require firefighting courses (S-130/S-190) for PIOF to provide personnel not familiar with wildland fire management valuable insight regarding wildland fire tactics, terminology and tasks. The Annual Fireline Safety Refresher (RT-130) is annual safety training that is required for all personnel who may take part in fireline activities. The OWDC felt that PIO personnel who are working on a wildfire or are asked to escort media or others to the fireline would benefit from this annual safety training.

For more information about the Communication, Education, and Prevention Committee contact your agency representative listed below or visit <http://www.nwcg.gov/branches/ppm/cepc/index.htm>.

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