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## Chapter 13 Firefighter Training and Qualifications

### Introduction

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

### Policy

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

- **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 Standards for Fire Training and Workforce Development*, available at [http://www.blm.gov/nifc/st/en/prog/fire/training/fire\\_training.html](http://www.blm.gov/nifc/st/en/prog/fire/training/fire_training.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 *RXBI*.

### Qualification and Certification Process

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

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

#### 15 16 **Non-NWCG Agency Personnel Qualifications**

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

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

#### 28 29 **Non-NWCG Agency Personnel Use on Prescribed Fire**

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

#### 35 36 **Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS)**

37  
38 The Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS) is the fire  
39 qualifications and certification record keeping system. The Responder Master  
40 Record report provided by the IQCS meets the agency requirement for  
41 maintaining fire qualification records. The system is designed to provide  
42 managers at the local, state/regional, and national levels with detailed  
43 qualification, experience, and training information needed to certify employees  
44 in wildland fire positions. The IQCS is a tool to assist managers in certification  
45 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 • **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

#### 16 **Certification of Non-Agency Personnel**

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

22

#### 23 **Incident Qualification Card**

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

29

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

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

36

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

- 42 • **NPS**- *Certification for Area Command and Type 1 Command and General*  
43 *Staff (C&GS) position task books will be done at the national office level;*  
44 *Type 2 C&GS, and any position task books issued to park fire management*  
45 *officers will be certified at the regional office level. All other position task*  
46 *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.*
- 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](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; and

- 1 • I-100 Introduction to ICS.  
2  
3 All Responders filling ICS positions must have completed:  
4 IS-700A *NIMS: An Introduction*<sup>1</sup>; and  
5 I-100 *Introduction to ICS*.  
6 Single Resource Personnel:  
7 • ICS-200 or equivalent  
8 Strike Team/Taskforce Leaders, Supervisors, and Branch Directors  
9 • IS-800B *National Response Framework, An Introduction*<sup>2</sup>; and  
10 • ICS-300 or equivalent  
11 Command and General Staff, Area Command and Emergency Managers:  
12 • IS-800B *National Response Framework, An Introduction*<sup>2</sup>; and  
13 • ICS-400 or equivalent  
14  
15 <sup>1</sup>IS-700A replaces IS-700. Either course meets the requirement.  
16 <sup>2</sup>IS-800B replaces IS-800A. Either course meets the requirement.  
17 • *FS - Forest Service direction is found in FSH 5109.17.*  
18

### 19 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training

- 20  
21 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training is required for those positions  
22 identified in the *Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide* (NWCG 310-1).  
23 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training must include the following core  
24 topics:  
25 • **Entrapment Avoidance-** Use training and reference materials to study the  
26 risk management process as identified in the Incident Response Pocket  
27 Guide as appropriate to the participants, e.g., LCES, Standard Firefighting  
28 Orders, Eighteen Watch Out Situations, Wildfire Decision Support System  
29 (WFDSS) direction, Fire Management Plan priorities, etc.;  
30 • **Current Issues-** Review and discuss identified “hot topics” as found on the  
31 current Wildland Fire Safety Training Annual Refresher (WFSTAR)  
32 website. Review forecasts and assessments for the upcoming fire season  
33 and discuss implications for firefighter safety;  
34 • **Fire Shelter-** Review and discuss last resort survival including escape and  
35 shelter deployment site selection. Conduct “hands-on” fire shelter  
36 inspections. Practice shelter deployments in applicable crew/module  
37 configurations; and  
38 • **Other Hazards and Safety Issues-** Choose additional hazard and safety  
39 subjects, which may include SAFENET, current safety alerts, site/unit  
40 specific safety issues and hazards.  
41  
42 These core topics must be sufficiently covered to ensure that personnel are  
43 aware of safety concerns and procedures and can demonstrate proficiency in fire  
44 shelter deployment. The minimum refresher training hour requirements for each

1 agency is identified below. Training time may be extended in order to  
2 effectively complete this curriculum or to meet local training requirements.

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

7  
8 The Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training course (RT-130) is not a self-  
9 study course. Minimum requirements have been established for instructors for  
10 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training. These requirements will ensure that  
11 an appropriate level of expertise and knowledge is available to facilitate  
12 refresher training exercises and discussions.

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

19  
20 For additional information please refer to the current *NWCG Field Manager's*  
21 *Course Guide* (PMS 901-1) at:

22 <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/training/fmcg.pdf>.

23  
24 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training will have a 12-month currency.  
25 Firefighters who receive initial fire training are not required to take Annual  
26 Fireline Safety Refresher Training in the same calendar year. A web site,  
27 <http://www.nifc.gov/wfstar/index.htm>, titled *Wildland Fire Safety Training*  
28 *Annual Refresher (WFSTAR)* is available to assist in this training.

29  
30 Entrapment avoidance and deployment protocols are identified in the *Incident*  
31 *Response Pocket Guide (IRPG)* (PMS No. 461/NFES No.1077). The guide  
32 contains a specific "Risk Management Process" and "Last Resort Survival  
33 Checklist".

- 34  
35 • **BLM** - The "Do What's Right" training is required annual training but is  
36 not a prerequisite for issuance of an Incident Qualification Card.

### 37 38 **Physical Fitness**

#### 39 40 **Physical Fitness and Conditioning**

41 Agency Administrators are responsible for ensuring the overall physical fitness  
42 of firefighters. Employees serving in wildland fire positions that require a  
43 fitness rating of arduous as a condition of employment are authorized one hour  
44 of duty time each work day for physical fitness conditioning. Employees  
45 serving in positions that require a fitness rating of moderate or light may be  
46 authorized up to three hours per week.

- 1 Fitness conditioning periods may be identified and structured to include aerobic  
2 and muscular exercises. Team sports are not authorized for fitness conditioning.  
3 Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 and appendices F, G, and H of *Fitness and Work*  
4 *Capacity 2009 ed.* (PMS 304-2, NFES 1596) and the FireFit Program  
5 (<http://www.nifc.gov/FireFit/index.htm>) provide excellent guidance concerning  
6 training specifically for the pack test, aerobic fitness programs, and muscular  
7 fitness training.
- 8 • **FS** - *Forest Service direction is found in FSH 5109.17. NFFE Partnership*  
9 *bargaining unit employees may only be required to successfully complete*  
10 *the WCT once per year.*
  - 11 • **NPS** - *A fitness plan is required for all NPS personnel participating in a*  
12 *fitness program (DO-57). For health and fitness purposes, those who are*  
13 *fire-qualified at less than the arduous fitness level are not required to meet*  
14 *the mandatory fitness program requirements of DO-57 for wildland fire*  
15 *management. They are strongly encouraged to participate in the voluntary*  
16 *fitness program, and must still meet physical fitness/work capacity*  
17 *requirements as outlined in the Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide*  
18 *(310-1) for positions with Moderate and Light fitness requirements.*

### 20 Medical Examinations and Work Capacity Tests

21  
22 Agency Administrators and supervisors are responsible for the occupational  
23 health and safety of their employees performing wildland fire activities, and may  
24 require employees to take a medical examination at any time.  
25 Established medical qualification programs, as stated in 5 CFR 339, provide  
26 consistent medical standards in order to safeguard the health of employees  
27 whose work may subject them or others to significant health and safety risks due  
28 to occupational or environmental exposure or demand.

29  
30 Information on any medical records is considered confidential and must be kept  
31 in the employee's medical file.

### 33 Department of Interior Wildland Firefighter Medical Standards Program 34 (DOI/MSP) - Arduous Fitness Level

35 All permanent, career-seasonal, temporary, Student Career Experience Program  
36 (SCEP) employees, and AD/EFF who participate in wildland fire activities  
37 requiring a fitness level of *arduous* must participate in the DOI-MSP at the  
38 appropriate level (see Examination Matrix on the MSP website) and must be  
39 cleared prior to attempting the WCT. Additional information regarding the  
40 DOI-MSP can be obtained at [http://www.nifc.gov/medical\\_standards/](http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/).

- 41 • **FS** - *Refer to current agency direction:*  
42 *[http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/safety/wct/wct\\_index.html](http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/safety/wct/wct_index.html)*

43  
44 If the HSQ or Annual Exam results in a status of "cleared", but the Servicing  
45 Human Resource Officer (SHRO) or FMO has a direct concern about an  
46 employee's/applicant's capacity to meet the physical or medical requirements of

1 a position, the agency may require the employee/applicant to report for a  
2 specific medical evaluation. For more information, contact your SHRO or  
3 agency Wildland Fire Safety Program Manager.

4  
5 If any “yes” answer is indicated on the HSQ, an annual exam is required prior to  
6 the employee taking the Arduous WCT. Cost of the exam will be covered at the  
7 National level.

8  
9 If an examining clinician believes diagnostic testing beyond what is required by  
10 the Wildland Firefighter Medical Standards Program is needed to determine  
11 medical clearance, then agency approval is required before the tests are  
12 conducted. If the agency approves the clinician request, or requests further  
13 testing themselves, then the agency is responsible for payment. Additional  
14 testing or treatment requested by the employee/applicant shall be at their own  
15 expense.

16  
17 Employees or applicants who fail to meet the Federal Interagency Wildland  
18 Firefighter Medical Qualification Standards as a permanent, seasonal/temporary,  
19 or term employee may not perform as an AD/EFF for arduous duty positions.

20  
21 If a Department of the Interior arduous duty wildland firefighter (WLFF)  
22 develops a change in medical status (injury or illness) between yearly medical  
23 exams or HSQs that prevents them from performing arduous duty lasting longer  
24 than three consecutive weeks, the WLFF is required to report this change to  
25 his/her supervisor who can request additional medical information and  
26 reevaluate the WLFF clearance status.

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

### 36 37 **Medical Exam Process for Light and Moderate Fitness Levels**

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

40  
41 If any “Yes” answer is indicated on the HSQ, a medical examination is required  
42 prior to the employee taking the WCT.

43  
44 Medical examinations will be performed utilizing the *Certificate of Medical*  
45 *Exam, U.S. Office of Personnel Management OF-178*. Stress EKGs are not  
46 required as part of the medical examination and will only be approved if



1 recommended and administered by the medical examining physician. Cost for  
2 exams will be borne by the home unit. If medical findings during exam require  
3 further evaluation, then the cost of any further evaluation or treatment is borne  
4 by the employee/applicant. Costs for additional tests specifically requested by  
5 the agency will be borne by the home unit.

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

7  
8 If the SHRO or FMO has a direct concern about an employee's/applicant's  
9 capacity to meet the physical or medical requirements of a position, the agency  
10 may require the employee/applicant to report for a specific medical evaluation.  
11 For more information, contact your SHRO or agency Wildland Fire Safety  
12 Program Manager.

13  
14 Standards for medical examinations using the OF-178 for light and moderate  
15 positions are available at:

16 [http://www.blm.gov/nifc/st/en/prog/fire/more/human\\_resources/forms.html](http://www.blm.gov/nifc/st/en/prog/fire/more/human_resources/forms.html)

17  
18 The examining physician will submit the completed OF-178 (and applicable  
19 supplements) to the employee's servicing human resources office, where it will  
20 be reviewed and retained in the employee's medical file.

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

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

### 30 31 **Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ)**

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

35  
36 The approved OMB Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ) may be found at:  
37 [http://www.nifc.gov/medical\\_standards/documents/NewExamProcess/5100-  
38 31.pdf](http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/documents/NewExamProcess/5100-31.pdf)

39  
40 The information on the HSQ is considered confidential and once reviewed by  
41 the test administrator to determine if the WCT can be administered, it must be  
42 kept in the employee's medical file (EMF). This file may only be viewed by  
43 Human Resource Management (HRM) or Safety personnel.

- 44 • **FS -** *See Work Capacity Tests for Wildland Fire Qualifications  
45 Implementation Guide, see website:  
46 [http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/safety/wct/wct\\_index.html](http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/safety/wct/wct_index.html)*

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

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

8  
 9 Law Enforcement physical fitness standard is accepted as equivalent to a “light”  
 10 WCT work category.

11 **Work Capacity Test Categories**

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

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

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

33 The Work Capacity Test (WCT) is the official method of assessing wildland  
 34 firefighter fitness levels. General guidelines can be found in the “*Work*  
 35 *Capacity Tests for Wildland Firefighters, Test Administrator’s Guide*” PMS  
 36 307, NFES 1109.

- 38 • **FS-** for FS direction on WCT administration, refer to “*FS Work Capacity*  
 39 *Tests for Wildland Fire Qualifications Implementation Guide*” at  
 40 [http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/safety/wct/wct\\_index.html](http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/safety/wct/wct_index.html)

- 1 WCT Administrators must ensure that WCT participants have been medically  
2 cleared, either through Wildland Firefighter Medical Qualification Standards or  
3 agency specific medical examination.  
4
- 5 WCTs are administered annually to all employees, including AD/EFF who will  
6 be serving in wildland fire positions that require a fitness level. The currency  
7 for the WCT is 12 months.
- 8 • **FS-** *Currency for WCT is 13 months.*  
9
- 10 The WCT results shall be documented on the WCT Record available online as  
11 Appendix O at [http://www.nifc.gov/policies/policies\\_main.html](http://www.nifc.gov/policies/policies_main.html). The WCT  
12 Record captures information that is covered under the Privacy Act and should be  
13 maintained in accordance with agency Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)  
14 guidelines.  
15
- 16 Administration of the WCT of non-federal firefighters is prohibited for liability  
17 reasons. Potential emergency firefighters who would be hired under Emergency  
18 Hire authority by the agency must be in AD pay status or sign an agency  
19 specific volunteer services agreement prior to taking the WCT.  
20
- 21 A Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) shall be developed and approved for each field  
22 unit prior to administrating the WCT. Administer the test using the JHA/RA as  
23 a briefing guide.
- 24 • **BLM -** *A risk assessment shall be developed and approved for each field  
25 unit prior to administering the WCT. A RA for the WCT can be found at:  
26 [http://web.blm.gov/portal/employeeresources/allemployees/safety/riskmana  
27 gment.php](http://web.blm.gov/portal/employeeresources/allemployees/safety/riskmanagement.php)*  
28
- 29 The local unit shall prepare a medical response plan (such as an ICS-206 form),  
30 evaluate options for immediate medical care and patient transport, and identify  
31 closest emergency medical services. A minimum of a qualified Medical First  
32 Responder/Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) must be on site during WCT  
33 administration. Based upon a thorough evaluation of potential medical  
34 treatment and evacuation scenarios, a higher level of on-site emergency medical  
35 qualifications and equipment may be warranted (e.g. Emergency Medical  
36 Technician (EMT) or paramedic).
- 37 It is recommended that an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) is on-site  
38 during all WCTs.
- 39 • **FS-** *an AED is required on-site during all WCTs.*  
40
- 41 Personnel taking the WCT will only complete the level of testing (Pack, Field,  
42 Walk) required by the highest fitness level identified for a position on their  
43 Incident Qualification Card. Employees shall not take the WCT unless they  
44 have an Incident Qualification Card qualification that requires it, and only at the  
45 fitness level required by that position as identified in the NWCG 310-1 or  
46 agency specific guidance or policy.

1 Treadmills are not approved for Work Capacity Testing.

2

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

- 8 • *FWS/NPS- Law Enforcement Officers are required to provide a copy of the*  
9 *medical clearance for verification and tracking purposes to the appropriate*  
10 *incident qualifications and certifications system (IQCS) account manager.*  
11 *Account managers will reflect the appropriate examination type and*  
12 *currency for the Law Enforcement Officer examinations in the physical*  
13 *examinations portion of the IQCS system.*

14

#### 15 **WCT Retesting**

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

- 23 • Three opportunities for permanent employees required to pass a test for  
24 duties in the fire program.
- 25 • One opportunity for temporary employees required to pass a test (a second  
26 chance maybe provided at the discretion of fire management).

27

#### 28 **Minimum Age Requirements for Hazardous Duty Assignments on Federal** 29 **Incidents**

30

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

33

#### 34 **Engine Modules**

35

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

38

#### 39 **Helicopter Modules**

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

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1 **Smokejumpers (SMKJ)**

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

5  
6 **SMKJ Policy**

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

9  
10 Each base will comply with smokejumper operations standards. The arduous  
11 duties, specialized assignments, and operations in a variety of geographic areas  
12 require smokejumpers to have uniform training, agency approved equipment,  
13 communications, organization, and operating procedures.

14  
15 **SMKJ Communications**

16 All smokejumpers carry programmable radios and are proficient in their use and  
17 programming procedures.

18  
19 **SMKJ Training**

20 To ensure proficiency and safety, smokejumpers complete annual training that  
21 covers aspects of aviation, parachuting, fire suppression tactics, administrative  
22 procedures, and safety related to the smokejumper mission and fire operations.  
23 The training program for first-year smokejumpers is four weeks long.  
24 Candidates are evaluated to determine:

- 25 • Level of physical fitness;
- 26 • Ability to learn and perform smokejumper skills;
- 27 • Ability to work as a team member;
- 28 • Attitude; and
- 29 • Ability to think clearly and remain productive in a stressful environment.

30  
31 **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	

32  
33 **SMKJ Physical Fitness Standards**

34 The national minimum standards for smokejumpers are:

- 35 • 1.5 mile run in 11:00 minutes or less;
- 36 • 45 sit-ups;
- 37 • 25 pushups ;

- 1 • 7 pull-ups;
  - 2 • 110 lb. packout over 3 miles/level terrain/90 minutes\*; and
  - 3 • Successful completion of the WCT at the arduous level.
- 4 \*This element is tested during Smokejumper Rookie Training.

## 6 **Interagency Hotshot Crews (IHC)**

7  
8 Interagency Hotshot Crews provide an organized, mobile, and skilled hand crew  
9 for all phases of wildfire suppression. IHCs are comprised of 18-25 firefighters  
10 and are used primarily for wildfire suppression, fuels reduction, and other fire  
11 management duties. IHC's are capable of performing self-contained initial  
12 attack suppression operations, and commonly provide incident management  
13 capability at the Type 3 or 4 levels.

### 15 **IHC Policy**

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

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

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

### 28 **IHC Certification**

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

### 32 **Annual Crew Pre-Mobilization Process**

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

### 38 **Annual IHC Readiness Review**

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

**1 IHC Organization**

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

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

**10 IHC Availability Periods**

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

**16 IHC Communications**

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

**20 IHC Transportation**

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

**25 Other Hand Crews****27 Policy**

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

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1 **MINIMUM CREW STANDARDS FOR NATIONAL MOBILIZATION**

Minimum Standards	Type 1	Type 2 with IA Capability	Type 2
<b>Fireline Capability</b>	Initial attack/can be broken up into squads, fire line 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
<b>Crew Size</b>	18-20		
<b>Leadership Qualifications</b>	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
<b>Language Requirement</b>	All senior leadership including Squad Bosses and higher must be able to read and interpret the language of the crew as well as English.		
<b>Experience</b>	80% 1 season	60% 1 season	20% 1 season
<b>Full Time Organized Crew</b>	Yes (work and train as a unit 40 hrs per week)	No	No
<b>Communications</b>	5 programmable radios	4 programmable radios	
<b>Sawyers</b>	3 agency qualified	3 agency qualified	None
<b>Training</b>	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
<b>Logistics</b>	Crew level agency purchasing authority	No purchasing authority	No purchasing authority
<b>Maximum Weight</b>	5300 lbs		
<b>Dispatch Availability</b>	Available nationally	Available nationally	Variable
<b>Production Factor</b>	1.0	.8	.8
<b>Transportation</b>	Own transportation	Transportation needed	Transportation needed
<b>Tools &amp; Equipment</b>	Fully equipped	Not equipped	Not equipped
<b>Personal Gear</b>	Arrives with: Crew First Aid kit, personal first aid kit, headlamp, 1 qt canteen, web gear, sleeping bag		
<b>PPE</b>	All standard designated fireline PPE		
<b>Certification</b>	Must be annually certified by the local host unit Agency Administrator or designee prior to being made available for assignment.	N/A	N/A

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

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**Wildland Fire Modules**

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**1 Chainsaw Operators and Fallers**

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

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

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