

Chapter 14 Firefighting Personnel

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45

Introduction

Firefighting personnel from all federal agencies, state organizations, and the private sector are used in the suppression and management of wildland fires. These resources fill all positions in the Incident Management System.

Leadership

The most essential element of successful wildland firefighting is competent and confident leadership. Leadership means providing purpose, direction, and motivation for wildland firefighters working to accomplish difficult tasks under dangerous, stressful circumstances. This concept can be applied to all individuals and not just those in a leadership role.

A Good Leader Must

- Be technically and tactically proficient
- Be responsible for your actions
- Know yourself and seek improvement
- Know your firefighters and look out for their well-being
- Set the example
- Make sound and timely decisions
- Keep your firefighters informed
- Ensure the task is understood, supervised and accomplished
- Develop a sense of responsibility in your firefighters
- Build the team
- Employ your team in accordance with its capabilities

Policy

Requirements for fire management positions are outlined in the Interagency Fire Program Management Qualifications Standards and Guide, referred to as the IFPM Standard. The supplemental Qualification Standard for professional GS-0401 Fire Management Specialist positions, approved by the Office of Personnel Management, is also included in the IFPM Standard. The Interagency Fire Program Management Qualification Standards and Guide can be found in its entirety on the IFPM website:

http://www.nifc.gov/training_qualifs/IFPM/ifpm.htm

All individuals filling positions within a fire management organization must be qualified according to agency direction found in *PMS 310-1 National Interagency Incident Management System Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualifications Guide*.

- *FS - FS5109.17 - Fire and Aviation Management Qualifications Handbook.*

1 **Minimum Age Requirements for Hazardous Duty Assignments on Federal**
2 **Incidents**

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

5
6 **Engine Modules**

7 Staffing levels and specific requirements for engine personnel may be found in
8 Chapter 15, Fire Fighting Equipment.

9
10 **Helicopter Modules**

11 Staffing levels and specific requirements for helicopter personnel may be found
12 in Chapter 17, Aviation.

13
14 **Smokejumpers**

15 Smokejumpers provide wildland fire suppression and hazardous fuels reduction
16 services to interagency land managers.

17
18 **Policy**

19 Smokejumper operations are guided by direction in the *Interagency*
20 *Smokejumper Operations Guide*.

21
22 Each base will comply with smokejumper operations standards. The arduous
23 duties, specialized assignments, and operations in a variety of geographic areas
24 require smokejumpers to have uniform training, equipment, communications,
25 organization, and operating procedures.

- 26 • **BLM** - *Smokejumper operations use the ram air (square) parachute*
27 *exclusively.*
- 28 • **FS** - *FS smokejumper operations are guided by direction in FSH 5709.14,*
29 *and the Interagency Smokejumper Operations Guide. Smokejumpers use*
30 *the round FS14 parachute system exclusively.*

31
32 **Smokejumper Organization**

33 The operational unit for smokejumpers is “one load.”

- 34 • **BLM** - *A load is typically one plane with pilot(s), one or two spotters, and*
35 *eight smokejumpers.*
- 36 • **FS** - *A load is typically 8-20 smokejumpers and varies as per aircraft type.*

37
38 Concurrence with NICC must be obtained prior to configuring smokejumpers as
39 a Type 2 IA crew.

40
41 **Operational Procedures**

42
43 **Coordination & Dispatch**

44 Smokejumpers are a national resource and are ordered according to geographic
45 area or national mobilization guides.

- 1 • **BLM** - Specific information on the coordination, dispatch, ordering, and
 2 use of BLM smokejumpers in the contiguous 48 states can be found in the
 3 BLM Boise Smokejumpers User Guide, and in the Alaska Fire Service
 4 operational procedures, policies, and guidelines. Contact the BLM
 5 smokejumpers in Boise at (208) 387-5426 or the Alaska smokejumpers in
 6 Ft. Wainwright at (907) 356-5670 for these publications.
- 7 • **FS** - FS bases have operations plans pertinent to each base.

8
 9 **Communications**

10 All smokejumpers carry programmable radios and are proficient in their use and
 11 programming procedures.

12
 13 **Transportation**

14 Smokejumper retrieval is accomplished by coordinating with the requesting
 15 dispatch center. More detailed information can be found in the guides
 16 mentioned above.

17
 18 **Safety**

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

21
 22 **Training**

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

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

33
 34 The following are ICS qualifications for smokejumpers:

35 Position	Target Recommendations
36 Overhead Cadre	ICT3, DIVS
37 Spotter	ICT3, DIVS
38 Squad Leader	STCR, ICT4
39 GS-6 Smokejumper	CRWB
40 GS-5 Smokejumper	FFT1, FFT2

41 **Physical Fitness Standards**

42 The national minimum standards for smokejumpers are:

- 43 • 1.5 mile run in 11:00 minutes or less
- 44 • 45 sit-ups in 60 seconds
- 45 • 25 pushups in 60 seconds

- 1 • 7 pull-ups
- 2 • 110 lb. packout over 3 miles/level terrain/90 minutes
- 3 • Successful completion of the WCT at the arduous level.

4

5 **Interagency Hotshot Crews**

6 Interagency Hotshot Crews (IHCs) provide an organized, mobile, and skilled
7 hand crew for all phases of wildfire suppression.

8

9 **Policy**

10 IHC standards provide consistent planning, funding, organization, and
11 management of the agency IHCs. The sponsoring unit will ensure compliance
12 with the established standards. The arduous duties, specialized assignments, and
13 operations in a variety of geographic areas required of IHCs dictate that training,
14 equipment, communications, transportation, organization, and operating
15 procedures are consistent for all agency IHCs.

16

17 As per agency policy all IHCs will be managed under the *National Interagency*
18 *Hotshot Crew Operations Guide* (NIHCOG).

- 19 • **BLM/NPS - BLM Preparedness Review Checklist #12 (Hotshot Crew)**
20 *supercedes the checklist found in the NIHCOG.*

21

22 **Certification**

23 Annual certification of IHC's is required prior to being made available for
24 assignment as an IHC. For certification the crew superintendent will:

- 25 • Submit a completed NIHCOG Appendix C to the local unit Fire
26 Management Officer for approval.
- 27 • Upon approval, the local unit Fire Management Officer will submit the
28 signed Appendix C to the State/Regional Fire Management Officer.
- 29 • Upon approval, the State/Regional Fire Management Officer will notify the
30 Geographical Coordinating Committee and NICC of the crews status.

31

32 **IHC Organization**

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

36

37 **Availability Periods**

38 All IHCs must be certified annually prior to initial assignment. Submit a
39 completed "Appendix C" from the *NIHCOG* prior to the crew being made
40 available for any incident assignment as an IHC. Any IHC not meeting all of
41 the requirements in "Appendix C" before, or during, the crew's availability
42 period will be available as an IHC(t). The Crew Superintendent is responsible to
43 inform local supervisor and the local GACC of any required changes in the
44 crew's typing.

1 IHCs will be available to meet or exceed availability periods specified in
2 *NIHCOG* 2001 (Revised 2004).

- 3 • **BLM - IHC crewmembers** will receive 40 hours of basic or refresher
4 training before their first fire assignment in a fire season. Refresher
5 training will include, but is not limited to, crew safety, risk management,
6 firefighter safety, fire behavior, communications, and organization. The
7 final responsibility for crew availability will rest with the Superintendent's
8 certification to local unit management that all training is complete.
9 The minimum tour of availability excluding required training periods for
10 BLM IHCs will be 130 calendar days for crews in the lower 48 states and
11 90 calendar days for crews in Alaska.
- 12 • **NPS/FS - IHCs** follow the *NIHCOG*, including minimum tours. In some
13 regions, tours may exceed the minimum based on preparedness and fuels
14 funding levels, or non-fire funding for these resources.

16 **Communications**

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

20 **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 in Appendix Z as well
29 as any additional agency, state, or contractual requirements. Typing will be
30 identified at the local level with notification made to the local GACC.

32 **Crew Types**

- 33 • **Agency Crews**
34 Agency hand crews consist of qualified agency personnel and are
35 organized on a local basis. These crews are designated as Type 2 or Type
36 2 IA.
- 37 • **State Crews**
38 State crews are organized under the auspices of individual states. These
39 crews may be designated as Type 1, Type 2, or Type 2 IA. These crews
40 include organized state inmate crews.
- 41 • **Emergency Firefighter Crews (EFF)**
42 These crews are usually Type 2 crews consisting of agency sponsored on
43 call personnel who meet the requirements for Type 2 IA or Type 2 as
44 defined in Appendix Z.

45

- 1 • **Contract Crews**
2 These organized crews consist of personnel trained, equipped, and certified
3 by a private contractor and must meet the contractual specifications as
4 stated in their state or national crew contracts.
5 • *FS - The FS endorses the National Minimum Standards for crews and
6 applies FSH 5109.17 for training requirements.*

7
8 **Fire Use Modules**

- 9 • *NPS - The National Park Service has Fire Use Modules. The primary
10 mission and priority of the modules is to provide skilled and mobile
11 personnel to assist with Wildland Fire Use (WFU) in the areas of
12 planning, fire behavior monitoring, ignition, and holding. Secondary
13 priorities follow in the order below:*
14 > *Support burn unit preparation.*
15 > *Assist with fire effect plot work.*
16 > *Support mechanical hazardous fuel reduction projects.*
17 • *NPS - As an interagency resource, the modules are available nationally
18 throughout the fire season. Each module is comprised of a module leader,
19 assistant leader and three to eight module members. See the Fire Use
20 Module Operation Guide for specifics. Modules are mobilized and
21 demobilized through established ordering channels through the GACCs.*

22
23 **Agency Certified Positions**

24 As a supplement to the qualifications system, certain agencies have identified
25 the additional positions of Prescribed Fire Burn Boss 3 (RXB3) – see Chapter
26 18; Engine Operator (ENOP) – see Chapter 15; and Chainsaw Operators and
27 Fallers listed below.

28
29 **Chainsaw Operators and Fallers**

30 The agencies have established the following minimum qualification and
31 certification process for Chainsaw Operators (Red Card certified as Faller A):

- 32 • Successful completion of S-212, including the field exercise, or those
33 portions of S-212 that appropriate for Faller A duties.
34 • Agency Administrator (or delegate) certification of qualifications after
35 verification that training is successfully completed.
36 • Documentation must be maintained for individuals, including annual
37 refresher training.
38 • The individual tasks required for completion of the “A” Task Book and the
39 final certification for the “A” level saw operators must be certified or
40 signed by a qualified “B or C” level saw operator.
41 • The individual tasks required for completion of the “B” Task Book must be
42 evaluated by a qualified “B” or “C” level operator. The Final Evaluator
43 Verification for “B” level operators must be signed by a “C” level saw
44 operator.

- 1 • The individual tasks required for completion of the “C” Task Book must be
2 evaluated by a qualified “C” level operator. The Final Evaluator
3 Verification for “C” level operators must be signed by a state approved
4 “C” level certifier.
- 5 • Each of the states/regions will certify and maintain a list of their current
6 “C” class saw operators who they approve to be “C” class certifiers.
- 7 • The certification of “C” class certifiers will remain the responsibility of the
8 Agency Administrator or delegate.
- 9 • All fire related (red carded) saw operation qualifications are maintained
10 through the IQCS system and will have a currency of five years.
- 11 • All chain saw operators will attend annual chain saw refresher training
12 specified and documented by the local unit.
- 13 • *FS - FS direction can be found in FSH 5109-17 and FSH 6709.11.*