

NEBRASKA FOREST SERVICE

FIRE AND AVIATION TRAINING AND QUALIFICATION PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION GUIDE



2019



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INTRODUCTION

1.1

The purpose of this guide is to set forth protocols for administering the incident training and qualifications program for Participating agencies within the state of Nebraska (state agencies, volunteer fire departments etc.) This guide identifies responsibilities, actions, procedures, and timelines for participants to ensure there is an effective incident training and qualifications system benefitting all state agencies and the fire and aviation management program.

The Forest Service recognizes its responsibility to provide a well-qualified fire management work force and to provide effective career path counseling and support to those interested or required to participate in the fire management mission. It is crucial that all participants, at the earliest possible stage in their careers, be provided with information about positions in the fire management organization and that the agency supports their pursuit of qualifications through training and experience.

1.2 Objective

The objective of the incident training and qualification program is to have a sufficient number of qualified personnel available to meet the requirements of fire and aviation management and support activities at the local, Regional and National programs, in a safe, effective, and efficient manner. This system ensures our participants meet current interagency and agency specific standards for training, experience, and physical fitness prior to being certified for wildland fire organization positions.

1.3 Policy

The National Interagency Incident Management System Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualifications Guide (**PMS 310-1**) and Forest Service Fire and Aviation Qualifications Guide (FSFAQG) provide direction for fire and aviation training and qualifications. Reference the FSH 5109.17 - Fire and Aviation Management Qualifications Handbook for further policy direction for fire and aviation training and qualifications for Forest Service employees and non-agency employees hired under the Administratively Determined (AD) pay plan.

The Forest Service requires the minimum qualification standards (MQS) contained in the "Interagency Fire Program Management Qualifications and Standard (IFPM)" for identified fire positions. Additional Forest Service fire positions are covered by the "Forest Service Fire Program Management Qualification and Standards (FSFPM)". For more information on IFPM and FSFPM reference the following website:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/management/ifpm/index.html>

2 RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1.1 Department/ Agency Officers

Department/Agency Officers are responsible for ensuring preparation of individual training and development plans based on job performance requirements, previous experience, position management considerations (needs analyses), and career interests of their employees/members. Training and development plans must ensure that the employee/members meets all prerequisite training, experience, and other qualification standards prior to certification for wildland fire management positions.

2.1.2 Employees

Department / Agency members/ employees are responsible for their own development and should seek training opportunities that will improve their performance. Employees should take the initiative to obtain information about opportunities in fire management/suppression as either a primary or collateral responsibility. Department/Agency members/Employees should become familiar with the fire management staff on their unit they are assigned to and seek counseling for incident management opportunities and pathways. In conjunction with their leaders, each department member/ agency employee is required to prepare an individual training and development plan annually that includes near term and long term career position goals and identify formal training and work experience needed to reach those goals. Fire and aviation management positions and specific ICS positions should be included in that plan.

Department members/agency Employees should periodically review their training and qualifications records and keep personal copies of all pertinent documents for their records and future use.

2.1.3 Supervisors

Supervisors/Officers will review and approve an individual training and development plan annually that includes short term and long term career position goals and identify formal training and work experience needed to reach those goals. Fire/Aviation Management positions and specific ICS positions should be included in that plan.

Supervisors will ensure that Department/ Agency standards are reflected in Individual Development Plans for personnel in those desired positions, and identify opportunities to meet the standards are provided. Supervisors will ensure that subordinates are aware of NWCG requirements for their current and target positions.

2.1.4 Fire & Aviation Management Staff

The Area FMS(Fire Management Specialist) and/or Training Manager is the subject matter expert for fire and aviation management and ICS positions' qualifications policy and procedures, including training and experience requirements. The Area FMS will ensure that counseling is provided to department's members, officers, and agency employees that seek to improve their understanding of fire management and ICS positions, and that experience and qualification records for department members and agency employees are maintained (IQS). These duties may be delegated to other agency Fire and Aviation staff and or the training manager.

2.1.5 Taskbook Committee

The Taskbook Committee's primary job will be to ensure the accuracy and consistency of taskbook completion. This will be accomplished by ensuring audits are being completed of all the training records. The taskbook committee will meet quarterly to review training records and taskbooks submitted. They will review 100% of individual training records each quarter to ensure taskbooks are being completed accurately and that the records are consistent with associated policies. The committee will have a chair that should rotate on a biannual basis. Committee members will be identified by their respected agencies. There will be at a minimum 2 reps from each Agency, NEMA, Nebraska Forest Service, Nebraska Fire Marshall's office, Nebraska Air National Guard and Nebraska volunteer fire departments.

3 TRAINING

3.1 Instructors of Incident Management Training

The Forest Service complies with the instructor training requirements for certified instructors contained within the NWCG Field Manager's Course Guide (PMS910-1).

3.2 Required training / classes

Department members/agency employees may work on any given taskbook prior to completing all classes required for that given position, however all required classes must be completed and proof of completion must be entered into that individual's IQS profile before submission of the taskbook to the taskbook review committee. Position qualification will not occur until all required prerequisite training has been completed. This is to also to include the proper level NIMS training for any given position.

3.3 Training and Experience Records

Department members/ agency Employees are responsible for providing training attendance documentation (certificates) to respective FMS/ training managers. Local course coordinators will ensure courses are entered as completed in IQS and maintain documentation of training put on locally.

4 - POSITION TASK BOOKS

4.1 Position Task Book Policy

The successful completion of all required tasks identified in the position task book (PTB) for a fire job, as determined by an evaluator(s), will be the basis for recommending certification by the Nebraska Incident Qualifications Review Committee (NIQRC).

4.1.2 Position Taskbook Initiation

Prerequisite experience and training needs can be found in the FSM 5109.17, Forest Service Fire and Aviation Qualifications Guide and PMS 310-1 to determine if a PTB should be initiated. The specific prerequisites for each incident management job may be found in Forest Service Fire and Aviation Qualifications Guide.

Taskbooks may be initiated at the local level by a Department training officer or Fire chief granted all prerequisites have been met by the recipient of the taskbook. An agency employee may also initiate taskbooks for Nebraska fire department members when a requested to do so. Fire Management Specialist (FMS) or Training manager for example.

An individual may not have more than six active position task books at one time. No more than two task books may be in a single functional area.

Initiations of PTBs will be documented in IQS, and the cover sheet of the PTB retained as hard copy documentation in the individual's IQS folder.

The trainee is responsible for the PTB until it has been completed. After completion, the PTB will be forwarded through the Department training officer or Fire Chief to the appropriate agency representative to the Nebraska Incident Qualifications Review Committee (NIQRC) will determine whether the trainee should be certified in the position by reviewing the information provided by evaluators and recommendations provided in the documentation for each experience.

Although not required, it is recommended that trainees successfully perform in a minimum of at least two assignments (on two separate incidents) in each incident management job for which a PTB is issued, under two or more qualified evaluators. Reference the PTB for instruction on types of assignments needed for specific tasks. Certification obtained with only one trainee assignment should be the exception, not the norm.

ONLY ONE EVALUATION CAN BE ON A TRAINING OR PLANNED EVENT.

WHEN OPENING A SINGLE RESOURCE TASKBOOK FOR THE FIRST TIME, ONLY ONE POSITION CAN BE ACHIEVED AT A TIME. ONCE AN INDIVIDUAL IS SINGLE RESOURCE QUALIFIED THEY CAN THEN WORK ON MULTIPLE SINGLE RESOURCE POSITIONS AT ONCE.

4.2 Position Task Book Procedures

The following process will be followed for initiation of position task books, evaluation of experience, and recommendation of certification.

Position Task Books (PTB) can be initiated prior to attendance and successful completion of required training. However, Trainees cannot become fully qualified for the position until required training has been successfully completed. A Trainee must be qualified in the prerequisite position(s) before a PTB can be initiated. Agency equivalent courses, and courses that are interchangeable as identified by the NWCG Training Working Team, may be substituted for required courses. For information on interchangeable courses and course equivalency guidelines, see the Field Manager's Course Guide, PMS 901-1, The employee must meet the physical fitness requirements for the trainee position.

4.2.2 Task Book Evaluation

Reference the PMS 310-1 for information on responsibilities of trainees, coaches, evaluators and certifiers for position task books.

4.2.3 Task Book Certification

- A PTB must be completed within three years from the time the first task is evaluated. The department member/ agency employee to whom the task book is issued is responsible to ensure the completed PTB is signed and dated as required by the instructions. As soon as all tasks are evaluated and documented, the department member/ agency employee should present the PTB to his or her Z fire training officer or chief who will review and then forward the completed PTB to the appropriate Nebraska incident qualifications committee representative. (NWCG to Nebraska forest service/ ALL HAZARD to NEMA Nebraska Emergency Management Agency)
- The **NIQRC** will make the determination for certification based on the completed task book with final evaluator's recommendation and specific knowledge of the Department member/ agency employee's experience and demonstrated capabilities. The committee recommendation will then be passed on to the jurisdictional Agency (Nebraska Forest Service for **NWCG** or Nebraska Emergency Management Agency for **ALL HAZARD**) for garment of qualification.
- A PTB is valid for 3 years from the day it is initiated. Upon documentation of the first task in the PTB, the 3-year time limit is reset from that new date. If the PTB is not completed in 3 years from the date of the PTB initiation (or first task being evaluated), the PTB will expire. A new PTB may be initiated. Prior experience documented in the expired PTB may be taken into account in completion of the new PTB at the discretion of the Certifying Official. All current qualification standards identified in the Forest Service Fire and Aviation Qualifications Guide must be complete prior to certification.
- It is recommended that at least one incident performance evaluation be attached to the PTB. At a minimum the certifying performance evaluation be attached. It is also strongly recommended that the final evaluator also include a letter of Recommendation explaining his/her decision to grant final signature to the trainee.

5 - CERTIFICATION OF QUALIFICATIONS

5.1 Position Qualifications

Training courses should be taken in ascending order of complexity based on successively higher levels of responsibility and skills in fire and aviation management. The required training identified for each position is set out in the Forest Service Fire and Aviation Qualifications Guide and PMS 310-1.

5.2 Nebraska Incident Qualifications Review Committee

The Nebraska Incident Qualification, Review and Certification Committee composed of multiple agency representatives with sufficient fire management, suppression and ALL-HAZARD experience to assess the experience, performance, qualifications, and formal training of personnel being rated. The Nebraska Incident Qualifications Review Committee (NIQRC) is established to determine certification of incident management job (ICS) qualifications of department members/ agency personnel. The committee chair is responsible to establish and convene the NIQRC quarterly. Fire department officers and or agency officials are to ensure a system is in place to prioritize training, development and currency assignments for department members/ agency employees to reach and maintain incident management job qualifications

5.3 Documentation of Qualifications

Once qualifications have been certified by the NIQRC, documentation of qualifications will be made on Form PMS-310-3, Incident Qualification Card (IQC). All department members / agency employees who are qualified for ICS positions will be issued an IQC annually. Incident Qualifications Card expiration dates:

- a. Positions requiring work capacity tests (WCT) are valid through the fitness expiration date listed on the card. If an employee is on an emergency assignment on the date their WCT/refresher expires, they will be able to complete the assignment including any extensions. Upon return to their duty station they must complete the WCT/refresher and acquire a new Incident Qualification Card prior to accepting any new assignments.
- b. Positions not requiring WCT for issuance are valid for 13 months from the date the card was signed by a certifying official.

5.3.1 Form 310-3, Qualifications Card Signing Authority

Red Card (PMS 310-3) Signing authority has been granted by the State forester to THE Wildland Fire Program Leader and Fire Management Specialists within the Nebraska Forest Service.

5.5 Transferring Qualifications

Personnel who transfer into the state of Nebraska from another states, agency, departments, and who have been certified for incident positions according to the policy of that state, agency or department will have their qualifications recognized if the qualification standard met the minimum requirements set in PMS 310-1.

6 - PHYSICAL FITNESS QUALIFICATIONS

6.1 Physical Fitness Qualifications Standard; Work Capacity Test

USDA Forest Service Work Capacity Tests for Wildland Fire Qualifications – Implementation Guide serves as direction for administration of work capacity test in the state of Nebraska.

The work capacity test (WCT) is the physical fitness qualification standard for wildland firefighters. The WCT must be taken and passed at the appropriate level for the incident management job for

which an employee is qualified through training and experience. In cases where a department member/agency employee is qualified for more than one incident management job requiring different levels of fitness, the highest fitness level will be used as the standard the department member/agency employee must test for and meet.

6.2 Work Capacity Test Administration

6.2.1 Work Capacity Test Administrator Certification

Fire Managers and training personnel should put on an annual training, as needed, to certify prospective work capacity test administrators. Discussion items to cover include: Types of Work Capacity Tests, Safety, medical emergency preparedness, course parameters, equipment, documentation and general administration of the work capacity tests. Reference Appendix A of the Work Capacity Test Administrators Guide for further guidance on WCT administration. Nebraska Forest Service recognizes Fire department chiefs as approved administrators along with Fire Management Specialists and other training staff.

6.3 Annual Fitness Testing Requirements

A successful (pass) WCT score is recognized for twelve (13) months from the date the test was last administered.

7 QUALIFICATIONS CURRENCY

7.1 Experience Requirements

Requirements for currency of experience are three years for air operations and expanded dispatch positions and five years for all other positions. Experience in positions, including similar ICS jobs, that meet currency requirements can be found for each position in The FSFAQG (FOREST SERVICE FIRE AVIATION QUALIFICATIONS GUIDE)

7.2 Re-certification of Qualifications

Reference the FSFAQG

7.3 Fire Safety Refresher

The Nebraska Forest Service training specialist or local unit shall determine the specific content of the annual Fireline refresher training being delivered each year, The national WFSTAR site provides suggested content each year that meets refresher requirements.

The content must include, but is not limited to, the following core subject areas:

1. Avoiding Entrapments. Use training and reference materials to study the risk management process as identified in the Incident Response Pocket Guide and rules of engagement as appropriate to the participants, that is, LCES, Standards Firefighting Orders, Eighteen Watch-Out Situations, Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS) direction, Fire Management Plan priorities, and so forth.
2. Current Issues. Review and discuss identified “hot topics” as found on the current Wildland Fire Safety Training Annual Refresher (WFSTAR) website. Review forecasts and assessments for the upcoming fire season and discuss implications for firefighter safety.

3. Fire Shelter. Review and discuss last resort survival. Conduct “hands-on” fire shelter inspections. Practice shelter developments in applicable crew/module configurations. Do not conduct “live fire” exercises for the purpose of fire shelter deployment training.

4. Other Hazard and Safety Issues. Choose additional hazard and safety subjects, which could include SAFENET, current safety alerts, site/unit specific safety issues and hazards.

8.4 Evaluating Performance

Completed incident performance evaluations for personnel are the key to monitoring successful training and experience development and validating qualification certification and maintenance of qualifications, as well as recognizing good performance and designing corrective measures for sub-standard performance.

All Department members/agency personnel assigned to fire duty in or out of state or beyond the jurisdiction of neighboring cooperators should obtain an incident performance evaluation from their incident supervisor. Crews and other modules will receive a single evaluation from each supervisor during multiple operational period assignments. Individual crew and module members will be provided with a written evaluation from their module leader. Performance evaluations should be obtained prior to release and demobilization from the incident and include open discussion between the incident supervisor and evaluated employee or module leader.

Trainees will attempt to get a performance evaluation on every trainee assignment. Evaluations should be attached to the PTB for each assignment. This information will help subsequent evaluators key in on specifics where the trainee needs more experience. NIQRC will use this information to aid the final certification determination.

NFS personnel who supervise firefighters from other units assigned on the Forest will provide those individuals or modules with constructive performance evaluations before they release or demobilize the resource. Local cooperator forces engaged in support of initial attack do not require evaluations unless requested.

It is the department member/ agency employee’s responsibility to request written performance evaluations from incident supervisors if that supervisor does not offer the evaluation.

Incident performance evaluations should be provided to the home-unit department Chief or officer when the department member/module returns from the assignment, reviewed for appropriate action, and placed in the Departments fire training, experience, and qualifications file.

8.5 De-Certification of Qualifications

De-certification is the process of rescinding or reducing an individual’s fire and aviation management qualifications, usually due to a lapse in experience for currency, demonstrated performance deficiencies, changed physical condition, or by personal choice of the employee. De-certification is not an adverse action. An individual who has been de-certified may be re-certified according to procedures described in the FSFAQG

De-certification of qualifications based on performance must be supported by appropriate documentation, including incident performance evaluation(s) completed by a qualified fire-job Supervisor/evaluator and discussed with the department member/agency employee.

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