

CHAPTER 40

NATIONAL INTERAGENCY INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

40 – NATIONAL INTERAGENCY INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM. All wildland fire protection agencies are organized to manage forest, brush, and grass fires within their jurisdictions. Where they are unable to manage large, complex fires with their own resources, additional or substantial outside assistance is required. To address this need, a nationwide multi-agency management system has been adopted, called the National Interagency Incident Management System (NIIMS), which provides the total systems approach necessary for response in emergency situations involving a wide range of natural or human-caused incidents.

NIIMS consists of five major subsystems, which together provide a total approach to incident management. The subsystems and their functions are as follows:

1. Incident Command System (ICS). An on-scene structure of generic management-level positions suitable to manage any incident.
2. Training. Development and delivery of training courses.
3. Qualifications and Certification. National standards for qualifications and certification for ICS positions.
4. Publications Management. Development, control, sources, and distribution of NIIMS publications provided by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG).
5. Supporting Technology. Technology and systems used to support an emergency response, such as orthophoto mapping. National Fire Danger Rating System, remote automatic weather stations, automatic lightning detection systems, infrared technology, and communications.

41 - QUALIFICATION CHARTS FOR THE INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM.

The Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide, PMS 310-1 displays the Position Qualification Flow Chart and the progression from one position to another in the system.

42 – QUALIFICATION FOR INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM POSITIONS.

This section sets out the additional requirements for skills, training and prerequisites for contractor employees for the wildland and prescribed fire positions outlined in the Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide, PMS 310-1. Qualifications for each position include the minimum acceptable levels of training, experience, physical fitness, and/or currency requirements. Job descriptions and duties for these positions are listed in the NWCG Fireline Handbook, PMS 410-1.

The Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide, PMS 310-1, defines a performance based qualification system. In this system, the primary criteria for qualification is individual performance, as observed by an evaluator using approved standards identified in a position task book for the position (Chapter 60). Qualification is based on performance on the job, physical fitness, and classroom training identified in PMS 310-1.

NWSA Instructors and Contractors must comply with the requirements specific to their Geographical Area Coordinating Group and meet or exceed appropriate NWCG prerequisite qualifications and currency requirements.

Additional training, which supports development of knowledge and skills, may be acquired in a variety of ways including on-the-job training, work experience and formal training. It is suggested that formal training be provided where applicable in order to assure knowledge and skills are acquired. Once training requirements and prerequisite experience is completed, a Position Task Book (PTB) can be issued. The successful completion of a PTB during an appropriate number of evaluation assignments is the measure of being qualified for a position.

43 – INCIDENT COMPLEXITY. The line officer or designated official shall determine the complexity of an incident and assign qualified personnel as needed. More than 95 percent of all wildland fires fall within the low complexity range and are controlled with initial attack and limited reinforcements. These fires are referred to as Type 3, 4, and 5 incidents.

The remaining 5 percent of fires, which fall into high complexity, are referred to as Type 1 and 2 incidents. Qualifications for Incident Commanders and General Staff have been established for Type 1 and 2 incidents (including Area Command) because they are normally more complex and can require resources from outside the local area.

43.1 – Guidelines for Determining Incident Complexity. The guidelines assist the line officer or designated official in determining incident complexity. The guidelines are presented in order of ascending complexity and describe the fire response with the appropriate fire organization. A Type 5 incident is the lowest level and Type 1 is the highest level of complexity. The Type 1 incident combines the multi-Division and multi-Branch classifications as described in the Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide, PMS 310-1.

44 – ANNUAL FIRE SAFETY REFRESHER TRAINING. All fireline personnel shall annually complete the minimum suggested time frame (bases on MOU's) of Annual Fire Safety Refresher training. Refresher training shall consist of fire shelter purpose and use, practice deployments, and any pertinent fire safety related topics, such as: Watch-out Situations; Look-outs, Communications, Escape Routes, and Safety Zones (LCES); and Look Up, Look Down, and Look Around. Incident Qualification Cards shall not be issued until supervisors certify that Annual Fire Safety Refresher Training (RT-130) has been completed and the person has passed the appropriate work capacity test.

Geographical Areas have different minimum required hours. It is the responsibility of each instructor to know the additional requirements of their Geographical Area Coordinating Committee.

44.1 - National Annual Fire Safety Refresher Website. This site provides a centralized resource for instructors doing refresher training to get pertinent policy guidance and identify interagency materials used throughout the nation.

www.nifc.gov/wfstar/index.htm

45 – RE-CERTIFICATION. Management evaluation of an individual's competency is key to re-certification where qualifications have expired. If currency has lapsed, the individual shall revert to the trainee level, be issued a position task book for the position, complete on-the-job training if needed, and re-qualify in a position performance assignment. By returning to the trainee level, the person re-certifying is introduced to new technology that assists with recalling position duties and responsibilities.

46 – PHYSICAL FITNESS STANDARDS. In addition to training and experience, physical fitness standards, when applicable, must be met for ICS position certification. Chapter 80 covers the Work Capacity Tests.

46.1 - Physical Fitness Requirements. Requirements for physical fitness are identified as arduous, moderate, light, and none. The definitions for these categories can be found in the Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide, PMS 310-1.

47 – DESCRIPTION OF THE PERFORMANCE BASED SYSTEM. The Wildland Fire Qualifications System PMS 310-1 is a "performance based" qualifications system. In this system the primary criteria for qualification, is individual performance as observed by an evaluator using approved standards. This system differs from previous wildland fire qualifications systems which have been "training based." Training based systems use the completion of training courses or a passing score on an examination, as a primary criteria for qualification.

A performance based system, has two advantages over a training based system:

1. Qualification is based upon real performance, as measured on the job, versus perceived performance, as measured by an examination or classroom activities.
2. Personnel who have learned skills from sources outside wildfire suppression, such as agency specific training programs or training and work in prescribed fire, structural fire, law enforcement, search and rescue, etc., may not be required to complete specific courses in order to qualify in a wildfire position.
 - a. The components of the wildland fire qualifications system are as follows:
 - (1) Position Task Book (PTB) contain all critical tasks which are required to perform the job. PTB's have been designed in a format, which will allow documentation of a trainee's ability to perform each task. Successful completion of all tasks required of the position, as determined by an evaluator, will be the basis for recommending certification.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Training requirements include completion of all required training courses prior to signing off of the PTB. Use of the suggested training courses or job aids is recommended to prepare the employees to perform in the position.

- (2) Training courses and job aids provide the specific skills and knowledge required to perform tasks as prescribed in the PTB.
- (3) NWSA Certification is issued in the form of an incident qualification card certifying that the individual is qualified to perform in a specified position.

b. Responsibilities

The contractor is responsible for selecting trainees, proper use of PTB's, and certification of trainees. See Chapter 60 of this manual and Appendix A of PMS 310-1 for further information.