

## **CHAPTER 30 QUALIFICATIONS AND CERTIFICATION**

**30** - This chapter sets out the interagency requirements and additional National Wildlife Suppression Association requirements for the wildland fire management positions outlined by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) in the "Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide" PMS 310-1, June 2009, the Field Manger's Course Guide PMS 901-1, June 2009 and the "Course Coordinator Guide", PMS-907 October 2006.

**31- CERTIFICATION PROCESS.** The Training Coordinator and/or a review committee made up of two Lead Instructors will do the screening of potential new instructors. The instructor candidates who meet the NWCG requirements, NWCG Geographical Area requirements, and NWSA requirements will be approved for certification of the courses they are qualified for. Geographical Areas that do not have an MOU with NWSA will follow the directions outlined in the February 1994 NWCG memo titled "Training, Qualifications and Certification," (Appendix A).

For those individuals not meeting the certification criteria, a letter will be sent by the Training Coordinator to the individual with an explanation of why they did not receive certification at this time. Instructor Certification is a privilege, not a right.

It is the responsibility of the individual applying for Instructor Certification to provide the NWSA Training Coordinator with documentation that is complete and accurate. It is not the responsibility of NWSA to gather this documentation for an individual. If you don't have the required documents and training certificates, please don't apply until you do.

**32 – NWCG INSTRUCTOR LEVELS and REQUIREMENTS.** NWCG publication PMS 907, Course Coordinators Guide has established the following levels and requirements for government agencies.

### **Training Program:**

The objective of NWSA is to provide wildland fire suppression resources that meet or exceed all training, experience, and physical fitness standards identified in the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG), Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide (PMS 310-1).

In February 1994 NWCG issued a position paper on Training Qualifications and Certification for Non-NWCG Entities. This NWCG position paper provided guidance to member agencies, private sector contractors, and educational institutions in order to establish and maintain similar standards within legal and contractual constraints.

Two important NWCG recommendations were the Memorandums of Understanding with the contract associations and certification of private sector instructors.

NWSA has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Southwest region U.S. Forest Service and Pacific Northwest Wildfire Coordinating Group. The Northern Rockies Coordinating Group has MOU's with individual training providers. These agreements formalize training and establish standards between NWCG Members and recognized contractor associations.

NWSA follows the standards established in the NWCG Course Coordinator's Guide (PMS 907) and the Field Manager's Course Guide (PMS 901-1) for certification of instructors. The NWCG has established the following general instructor levels:

- Lead Instructors
- Unit Instructors
- Adjunct Instructors

### **Lead Instructors**

- Lead Instructors must have sufficient experience in presenting all units of the course to be capable of last-minute substitution for unit instructors. It is recognized that exceptions may occur where courses are of such a technical nature that no one person may be technically competent to instruct all units.
- Lead Instructors are required to have 32 hours of instructor training (Facilitative Instructor, M-410 or equivalent course).
- Must be position qualified at the next higher job level of the course they are teaching.
- In addition the person must have five years of teaching experience, and quality fire experience, documented by individual Incident Performance Ratings.
- Lead Instructors can teach the 100 and 200 level courses, and some are qualified to teach 300-level and higher courses. Lead Instructors are certified for individual courses based on requirements in the Field Manager's Course Guide.

### **Unit Instructors**

- Unit Instructors must be experienced in the lesson content they are presenting.
- Unit Instructors can teach / assist the Lead Instructors with 100 and 200-level courses. When teaching units of 200 level courses, instructors should have 32 hours of instructor training (M-410).

### **Adjunct Instructors**

- Adjunct Instructors may be utilized to provide limited instruction in specialized knowledge and skills at the discretion of the Lead Instructor. They must be experienced, proficient, and knowledgeable of current issues in their field of expertise.
- Adjunct Instructors or specialist in a specific field or have not met the currency requirements because they have not been on a wildfire incident in the last five years. Most of the NWSA Adjunct Instructors have years of fire experience and teaching experience in fire suppression, fire behavior and the Incident Command System (ICS).

### **Duties of Lead Instructors:**

- Lead Instructors must attend annual training and updates to stay current.
- Lead Instructors must notify the Training Coordinator of class time and location in advance of training.
- Lead Instructors must use the NWSA data base to document all persons trained.
- Formal records will be kept on all individuals trained. Fire records and training records should be kept up to date by the company or contractor.
- All instructors are required to sign the Code of Ethics for Instructors.

### **Training Coordinator:**

- The Training Coordinator is responsible for certifying instructors and compiling the annual list of current instructors.
- Assist NWSA members with training issues, and advise members of changes in the qualification system.
- Coordinate and teach NWSA sponsored courses.
- Monitor the quality of the training program.
- Maintain a professional relationship with Agency representatives. Stay current on the latest policy changes and other events that will affect the association and the NWSA members.
- A major emphasis item that is part of all training is promoting safety and a passion that the safe way to perform a task is the only way.
- Training Coordinator reserves the right to attend any and all training given by NWSA Instructors.
- The Training Coordinator is supported by a Training Committee of six instructors, elected by the NWSA instructors at the Annual Meeting.

### **Carding System and Data Base of NWSA:**

- Complementing the training program is a Data Base and Incident Qualification Card System.
- Incident Qualification Cards are issued yearly, with a photo ID, employee number, incident qualifications, additional skills, physical fitness rating, incident position needs, and years of experience. Signed by a Lead Instructor and company representative with company name.
- Instructor Records: Database must, as a minimum, contain fields that document Instructor Qualifications and teaching history.
- Firefighter Records: Database must, as a minimum, contain fields that document firefighters Qualifications, Training, Experience, Task Books and Fitness Level
- Instructors are responsible for Data Base input and the proper issuance of the Incident Qualifications Cards.
- All data entries must be paid for when entered.
- Information is confidential.

### **Data Entry Fees for 2010:**

- Carded Classes - Members: \$10.00/ person.
- Carded Classes - Non Members: \$30.00/ person
- Non Carded Classes - \$5.00/person
- Large groups (100 or more) such as National Guard Training should contact Executive Director for price information.
- Government Agencies through the Data Base Coordinator, can **only** access a firefighters, name, qualifications and employer.

33 - NWSA INSTRUCTOR REQUIREMENTS. The February 1994 NWCG position paper (Appendix A) on Training, Qualifications and Certification for non-NWCG entities provided an opportunity for contract associations to certify their employee's qualifications. NWSA has adopted the following requirements for certifying Lead, Unit and Adjunct Instructors.

## **BECOMING AN NWSA INSTRUCTOR**

### **Process for becoming an Instructor for the National Wildfire Suppression Association**

The Training Coordinator and/or a review committee will do the evaluation of new instructors and the upgrading of current instructors.

It is the responsibility of the individual applying for instructor certification to provide documentation that is complete and accurate. The Training Coordinator is not responsible for gathering documentation on an individual. If you do not have the required documents and training certificates, please do not apply until you have a complete package.

Lead Instructors must have sufficient experience in presenting all units of the course. It is recognized that exceptions may occur where courses are of such a technical nature that no one person may be technically competent to instruct all units. They must be positioned qualified at the next level.

Unit Instructors must be experienced in the lessons they are teaching. They must be positioned qualified at the job level to which the course is targeted.

1. In order to apply for instructor certification you need to be a member of NWSA.

Membership application, dues, certification fee and other information can be found on the NWSA web site: [www.nwsa.us](http://www.nwsa.us). If you are an employee of a member company have the company owner submit a letter verifying your employment.

2. You are required by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) to meet Currency Requirements. A qualified instructor means the instructor meets the position currency requirements as described in the NWCG's Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide, PMS 310-1 and the Field Manager's Course Guide (FMCG), PMS 901-1. This document can be accessed at <http://www.nwcg.gov>
3. Submit a copy of your most recent Incident Qualification Card and any Incident Performance Ratings you received in the last 5 years.
4. Submit copies of certificates for NWCG courses you have taken and other certificates that relate to specific related subjects such as a manufactures course in pump repair or your chain saw certification level.
5. Lead Instructors must have 5 years of documented performance as an instructor. Unit instructors must have documentation of their instructor capabilities. Submit evaluations from Lead Instructors, student evaluation forms, letters of reference from people in a position to evaluate your skills such as teachers or immediate supervisors.
6. Review the FMCG, PMS 901-1 for each course you plan to teach and provide documentation that meets the instructor requirements for that course. This document can be accessed at: <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/pubs/pubs.htm>

7. Complete the Instructors Information Sheet and the Code of Ethics for Instructors found on pages 30-8, 9 and 10.
8. All Lead Instructors are required to have the 32 hours Facilitative Instructor Course: M-410 or equivalent. Equivalency courses are classes that have been determined by evaluators to be equivalent to courses identified in the NWCG approved curriculum. NFPA Fire Instructor 1 course, a State Teaching certificate, or a Bachelor Degree in Education would be considered equivalent.
9. Copies of other useful documents that may be required include: Position Task Books, Wildfire History or Summary Record, Incident Qualification System Persons Master Record.

10. A resume of your qualifications, which should include:

**a. Personal Data**

Full legal name, present address and phone number.

**b. Education**

High School: \_\_\_\_\_ Graduated? Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Location:\_\_\_\_\_

College/Univ.: \_\_\_\_\_ Graduated? Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Degree (s):\_\_\_\_\_

Other (specify type) \_\_\_\_\_ Graduated? Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Certificate (s):\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Graduated? Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Certificate (s):\_\_

**c. Work Experience**

List below all present and previous employment, starting with the most recent.

Company name: \_\_\_\_\_ From (mo/yr):\_\_\_\_ Type of work\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ To (mo/yr):\_\_\_\_ Name of Supervisor\_\_\_\_\_

Reason you left: \_\_\_\_\_

Follow same format for all employment.

May we contact the employers above? Yes \_\_ No \_\_

**d. Other Organizations**

List only organizations that pertain to fire fighting or resource management such as a Rural Fire Department volunteer, Society of American Foresters, County Search & Rescue, etc.

11. In your cover letter please add the following statement: I certify that all documents sent are true and complete, and all training courses have been NWCG certified. NWCG certified courses must meet the guidelines established in the FMCG.
12. If you are joining as a new member, complete the application and mail with a check, for the membership fee to Debbie Miley, NWSA Executive Secretary.

13. Submit a complete training package with a check for the one time \$150.00 certification fee made out to NWSA to Stan Kunzman, NWSA Training Coordinator.
14. There will be an Annual \$200 Renewal fee charged on every January 1 to retain your Certification through NWSA. You may opt to become a voting member of NWSA by paying the \$200 Voting Membership in addition to the renewal fee but it is not required.

Stan Kunzman  
NWSA Training Coordinator  
*21683 Paloma Dr*  
Bend, OR 97701  
541-389-3526  
kunzmansw@aol.com  
February 2010

## CODE of ETHICS

### For Instructors of the National Wildfire Suppression Association

#### **Preamble**

Wildland fire fighting agencies have relied heavily on the private sector to supply firefighters to suppress fires and assist with Department of Homeland Security activities for national security. More than half of the firefighters in the US are employees of private contractors that bid their services to the agencies responsible for protection.

The wildland agencies require the contractors to train and certify their people to the standards established in the “Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide” (PMS 310-1). This guide was developed by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) to establish minimum standards for both agency and contract firefighters. Additional requirements for certification for contract firefighters can be found in geographical area Memorandums of Understanding (MOU and agency contracts.

NWCG has also established instructor levels and requirements. Course coordinators and instructors are the cornerstone for developing qualified personnel. The NWSA Instructor, in their roles as fire suppression experts, seek to not only teach the required courses but instill a sense of safety awareness both on and off the fire line to all trainees.

The purpose of this **Code of Ethics** is to inspire, guide, and provide standards by which to judge conduct of NWSA Instructors in their professional teaching lives. Compliance with the code demonstrates members respect for the trainees, their safety awareness and mutual respect for all firefighters. On joining NWSA and becoming a certified instructor, a person assumes a special responsibility to the firefighting community by promising to uphold and abide by the following:

#### **Principles and Pledges**

- Shall treat all students with respect and in a professional matter.
- Shall not unfairly exclude any student from participation in any curriculum on the basis of age, race, color, sex, religion, national origin, martial status, or sexual orientation.
- Shall not misrepresent his/her professional qualifications.
- Shall not knowingly make false or malicious statements about a colleague.
- Shall not accept any gratuity, gift, or favor that might impair or appear to influence professional decisions or actions.





**The National Wildfire Suppression Association**  
*preserving and protecting our environment*

---

**NWSA Certified Instructor Informational Data**

Please print all information below, except for legal signature.

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Legal Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please put a check next to your instructor status:

Company Instructor Only \_\_\_\_\_

Company Instructor & Other Contractors \_\_\_\_\_

Independent Instructor \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_