



PRESCOTT NATIONAL FOREST

Forest Incident Qualifications, Certification and Training Guide

(August 2019)

Forest Fire Qualifications Review Committee (FQRC)

Forest Fuels, Fire, & Aviation Program Staff Officer
(Certifying Official)

Deputy Forest Fire Staff/Forest Aviation Officer
(Alternate Certifying Official)

Line Officer
(1 calendar-year term position)

FMO, East Zone

FMO, West Zone

Forest Fire Training & Development Coordinator

Forest IQCS Account Manager

Reference Box/Pinyon for the most current version of this guide and associated documents.

Pinyon <https://usfs.app.box.com/folder/83984483892>

Prescott National Forest

Forest Incident Qualifications, Certification, and Training Guide

Documents Governing Qualifications, Certification, and Training: The Prescott NF will operate within the direction set forth in the most current versions of the FSH 5109.17 - *Fire and Aviation Management Qualifications Handbook*; PMS 310-1 *National Wildfire Coordinating Group Wildland Fire Qualification Systems Guide*; *Forest Service Fire & Aviation Qualifications Guide*; and the *Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations*.

I. Forest Fire Qualifications Review Committee

Mission: The Forest Fire Qualifications Review Committee (FQRC) on the Prescott NF is charged with reviewing qualifications and performance of incident qualified personnel and making recommendations to the Certifying Official. The committee's intent through recommendations is to promote superior achievement and hold high expectations of a well-qualified and motivated incident management workforce with a great depth in experience.

Values: The Prescott National Forest FQRC will adhere to and promote the following Leadership Values.

Duty - The FQRC has a duty to:

- Promote proficiency in the job, technically and as leaders.
- Develop future leaders and provide avenues for qualification development.
- Provide honest evaluation, feedback, and use sound judgment regarding qualifications and performance.
- Maintain situational awareness regarding Forest and national needs relative to our employees' and the Forest's needs among qualifications.

Respect - The FQRC will:

- Know and understand the abilities, expectations, and desires of our employees and managers.
- Put no employee in the position of trying to function in a qualification beyond his or her limit.

Integrity - The FQRC will:

- Exercise discretion and make judgments objectively.
- Provide options for employees to dictate their own abilities and limitations.
- Know the strengths and weaknesses within our organization and respond appropriately through development, coaching, and mentoring.
- Maintain a consistent approach and remain accountable for recommendations and review.

Committee Membership: The Prescott National Forest's FQRC is required by agency direction and its membership will follow at a minimum, the requirements in FSH 5109.17 (Fire Staff, Line Officer, and IQCS Manager).

- The Forest Supervisor and/or Fire Staff Officer may elect to host more members than the minimum direction.
- Additional subject matter experts may be called upon as necessary.
- The Forest Fire Training & Development Coordinator will administer and coordinate FQRC meetings and business.
- When a committee member's qualifications and/or certification are under review by the FQRC, that member will abstain from committee discussion.

Meeting Schedule:

- The FQRC is scheduled to meet the second Tuesday of each month. As necessary, effort will be made to reschedule any missed meetings as soon as possible.
- If insufficient workload exists for a regularly scheduled meeting, the meeting may be cancelled at the discretion of the Certifying Official. Any work unattended by meeting cancellation may be deferred to the next month's meeting or the Certifying Official may opt for a virtual meeting. See below.
- In an effort to avoid unnecessary delays in reviewing employee Position Task Book (PTB) certifications or initiations, at the discretion of the Certifying Official, the FQRC may elect to hold "virtual" meetings via Pinyon folder access, email, or phone. Virtual meetings will be the exception, not the rule: opportunity to carry business to the next scheduled in-person meeting will be assessed and desired.
- If sufficient membership is not available for meetings, business may or may not continue (or reschedule) at the discretion of the Certifying Official. While complete committee participation is desired, neither a majority nor quorum is required for FQRC business and Certifying Official decisions.

FQRC Guide Revision & Approval: This guide will be reviewed and updated as necessary through committee input and participation. At a minimum the guide will be reviewed annually by the Fire Staff Officer and Deputy Fire Staff Officer.

Concurrence & Recommendations:

- The goal of discussions and reviews by the FQRC is consensus on recommendations.
- The Certifying Official has the authority to exercise discretion based on objective judgment and experience, in determining certification.

Certification and Decertification of Qualifications: The FQRC's role in the certification of fire qualifications is that of an advisory and review committee. Under the guidance of FSH 5109.17 and the FQRC PNF Forest Incident Qualifications, Certification, and Training Guide, the committee will review performance and evaluations of all trainees for the quality of assignments and the meeting of all requirements set forth within these documents. The committee will make recommendations for certification based on the required and recommended criteria as well as based on a collective professional judgment.

The role of the FQRC in decertification considerations is much the same as the committee's role in the certification process. In these instances, the committee will make recommendations and/or provide counsel to the requesting party (Agency

Administrator, Fire Staff, Line Officer, or supervisor) based on the individuals performance and other criteria set forth in FSH 5109.17. Again, collective professional judgment as well as specific circumstances will drive the FQRC's advice on decertification.

The FQRC has no role in disciplinary or adverse actions that may be related to fire qualification decertification. The FQRC will limit its involvement in possible disciplinary action to the direction set forth in the FSH 5109.17 and to the committee's role in reviewing fire qualification performance and ability.

Committee Role in Recommendations for Missing Records: The FQRC may play a role in maintaining and reviewing some records with missing documents as laid out in the missing qualification records process in the FSH 5109.17. The committee may be called upon to make recommendations or review specific situations and advise the Certifying Official in discretionary decisions. However, the committee's contributions and suggestions should be based on the following guidelines.

- The committee must be convinced that the individual and his or her supervisor has exhausted all options to rectify the situation as laid out in the FSH 5109.17.
- While the committee and the Certifying Official will make every attempt possible to maintain consistency in the methods leading to a discretionary decision, each individual case of lost documentation and qualification review will need to be treated as a separate and distinct case. The individual with the missing documentation and his or her performance history and ability to maintain the qualification will be as distinct as the circumstances themselves.
- There must be some knowledge of and familiarity with the individual's abilities, performance, and training history within the committee before this discretionary recommendation can be made.
- The FQRC will exercise good judgment and proceed with caution when performing this discretionary role.
- Documentation of the situation and request of the review should be provided to the committee and the Certifying Official, from the individual in question.
- Documentation of the recommendation from the committee and the decision in the missing records must be included in the individual's official IQCS File.

Position Task Book Administration: The FQRC, Fire Managers, and other supervisors will adhere to the direction and policy found in FSH 5109.17 as well as the guidelines found here in this guide. The individual owner of the PTB and his or her immediate supervisor are responsible to ensure that all policy and protocol is adhered to and that the PTB is complete and correct before submitting it to the committee. The committee's role will be to review each consideration for initiation or certification and provide recommendations to the Certifying Official based on professional judgment, personal knowledge, and PTB Evaluation Criteria found here in this guide.

General Guidance

- ✚ ICT5/FFT1, Single Resource Boss PTBs, and other PTBs covering multiple positions will be issued and certified separately. The PMS-310-1 allows trainees

to complete common tasks in these PTBs only once. However, trainees are encouraged to treat each assignment and task, common and otherwise in these PTBs as a new opportunity to demonstrate proficiency. The FQRC and Certifying Official may question competency if common tasks are completed only once within an assignment where typical complexities associated with fireline leadership are absent.

- ✚ To ensure trainees and trainers are not subjected to unnecessary challenges in success, initiations of FFT1 PTBs for employees with relatively little prior FFT2 experience (i.e. 1 season; few assignments; etc.) may be denied. If such PTBs are initiated with little prior experience, the FQRC and Certifying Official will ensure rigorous review and assurance of quality assignments and experience at certification of such PTBs/employees. Similar decisions may be made for other PTB initiations.
- ✚ It is strongly encouraged that all Public Information Officers (PIO1, PIO2, POIF) meet the Non-Escorted Visits to the Fireline requirements found in the Red Book (Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations), including successful completion of the "light" WCT.
- ✚ The PNF will utilize the NWCG Prescribed Fire Burn Boss Type III (RxB3) PTB for employees who intend to lead pile burning projects and who are not already qualified at the RxB2 level.
- ✚ The FQRC and/or the Certifying Official will require completion of position-required training prior to initiation of a PTB/trainee status in situations where a large number of or critical courses are required and a lack of training may challenge the trainee and trainer to successfully learn and/or mentor. For example: prior to entering into a Single Resource Boss trainee position (initiating a PTB), employees will be required to complete S-290 at a minimum; and prior to entering into an RxB2 trainee position (initiating a PTB), employees will be required to complete Rx-301 and Rx-341 at a minimum. This intended to avoid subjecting the trainee and trainer to situations where a great deficit in some basic or supporting information of the trainee position will impede a quality assignment and/or success in a learning opportunity.
- ✚ Requests for Technical Specialist (THSP) qualifications to be carried in IQCS and ROSS will be made to the Fire Staff Officer or Deputy Fire Staff Officer in writing (email sufficient). Evaluation and approval (written justification) will be done at this level prior to entry of the THSP into the system.
- ✚ Back-dated assignment evaluations in PTBs, prior to the initiation of the PTB will not be accepted. It is the employee's and supervisor's responsibility to assure all criteria and PTB initiation is done prior to an assignment.
- ✚ The Certifying Official will not accept on-line versions of S-130/S-190 and S-290 as qualified training. Exceptions will only be considered in cases where such courses were completed well ahead of the employee's current position on the Prescott NF and current competence is well demonstrated. These courses are held in high regard and with great importance as a foundation to all operational qualifications. The Certifying Official is unwilling to risk lost opportunities for student-cadre interaction and opportunities for clarifying difficult material not available in a unilaterally delivered and scripted curriculum on-line.

- ✚ Upon completion of a qualification, individuals are expected to demonstrate proficiency as qualified before initiating the next level of qualification PTB within the same functional area; i.e. a TFLD must have satisfactory experience as a qualified TFLD prior to initiating a DIVS PTB. The goal is to avoid missed opportunities for individual demonstration of performing a skill set and being caught in a “perpetual trainee” mode without ever functioning as fully qualified.

All initiations and certifications of PTBs and Incident Qualification Cards are limited to the Certifying Official or the Alternate Certifying Official. It is important that supervisors and trainees understand this process and review the process described in the [Forest Service Fire and Aviation Qualifications Guide](#); the [FSH 5109.17 - Fire and Aviation Management Qualifications Handbook](#); and the [PMS 310-1 National Wildfire Coordinating Group Wildland Fire Qualification Systems Guide](#). All PTBs also contain a description of the process for completing the evaluations within a PTB. The following step-by-step process covers the entire Prescott NF PTB administration process from initiation to final certification.

1. **PTB Initiation Request:** Individuals are required to complete the Prescott NF PTB Request [Form](#) and attach it to the cover of the latest version of the [NWCG PTB](#) or [Agency Specific PTB](#) for which they wish to initiate. The Zone FMO’s, Deputy Fire Staff Officer, and Fire Staff Officer are responsible for forwarding the PTB request to the Forest IQCS Account Manager for a qualifications check a minimum of 4 days prior to the scheduled FQRC meeting. The Zone FMO’s, Deputy Fire Staff Officer, and Fire Staff Officer are the only ones who can forward PTBs for initiation to the FQRC. Initiation of a PTB during an incident/assignment is not an acceptable practice and will rarely be considered only under extenuating circumstances. It is important to note that prior to initiating a PTB, individuals must have successfully performed in a qualified capacity at the prerequisite level. An individual may not have more than six PTBs open at one time. No more than two of the PTBs may be in a single functional area. A PTB must be completed within three years of the initiation date or the first experience record. After that, a new PTB must be initiated (previous experience may be considered).

If an initiation request is denied, an explanation will be documented on a decision record form. That form will be maintained in the individual’s IQCS folder. In addition, the employee will be contacted with the explanation as follows:

- Fire Center, militia, & AD employees: Fire Staff Officer or Deputy Fire Staff
- East Zone employees: East Zone FMO
- West Zone Employees: West Zone FMO

PTB Administration: Once a PTB has been initiated, the Forest IQCS Account Manager will enter the information into IQCS. A copy of the PTB and PTB Request Form will be filed in the employee’s IQCS File and the original PTB and PTB Request Form will be sent back to the individual to begin training.

A confirmation of initiation will be sent by email by the Training Officer to each individual as soon as possible following the FQRC meeting in which the initiation occurred.

2. **PTB Evaluation Criteria:** The goal with establishing evaluation criteria is to ensure greater opportunities for quality assignments, diversity in evaluators, and establish a broader and deeper experience base for our incident qualified employees. Such a goal benefits the employee, the Forest, and the Agency. Individual adjustments and determinations may be made as the committee and the Certifying Official review trainee evaluations, assignment history and numbers, experience, and evaluations.
 - Individual Performance Ratings ([ICS 225 pdf](#) or [ICS 225 MS Word](#)) are **required** for each assignment and/or evaluator. This is Forest Service policy.
 - As a general rule of thumb, three quality assignments are recommended. Factors defining "quality" include complexity, duration, location, variety of resources, and fuel type to name a few. Positions directly relating to personal safety, operational control and/or leadership will be looked at with a higher degree of scrutiny.
 - Multiple evaluators are recommended.
 - Assignments away from your assigned Unit and Module are recommended.
 - Employees and supervisors are responsible to ensure each assignment evaluation in the PTB is filled out completely: only one evaluation per incident assignment and/or evaluator.
 - Fill out each PTB evaluation sheet completely: evaluator's contact info and role critical to legal documentation and follow up if needed; incident details and incident number critical to tracking and legal documentation within IQCS.
3. **PTB Certification Request:** The responsibility to forward completed PTBs to the FQRC for final certification rests only with the Zone FMO's (ZAFMOs as needed), Deputy Fire Staff Officer, and Fire Staff Officer. This will be indicated by initials or signature and date, adjacent to the final evaluator's signature on the inside front cover of the completed PTB, prior to submitting it to the Forest IQCS Account Manager for a qualifications check. This is to be done a minimum of 4 days prior to the scheduled FQRC meeting. It is imperative that the trainee has met all agency requirements and that the PTB has been completely and accurately filled out prior to submittal. Trainees in cooperation with their supervisor must ensure that the PTB adequately addresses the evaluation criteria

described above. The final evaluator's block must be signed and Performance Ratings must accompany the PTB.

PTB Administration: Trainees are encouraged to make copies of the entire PTB and Performance Ratings prior to forwarding to the FQRC.

- 4. FQRC Review & Concurrence:** Prior to forwarding PTBs to the Certifying Official, FQRC members will review all completed PTBs and ensure that the trainee has met all prerequisites and PTB evaluation criteria. The committee will make recommendations for certification based on the required and recommended criteria as well as based on a collective professional judgment.

PTB Administration: FQRC members will initial the PTB, indicating concurrence with the final evaluator's recommendation for approval and that the trainee has met all requirements and criteria.

- 5. Certifying Official Final Signature:** After review of the PTB, position requirements, and dialogue among the FQRC, the Certifying Official (Fire Staff or Deputy Fire Staff) will provide the final certifying signature in the PTB. While concurrence and/or consensus is desired among the FQRC for final certification of a PTB, it is not required. Final certification for all qualifications and/or PTBs will be subject to the discretion and analysis of the Certifying Official as allowed by policy, direction, and doctrinal principles.

The FSH 5109.17 directs the Fire Staff position to be the Certifying Official for all positions below Type II Command & General Staff. The Forest Supervisor has delegated authority for Type II positions to the Fire Staff Officer. The Prescott NF Supervisor has delegated concurrent authority to the Deputy Fire Staff Officer as the Certifying Official. This delegation is reviewed and renewed annually. This delegated authority is not automatically transferred to individuals acting in either position. Should the Fire Staff or Deputy Fire Staff positions be filled by an Acting due to a vacancy or a rare circumstance in which both incumbents are unavailable for a long period of time, the Forest Supervisor will initiate a new delegation of authority to individuals acting in either position. If one or both positions is encumbered by an Acting due to a temporary situation, extra efforts will be made to ensure the incumbent Fire Staff or Deputy Fire Staff with initial delegated Certifying Official authority is available to FQRC business.

PTB Administration – Approval: Once a PTB receives final certification the Forest IQCS Account Manager will enter it into IQCS. A copy of the original PTB cover page, final signature page, evaluation pages, performance ratings, and Prescott NF – FQRC Decision Record will be filed in the employee's IQCS File. Original paperwork along with the Prescott NF – FQRC Decision Record will be returned to the individual for personal record keeping. A confirmation of certification will be sent by email by the Training Officer to each individual as soon as possible following the FQRC meeting in which the initiation occurred.

PTB Administration – Denial: If a PTB is denied final certification, original copies of the PTB and all supporting documentation will be returned to the individual with a copy of the Prescott NF - FQRC Decision Record explaining the reason for the decision. A copy of this Decision Record will be filed in the employee's IQCS Folder. In addition, the employee will be contacted with the explanation as follows:

- Fire Center, militia, & AD employees: Fire Staff Officer or Deputy Fire Staff
- East Zone employees: East Zone FMO
- West Zone Employees: West Zone FMO

NOTE: If an employee decides on his/her own volition to stop pursuing certification/training for a specific qualification, the employee is to return the incomplete PTB to the FQRC Coordinator.

Incident Qualifications Cards: Incident Qualifications Cards (Red Cards) will be generated on an annual basis (typically late spring) after individuals provide updates to their qualifications and experience. Individuals must submit complete and proper documentation (annual fire [experience record](#), PTBs, Work Capacity Test records, training certificates) to the IQCS Manager/Fire Program Administrative Assistant to ensure incident qualifications cards are accurate. Individuals can expect a one month turnaround from documentation submittal to card receipt. Printing duplicate or updated Red Cards after the initial issued card will be the exception. (Updates to individual qualifications will still occur throughout the year and be maintained within IQCS; the agency's official record.)

II. Incident Training & Development

On an annual basis (target January FQRC meeting), the Forest Training & Development Coordinator in cooperation with the Fire Management Officers will assess, review, and implement a fire training and development program for the Prescott NF. Program design will be centered on agency needs followed by personal development. Program components will address and consider the following:

- A. Forest training and position needs utilizing the following methods:
 - Training needs analysis
 - Review of Forest's desired/needed competencies
 - Unable to Fill (UTF) resource order list
 - Position shortages in key areas at the local and national level
- B. Training priority identification and selection based on the following criteria:
 - IFPM and FS-IFPM Qualifications & Guidelines
 - Forest position needs / training needs analysis
 - Individual interest and availability
- C. Local cooperator partnerships and goals

D. Trends in Incident Performance Ratings

Training Courses

Identification Process:

- A. Local Training – The Forest Training & Development Coordinator in cooperation with the Fire Management Officers will maintain an annual PNF Training [Calendar](#) of locally offered training courses.
- B. Zone, Regional & National Training – A listing of courses offered at the zone, regional and national level can be found by accessing the National Wildland Fire Training Website at www.nationalfiretraining.net

Nomination Process

- A. All primary fire personnel requesting incident training will need to complete a National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) Training Nomination Form. Completed forms will be submitted to the immediate supervisor for signature. Supervisors will forward all nomination forms to the appropriate Zone FMO or Forest level Fire Management supervisor who in turn will forward them on to the Forest Fire Training & Development Coordinator. The Coordinator will then forward the nominations through the appropriate channels as determined by the level and location of the indicated training course.
 - B. All non-primary fire personnel requesting incident training will need to complete a NWCG Training Nomination Form. Individuals will submit completed forms to their immediate supervisor for approval. Supervisors will submit nomination forms direct to the Forest Fire Training & Development Coordinator. The Forest Fire Training Coordinator will route completed forms to the Deputy Fire Staff Officer for approval prior to the Training Coordinator forwarding the nominations through the appropriate channels.
- * All 300-Level and higher incident training must be approved by the Fire Staff Officer or Deputy Fire Staff Officer.

III. Roles & Responsibilities

Fire Training & Development Coordinator

1. Develop and maintain a year round fire training schedule/calendar. Ensure the schedule is posted on the PNF internet/intranet.
2. Prior to February 1st of each year and in cooperation with Fire Managers, review and update the Forest Incident Qualifications, Certification and Training Guide.
3. Annually, distribute and manage a forest-wide fire training and qualifications needs analysis.

4. Serve as the primary contact for IFPM and FS-IFPM related matters. Work closely with the IQCS Account Manager to maintain a forest-wide IFPM database.
5. Actively participate as the primary course coordinator for fire related training hosted on the Forest. As, appropriate, assist with course development and instruction.
6. Collaborate with local, zone, and regional training specialists in a coordinated effort to produce effective and efficient training programs.
7. Work in conjunction with the FQRC to develop and prioritize needs list identifying position target levels, shortages, courses, and candidates.
8. Serve as the centralized receiving and processing point for all incident training nomination forms and selections.
9. Unless otherwise determined, serve as a Forest representative on all fire training boards and committees within the local and zone area.
10. As needed, distribute forest-wide correspondence regarding fire training availability, registration, and documentation procedures.

IQCS Account Manager

1. Ensure the Forest's IQCS is properly managed and maintained consistent with agency policy and direction.
2. Produce accurate and timely Incident Qualifications Cards to all actively managed individuals within the Forest IQCS database.
3. Ensure a copy of the delegation of authority granting you IQCS roles and responsibilities is in place and understood.
4. Conduct periodic audits/reviews of the individual IQCS records annually in cooperation with the Fire Staff Officer and/or Deputy Fire Staff Officer.
5. Initiate hard copy Position Task Book for employees per the Forest Qualifications Review Committee (FQRC) guidance
6. Provide support to the Incident Management Team (IMT) application process.

All Prescott NF Employees

1. Read and understand the intent and content of this guide. Seek clarification where necessary.
2. On an annual basis, reply to the Forest Training Needs Analysis by the deadline indicated.
3. Submit Incident Performance Ratings to the Deputy Fire Staff Officer upon completion of each incident assignment.