



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

Federal, State, and Local Government Agencies Working Together in Emergency Response Management

Date: August 17, 2021 NRCG Memo# 2021-008
To: Northern Rockies Interagency Wildland Fire Community
From: Chair, Northern Rockies Coordinating Group
Subject: NRCG Incident Commander – Path Process

How to Become a Northern Rockies Incident Commander

Becoming an IC in the Northern Rockies involves the agency and the home unit that the employee works for, mentorship by the Northern Rockies Incident Commander (IC) community, and finally, successful application to, and approval by, the Northern Region Coordinating Group (NRCG) Board.

Roles/ Responsibilities and Navigating the Process

The Home Agency (Unit)

It is the responsibility of each agency to issue a Type 1 or 2 IC task book to an employee. The home agency of the employee will utilize the process/es that it has in place when initiating a task book for someone seeking the IC qualification. They are also responsible for the final agency certification for the completed task book.

Home agencies should consider if an individual employee is ready to have a task book for IC opened and that the unit, including the unit line officer, would support the individual pursuing an IC qualification. There should be recognition that the employee is ready to pursue the qualification but that the purpose of the task book is to train the individual to become an IC.

Mentoring by the IC Community

In most cases, potential IC candidates will be known by one or more of the Northern Rockies ICs. Individuals that self-identify, or if asked by an IC that they are interested in pursuing the IC position, will have discussion regarding commitment, expectations, and capabilities, “fit” etc. with the IC. This discussion should also take place with the leadership of the employee’s agency/home unit.

A mentoring IC should ensure that the individual has the support of the home agency but recall that the purpose of the task book is to train the individual to become an IC.

ICs should counsel the trainee on any areas of needed focus during their training assignments. A discussion with the home agency can also help focus the training assignments of the individual trainee to help ensure their success.





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Trainee Assignments:

Trainees will work with a primary IMT but will also have at least 1 assignment with another IMT. Trainees will acquire individual performance reviews by a host Agency Administrator (AA) for each assignment.

NRCG board representative(s) are encouraged to spend time with IMTs that have trainees during the assignment specifically to ascertain how trainees are performing. It would be preferable to spend the night to see the entire incident cycle and interface with host agency personnel regarding trainee experiences and development.

If NRCG board members have input for and individual trainee's development, it should be shared with the primary IC and the trainee during the task book process.

Recommendation to the NRCG Board:

Upon Completion of the certification of the task book by the home unit/agency, the IC Committee will discuss the individual and make a recommendation to the Board as to the appropriate position for the individual as either ready to be the lead IC or as deputy IC.

Application to the NRCG Board

The Northern Rockies Wildland Fire Agency Administrators have delegated the NRCG Board selection of IC's for the Northern Rockies Incident Management Teams. The Board entrusts the IC's/IC Committee as very experienced, capable, and savvy folks to responsibly train and promote current IC trainees to the Board so all parties involved can discuss issues and concerns early and as needed in the trainee process. The Board will take trainee development/qualification attainment and IC role suitability under advisement from the IC's/IC Committee for informed decision making. The Board has the sole authority to choose the individuals who will lead the teams that represent the Northern Rockies.

Recruitment Notice with Application Requirements

It is the candidate's responsibility to make sure that they submit all required documents to the board by the due date and follow all the instructions from the Recruitment Notice detailed below.

Northern Rockies Area Incident Commander (IC) Recruitment Notice

REPLY DUE COB, DECEMBER (insert date)

To: IC, Deputy, Alternate and IC Trainee Candidates for Interagency Incident Management Teams

From: Northern Rockies Coordinating Group, (NRCG)

Information

The Northern Rockies Geographic Area includes the States of Montana, North Dakota, and northern Idaho, Yellowstone National Park, and a small portion of South Dakota. The Northern Rockies hosts two interagency Type 1, four interagency Type 2 Incident Management Teams (IMTs) and one Wildland Fire Management Team (WFMT). Northern Rockies IMTs are managed by the NRCG through the Northern





Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

Federal, State, and Local Government Agencies Working Together in Emergency Response Management

Rockies IMT Standard Operating Guide, as well as the National and Northern Rockies Mobilization Guides. Rotation and dispatching are coordinated by the Northern Rockies Coordination Center.

Type 1 Teams are required to maintain year-round availability per a national rotation. Type 2 Teams and the Wildland Fire Management Team typically remain available from June through October and are dispatched on a rotational basis. These teams manage high complexity incidents and usually consist of the most experienced incident management personnel. Although their primary incident response is wildfire, the teams may respond to all- risk incidents such as hurricanes, floods, or other national emergencies.

Incident Commanders from within the Geographic Area are selected for three-year tenures. Outgoing Incident Commanders may re-apply for another second – three-year tenure. Qualified and Trainee IC's from all agencies are encouraged to apply if they can fulfill the commitment. Type 1 and 2 Incident Commanders, Deputies, and Alternate Incident Commanders should be filled by Federal, State and Local Government employees who are employed on a permanent basis (per NMAC Memo March 2016). Supplemental resources are not approved for Type 1 and 2 Incident Commanders and Deputy Incident Commander positions. Supplemental employees from local governments are defined as overhead tied to a local fire department, generally by agreement, and are mobilized primarily for response to incidents/wildland fires outside of the district or mutual aid zone. They are not a permanent part of the local fire organization and are not required to attend scheduled department staff training, meetings, etc.

The selection prioritization for all IC's will follow the below listed priorities:

1. Agency employees (includes Federal, State, permanent FD/local agency, tribal employees) within Northern Rockies Geographic Area (NRGA) Agencies/Regions.
2. Federal/State Agency employees from outside the NRGA Agencies/Regions.

This recruitment is seeking highly qualified and motivated candidates interested to perform as IC, Deputy IC, Alternate IC or Trainee IC on Northern Rockies Type 1, Type 2 and Wildland Fire Management Teams for the 20XX-20XX (insert appropriate years) seasons. Current Northern Rockies IMT IC's do not need to reapply.

Instructions:

Submit the following application package to mtnrc@firenet.gov

- Completed Northern Rockies Incident Commander Application Form
- Your responses to the supplemental questions.
- Your agencies NRCG Board Line Officer Letter of Recommendation for you to serve as a Northern Rockies IC addressed to the NRCG Board Chairman.
- Your direct supervisor's Letter of Support
- Your Individual Incident Qualifications Master Record





Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

Federal, State, and Local Government Agencies Working Together in Emergency Response Management

Date due: December (insert applicable date). Application package will be accepted via email to mtnrc@firenet.gov with "IC Application" in the subject line or the NRCC fax, 406-329-4891. **After submitting your application, please follow-up with a phone call to the Northern Rockies Coordination Center at 406-329-4880 to ensure receipt. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.**

Methods of Evaluation and Selection: The IMT Coordinator will forward out applicant packages to the NRCG Board of Directors for review and selection. A standard set of selection factors and a rating and ranking criterion shall be utilized to determine the best-qualified candidates. The NRCG Chair is responsible for notification of selection and non-selections.

If Selected: The IC, Deputy IC, Alternate IC, or Trainee IC will be expected to attend the IMT Selection Meeting in February, the IMT Meeting when scheduled in the spring, and the Fall Incident Commander After Action Review. IC's become a member of the Northern Rockies Incident Commander Committee (NRICC). Trainee IC's must apply to the Northern Rockies Priority Trainee Program each respective year performing as trainee.

NORTHERN ROCKIES INCIDENT COMMANDER APPLICATION FORM

REPLY DUE COB, DECEMBER (insert applicable date)

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Applicant Name: _____ Agency/Unit: _____

Sponsoring NRCG Agency: _____

Phone: Cell Phone: _____

E-mail:Office Fax: _____

POSITION(S) APPLYING FOR - IC Type 1: IC Type 2: APPLICANT SIGNATURE

I understand that if selected, this commitment will be for a three (3) year tenure as Incident Commander. I will be committed to lead and manage a team to the highest standard and to the best of my ability.

Applicant: _____ Date: _____

Applicant Remarks (If Any): _____





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Federal, State, and Local Government Agencies Working Together in Emergency Response Management

SUPERVISORY APPROVALS

I concur with the goals and availability of the applicant for the Incident Commander position and fully support this employee's availability and commitment, if selected.

Agency Board Line Officer: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Supervisor Remarks (If Any):

NORTHERN ROCKIES INCIDENT COMMANDER APPLICATION

Supplemental Questions

REPLY DUE COB, DECEMBER (insert applicable date)

(Each applicant should address all five questions and attach to their application)

1. Describe your experience related to the full use of available strategies under the current Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy.
2. Describe your short-and-long term goals for yourself as it relates to the leadership of a Northern Rockies Incident Management Team.
3. There are studies in progress concerning the future structure and missions of IMTs. Describe your vision of what a future IMT should look like and how it should function?
4. Describe your approach to working with agency administrators and local fire leadership in the management of an incident.
5. Describe your approach to the management of risk to fire fighters and the public as well as political risk.

Josh Harvey
Chair, Northern Rockies Coordinating Group (NRCG)

