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# NWCG Standards for Wildland Fire Module Operations

PMS 430

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The *NWCG Standards for Wildland Fire Module Operations* standardizes procedures and expectations for Wildland Fire Modules (WFMs). These standards are to be used by staff, supervisors, specialists, and technicians for planning, administering, and conducting WFM operations. These standards will also be used as a measure of WFM qualifications, capabilities, and expected performance, for both Type 1 and Type 2 WFMs.

Individual home units shall provide direction, support, and review processes that ensure WFM operations are safe and effective and meet the WFM operations standards as outlined in this document. Any individual host unit may assemble, and make available for mobilization, a WFM meeting the minimum standards described in this document. Only those WFMs meeting the standards and having completed the WFM certification process will be available for mobilization.

Prior to implementing activities and operations under the standards in the *NWCG Standards for Wildland Fire Module Operations*, local units must have ensured compliance with agency policy. In addition, an approved local employee or module handbook must be in place and identify how the module interacts with the local unit.

The *NWCG Standards for Wildland Fire Module Operations* meets requirements of Federal Fire Policy Guiding Principle #9<sup>1</sup>: Standardization of policies and procedures among federal wildland fire management agencies is an ongoing objective. This principle promotes common language and unified direction or guidance for agency or bureau manuals, directive handbooks, and guidelines.

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<sup>1</sup> Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy, February 13, 2009

The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) provides national leadership to enable interoperable wildland fire operations among federal, state, tribal, territorial, and local partners. NWCG operations standards are interagency by design; they are developed with the intent of universal adoption by the member agencies. However, the decision to adopt and utilize them is made independently by the individual member agencies and communicated through their respective directives systems.

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# Chapter 1: Program Purpose and Emphasis

The primary mission of a WFM is to provide an innovative, safe, highly mobile, logistically independent, and versatile fire module with a commitment to achieving diverse fire and fuels management objectives.

The WFM program facilitates the use of fire, and other management techniques, involving planned and unplanned wildland fire events. WFMs are highly skilled and versatile fire crews, which provide technical and ecological based expertise in the areas of prescribed fire and wildfire response such as long-term planning, ignitions, holding, suppression, hazard fuels reduction, and fire effects monitoring; with an emphasis in fire fulfilling its natural or historic role to meet resource and management objectives. This unique skill set sets WFMs apart from other fire resources (e.g., initial attack squads, fire suppression modules, fuels crews).

The utilization of WFMs will be with strict compliance to the accepted interagency and agency-specific standards. These standards are what differentiates WFMs from other suppression or fuels modules which do not subscribe to interagency standards. Responsibility for compliance with these standards and the safe operation of a WFM ultimately lies with the WFM leader. There are five primary areas in which WFMs are especially well suited:

## Logistically Self-Sufficient

WFMs provide a uniquely high level of operational self-sufficiency. WFMs have the capability to operate in any location with little to no need for additional supplies or support from local fire management or assigned Incident Management Teams (IMTs). WFMs carry backcountry camping equipment to sustain the crew for up to seven days at a time and purchasing powers to provide for their own resupply.

## Wildland Fire Response

WFMs are staffed, conditioned, equipped, and qualified to meet a variety of planning, strategic, and tactical wildland fire assignments. WFMs specialize in fire intelligence gathering such as perimeter mapping, line placement, identification of critical resource values, control points, management action points, and safety zones; structure protection triage, planning, and implementation actions; and monitoring, recording, validating weather, fuel conditions, fire effects, fire behavior, and burn severity monitoring. WFMs also provide highly skilled fire professionals to assist in the development of long-term implementation plans and are proficient in all manner of strategic and tactical response including line construction, burn out, point-protection, or monitoring in advance of initiating planned actions. In addition, WFMs may be used for initial attack operations and to fill ready reserve duties to assist local and national fire management needs.

## Prescribed Fires

WFMs provide a high level of expertise in the use of fire on the landscape as a resource management tool. WFMs are staffed, equipped, and qualified to meet a variety of prescribed fire assignments including filling needed overhead positions and serving as ground personnel to independently or cooperatively manage prescribed fire incidents. Type 1 WFMs include an RXB2 position to assist with burn plan development and implementation of moderate complexity prescribed fires. Type 2 WFMs include FIRB position to assist with ignition operations.

## **Resource Management Assignments**

When not committed to planned or unplanned fire assignments, WFMs can provide a workforce to accomplish a variety of resource management objectives while maintaining availability for incident mobilization. Some objectives may include hazardous fuels reduction planning and implementation; monitoring of first and second order fire effects, vegetation plotting, photo points; and rehabilitation efforts.

## **Training**

WFMs have an extensive expertise in the use of fire and the management of fuels. This expertise allows the WFMs to provide the fire community with highly experienced trainers for local, geographic, and national level training courses.

## Chapter 2: Foundational Skills and Distinguishing Features of Wildland Fire Modules

The list below describes foundational skills for all WFMs. This skill set serves as a framework to identify the expertise that can be expected when employing any WFM. Although individual WFM strengths will vary, these foundational skill sets can be expected from all certified WFMs.

### Operations

#### Proficient in Wildland Fire Tactical Operations:

- 1) Skilled at maintaining Lookouts, Communications, Escape Routes and Safety Zones (LCES) in an unanchored fireline environment.
- 2) Skilled in line construction with production rates similar to a Type 1 hand crew at similar crew strength.
- 3) Skilled at planning and conducting burnout and blackline operations.
- 4) Skilled in the design, operation, and maintenance of fire management hydrologic systems, including pumping, hose lays, and structure protection sprinkler systems.
- 5) Ability to independently interpret, evaluate, and implement operational action plans.
- 6) Ability to manifest, assemble, and facilitate external cargo for helicopter.

#### Long-Term Strategies:

- 1) Skilled at implementing long-term plans by understanding concepts of point-protection, Management Action Points, and season ending events.
- 2) Ability to provide information back to managers on tactical actions that meet the long-term overall objectives.

#### Point-Protection Skills:

- 1) Skilled at completing written structure assessments.
- 2) Skilled in structure wrapping; interface fuels reduction during ongoing incidents.
- 3) Ability to perform structure triage.

#### Prescribed Fire:

- 1) Skilled at ignition of prescribed fire through all complexity levels.
- 2) Skilled in prescribed fire holding actions through all complexity levels.

### Intelligence

#### Fire Environment Assessment Skills:

- 1) Skilled at safely monitoring and documenting fire behavior.
- 2) Skilled at monitoring smoke dispersal and impacts to sensitive receptors.

- 3) Skilled at identifying and documenting fuels, slope, and aspect affecting current, and foreseeable fire behavior.
- 4) Skilled at the collection, measurement, and documentation of live and dead fuel moisture.
- 5) Skilled at collection and identification of fuel load data (e.g., Browns transects, photo series).
- 6) Ability to evaluate and document post-fire effects.
- 7) Ability to evaluate the potential effectiveness of natural and constructed fire barriers.
- 8) Ability to evaluate the effectiveness of fuel treatments in modifying fire behavior.

**Fire Weather:**

- 1) Skilled at consistent fireline weather monitoring and documentation.
- 2) Skilled at submitting, interpreting, and providing feedback to spot weather forecasts.
- 3) Ability to deploy and maintain portable weather stations.

**Mapping Skills:**

- 1) Skilled with GPS systems with the capability to transfer information to mapping software.
- 2) Skilled at wildland fuels and fire progression mapping.
- 3) Ability to map fire perimeters and points of interest using GPS systems.

**Backcountry Capability:**

- 1) Skilled at operating self-sufficiently for multiple days in backcountry fire environment including food, water, and anticipated equipment for 5-7 days.
- 2) Skilled in the use of the minimum tool and “light hand” techniques including crosscut saw skills, leave no trace camping, and minimum impact suppression techniques (MIST).
- 3) Ability to transport personnel and equipment using remote travel techniques.

**Documentation:**

- 1) Skilled in preparing fire behavior and fuels condition monitoring documentation during ongoing incidents.
- 2) Ability to transmit onsite observations from remote locations.
- 3) Ability to assemble and organize large amounts of data in digital or hardcopy format.

**Planning:**

Ability to provide intelligence and feedback for the effectiveness of long-duration fire plans.

**Distinguishing Features**

All WFM modules provide those foundational skills and expertise described above. The distinguishing features between Type 1 and Type 2 are:

- 1) Type 1 can plan and implement moderate complexity prescribed fire projects independently while Type 2 can assist with prescribed fire projects but cannot plan or implement independently (T1–RXB2 vs. T2–FIRB).



- 2) Type 1 have higher fireline qualifications than Type 2 (T1–TFLD/ICT4 vs. T2–CRWB/ICT5).
- 3) Type 1 has depth in supervision to assume additional duties and responsibilities while maintaining module operations whereas Type 2 typically cannot (multiple CRWB for T1 vs. 1 CRWB for T2).
- 4) Type 1 may come with their own equipment to set up remote weather stations and conduct fuel moisture sampling whereas Type 2 modules may have the skills but do not have the specialized equipment.

**Table 1: General overview and distinctions between Type 1 & Type 2 WFMs.**

	<b>Type 1 WFM</b>	<b>Type 2 WFM</b>
<b>Permanent or Temporary Organization</b>	Permanent established module dedicated to WFM operations either seasonally or full-time.	Permanent established module dedicated to WFM operations either seasonally or full-time.
<b>Leadership Depth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership sufficient to break into two groups with appropriate leadership at the CRWB level for independent operations.</li> <li>• Ability to maintain module operations along with additional fireline supervision duties at the TFLD level.</li> <li>• Ability to assume command of one or more incidents at the Type 4 or 5 complexity level.</li> <li>• Ability to independently plan and implement prescribed fire at the RXB2 level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership sufficient to maintain module operations as a single module at the CRWB level.</li> <li>• No expectation for providing additional overhead capacity.</li> <li>• Ability to assume command of one or more incidents at the Type 5 complexity level.</li> <li>• Ability to assist in the implementation of prescribed fire at the FIRB/CRWB level.</li> </ul>
<b>Level of Self-Sufficiency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to form separate logistically self-sufficient groups.</li> <li>• Purchase cards (2)</li> <li>• Backcountry equipped</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A single logistically self-sufficient group.</li> <li>• Purchase cards (1 or more)</li> <li>• Backcountry equipped</li> </ul>
<b>Certification Process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rigorous initial certification with simple annual readiness checklist that does not require annual review/inspection by state/regional operations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rigorous initial certification with simple annual readiness checklist that does not require annual review/inspection by state/regional operations.</li> </ul>
<b>Annual Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Fireline Refresher</li> <li>• Annual critical training</li> <li>• Documentation of critical training submitted with annual readiness review.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Fireline Refresher</li> <li>• Annual critical training</li> <li>• Documentation of critical training submitted with annual readiness review.</li> </ul>
<b>Physical Fitness Standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arduous duty work capacity test (WCT)</li> <li>• Strives toward WFM fitness goals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arduous duty work capacity test (WCT)</li> <li>• Strives toward WFM fitness goals.</li> </ul>

## Professional Ethics

WFMs acknowledge responsibilities to respective host agencies and to the wildland fire community as a whole. Members subscribe to this code of ethics to guide modules in the practice of wildland fire professionalism:

- 1) Perform only services we are qualified, trained, equipped, and experienced to do, and that can be accomplished safely.
- 2) Conduct operations to meet the needs of resource managers.
- 3) Continue to educate ourselves in order to improve our qualifications and performance.
- 4) Give earnest effort and provide our best professional advice in the performance of duties.
- 5) Build our professional reputations on the integrity, quality, and cost effectiveness of our programs.
- 6) Be accountable to supervisors, IMTs, and colleagues, as a safe, productive, and professional resource.
- 7) Conduct ourselves and our programs in accordance with the *NWCG Standards for Wildland Fire Module Operations*, relevant federal, agency, state and local policies, and all operational, and safety procedures.
- 8) Ensure the civil rights of others by treating every person with respect.
- 9) Professional behavior will be exhibited at all times. Hazing, harassment of any kind, verbal abuse, or physical abuse by any employee toward any other person will not be tolerated.
- 10) Endeavor to enhance public knowledge and promote understanding of the functions and achievements of the wildland fire community.

## Chapter 3: Support

### NWCG Fire Use Subcommittee

The Fire Use Subcommittee (FUSC) is a subgroup of the Fuels Management Committee and has the primary responsibility to provide strategic oversight to the WFM program. Proposed changes to policy and standards for the WFM program are received by the FUSC from the Wildland Fire Module Unit (WFMU). The FUSC reviews and recommends changes in the WFM program, and submits their recommendations to the parent NWCG Fuels Management Committee (FMC) for concurrence. The FMC then is responsible to submit changes/recommendations to the NWCG Executive Board for final approval.

FUSC discussions regarding WFM business may occur during regular bi-annual meetings, as needed with meetings of the WFMU or by electronic conferencing.

### NWCG Wildland Fire Module Unit

The NWCG WFMU has the primary responsibility to provide leadership and representation for the WFM program. The unit develops proposals for maintaining or enhancing program standards, establishes consistent national program coordination and implementation procedures, provides a means for proactive problem and issue resolution for the WFM community, evaluates organizational, and staffing needs and recommendations for the WFM community, facilitates the exchange of information between groups, and proposes changes in the WFM program to the NWCG through the FUSC. The WFMU maintains the master list of all certified WFMs and revises this list on an annual basis. Additional information on the WFMU including their mission and roster are available at <https://www.nwcg.gov/committees/wildland-fire-module-unit>.

### State/Region/Geographic Area

Agency representatives at this level coordinate WFM development, and facilitate interagency, and intra-agency requests for the modules. They also have responsibility for oversight through the WFM certification process.

### Home Unit

WFMs are local or regional resources meeting national interagency standards, and assist the home unit with other wildland fire, fuels, planning, and resource management objectives when not assigned to incidents or conducting training. The home unit also has responsibility for oversight through their role in the WFM certification process. WFMs are available, as determined by their local or regional coordinator, to assist interagency wildland fire agencies in accomplishing their fire management missions.

WFMs require management oversight, administrative support, and facilities to accomplish their mission.

The home unit supervisor and the agency administrator shall:

- 1) Oversee and coordinate the WFM during non-fire assignments.
- 2) Ensure the WFM program complies with the *NWCG Standards for Wildland Fire Module Operations*.

- 3) Use the Wildland Fire Module Certification Review Checklist and the Wildland Fire Module Annual Mobilization Preparedness/Proficiency Checklist, (<https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/430>) to verify that both Type 1 and Type 2 WFMs are ready for initial incident assignment prior to being placed in available status.
- 4) Assist in career development and training of WFM personnel.
- 5) Ensure that WFM health, safety, and welfare needs are addressed.
- 6) Provide administrative support such as personnel management, time and attendance, travel, purchasing, and fleet management.
- 7) Provide adequate facilities for the WFM including office space, phones, fax machine access, and electronic communication, access to physical training facilities, equipment storage, and fire equipment cache.

## **Finance**

Wildland fire emergency accounts or receiving unit project accounts will be charged for WFMs travel, per diem, premium pay (overtime), and other support costs when on assignment.

WFMs will adhere to *NWCG Standards for Interagency Incident Business Management*, PMS 902, procedures.

## **Time Management**

WFM personnel will adhere to work/rest guidelines of the PMS 902 and federal travel regulations. WFM leaders have the responsibility to shorten travel times when necessary to maintain module health and safety.

# Chapter 4: Dispatching & Ordering Procedures

## Off-Unit Assignments

For all off home unit assignments, WFMs will be ordered and moved through the established dispatch ordering channels by the resource ordering process. All home unit supervisors and WFM leaders will work closely with their local dispatching office before and during the field season to facilitate smooth resource movement. Local mutual aid agreements will also be recognized in WFM dispatching and assignment. For current information, reference the *National Interagency Mobilization Guide* (<http://www.nifc.gov/nicc/mobguide/index.html>).

To request a Type 1 or Type 2 WFM:

- 1) Fill out a ROSS order for “module–wildland fire (Type 1 or 2)” following the standard procedure through the local dispatch office. Each WFM is responsible for maintaining their status in ROSS in coordination with local dispatch centers.
- 2) Ordering unit should refer to Table 1 to ensure that the ordered resource (WFM1 or WFM2) will possess the capability to perform the tasks required appropriate to the level of complexity of the ordering incident or project.

Prescribed fires are planned events. Therefore, it is recommended that WFM personnel be ordered for prescribed fire assignments during normal weekday work hours.

Requesting unit should place an order through ROSS and contact the WFM leader 48 hours in advance of the prescribed fire and other planned projects.

## Naming Convention for Wildland Fire Modules

Type 1 WFMs are normally referred to by the name associated with their sponsoring Unit or local area (e.g., Calaveras WFM, Whiskeytown WFM, Unaweep WFM)

Type 2 WFMs will vary, but must not have the same name as any Type 1 WFM. They can generally be identified by the dispatching unit or something similar (i.e. Central Utah WFM Type 2). All Type 2 WFMs must have WFM Type 2 in their designator.

## Interagency Availability of Wildland Fire Modules

WFMs are available on an interagency basis for fire management assignments. Besides wildfire response, agencies can also order WFMs to assist in prescribed fire or hazard fuel reduction projects under the appropriate interagency agreement if exchange of funds is required between agencies. WFMs are a specialized resource. Each agency has the ability to prioritize the needs for the modules including the period of time for which they are available for off-unit assignment.

**Table 2: Minimum Module Standards for Interagency Mobilization**

	<b>Type 1 WFM</b>	<b>Type 2 WFM</b>
<b>Qualified Personnel Available for Dispatch</b>	7-10 Personnel	7-10 Personnel
<b>Personnel Experience</b>	80% of members with at least one season of wildland fire experience.	60% of members with at least one season of wildland fire experience.
<b>Temporary or Permanent Supervisory Staff</b>	Module leader, assistant and at least two other members (Squad Boss/Senior FF) permanently assigned, seasonal, or full-time.	Module leader and assistant both permanently assigned, seasonal, or full-time.
<b>Availability Period</b>	Minimum of 90 days annually. (Including required days off and local assignments or training).	Minimum of 90 days annually. (Including required days off and local assignments or training).
<b>Assigned Equipment</b>	Vehicles, hand tools, power saws, and communications equipment configured for their needs; to include portable fuel sampling and weighing equipment.	Vehicles, hand tools, power saws, and communications equipment configured for their needs.
<b>Module Leader Qualifications</b>	TFLD, ICT4, RXB2	CRWB, ICT5, FIRB
<b>Assistant Module Leader Qualifications</b>	CRWB, ICT5, FIRB	FFT1, ICT5

### **Availability Periods**

Availability periods are defined as the time during which a WFM meets minimum staffing standards, and will be listed as available for local, geographic area, or national assignments in ROSS. Local unit establishes work priorities and determines when WFM will be made available for off-unit assignment.

### **Incident Guidelines**

WFM personnel are dedicated to supporting both planned and unplanned wildland fire activities. WFMs can be assigned to other operations or emergency incidents, subject to the following limitations:

- WFM members may be committed to single resource assignments as long as the integrity of the module remains intact.
- WFMs committed to planned or unplanned events will be unavailable for other assignments until officially released from the assignment.
- WFMs must be mobilized and demobilized through the established interagency resource ordering process.

All WFMs should receive a performance rating to provide feedback, identify training needs, and evaluate module performance, as the WFM is released from an assignment. WFM leaders are responsible for supplying these evaluation forms to the requesting unit and sending a completed copy to the home unit.

## Incident Support

WFMs are self-contained and self-sufficient. The ordering incident will be expected to supply the WFMs with needed supplies depending on method of transport and specific needs to that assignment. Dialogue between the WFM leader and ordering and receiving unit is essential in meeting expectations of the unit, assignment, and program.

Replacement or repair of those items or supplies consumed, damaged, or destroyed on an incident or project will be coordinated through the incident or project. Replacements or repairs will be documented on a resource order prior to leaving that activity, and adhere to the guidelines in the *NWCG Standards for Interagency Incident Business Management*, PMS 902.

## Minimum Equipment Standards

### Ordering Via Ground Transportation

WFMs will come equipped with the **minimum** complement when arriving via ground transportation, as listed in Table 3:

**Table 3: Minimum equipment required for dispatch via ground transportation.**

Equipment	Type 1 WFM	Type 2 WFM
Appropriate PPE	YES	YES
Dedicated module vehicles (minimum 2)	Agency Owned and assigned	Agency owned and assigned
Dedicated cellular telephones	2	2
Satellite phone	1	0
Crew level purchase authority	2 or more	1 or more
Chain saws with kit	4	2
Firing Devices:		
• Drip torch	4	4
• Flare launcher	1	1
• Fusees (1 case)	1	1
Firefighting hand tools—geographically dependent	YES	YES
Programmable hand-held radios	5	5
Tents and sleeping gear, all season	YES	YES
Extended 14 days backcountry camp and cooking equipment	YES	YES
Water filtration system	YES	YES
Medical Equipment:		
• 10 person or Trauma Kit	2	2
• Remote carry out capability	YES	YES
Drinking water and food	72 hours	48 hours
Digital Technical Equipment:		
• Computer	2	1
• Printer	1	1
• Digital camera	2	1
• GPS	5	2
• Software or interface capabilities	YES	NO
Weather Monitoring Equipment:		
• Belt weather kit	3	2

<b>Equipment</b>	<b>Type 1 WFM</b>	<b>Type 2 WFM</b>
• Calibrated Hand-held Weather Meter	2	2
Fuel Moisture Sampling Equipment:		
• Clippers	2	2
• Hand-saw	2	2
• Oven-ready sample containers	20	20
• Calibrated hand-held moisture probe	1	1
• Scientific scale	1	0
• Binoculars	2	2
Documentation:		
WFM Field Guide	YES	YES
• WFM monitoring forms	YES	YES

### **Ordering Via Air Transportation**

Both the receiving unit and the WFM have the responsibility to negotiate and establish expectations and specific equipment needs.

Receiving unit should expect to provide the following minimum equipment or supply needs:

- Crew personnel transportation
- Chainsaws with fuel, oil, and kit
- Hand tools
- Drinking water and food
- Firing equipment



# Chapter 5: Staffing

## Personnel

All WFMs shall be staffed to provide skilled personnel to accomplish specific agency missions. A trainee or detailer in a supervisory or lead positions will be in addition to module core positions, until that individual is qualified to function independently in these positions. All WFMs have dedicated support funding for positions, training, travel, and supervision. WFM core personnel are defined as personnel – including career-seasonal and temporary seasonal employees – who work and train together as a unit 40 hours a week on a continuous basis during periods of availability.

## Module Organization

All WFMs are comprised of seven to ten individuals in the following positions:

- WFM leader
- Assistant WFM leader
- Squad bosses or senior firefighters
- Crewmembers, trainees, apprentices, fill-ins, or detailers as scheduled

WFM leaders are responsible for keeping home unit dispatch informed of changes in their status and location in order to maintain, track, and ensure availability, and to coordinate any personnel changes with the receiving unit or IMT.

## Minimum Qualifications

Table 4 identifies the minimum qualifications for dispatch. The module leader and assistant module leader or anyone filling in for those positions must meet the NWCG qualifications of those positions as described in Table 2. The remaining qualifications described in Table 4 are not necessarily tied to a particular position within the WFM, but should be met collectively by the module. All qualifications will adhere to the standards published in the *NIMS Wildland Fire Qualifications Guide*, PMS 310-1 (<https://www.nwcg.gov/sites/default/files/publications/pms310-1.pdf>). Additional incident qualifications will be pursued at the discretion of each WFM member and their supervisor. In addition, the requesting unit may ask for specialized qualifications based on the nature of the assignment.

**Table 4: Wildland Fire Module Minimum Qualifications**

<b>Required WFM Qualifications</b>	<b>Type 1 WFM</b>	<b>Type 2 WFM</b>
<b>RXB2</b> – Prescribed Fire Burn Boss Type 2	1	0
<b>TFLD</b> – Task Force Leader	1	0
<b>CRWB</b> – Crew Boss	1 (other than TFLD)	1
<b>FIRB</b> – Firing Boss	1 (other than RXB2)	1
<b>ICT4</b> – Incident Commander Type 4	1	0
<b>ICT5</b> – Incident Commander Type 5	2 (other than ICT4)	2
<b>FOBS</b> – Field Observer	1	0
<b>FEMO</b> – Fire Effects Monitor	2	2 (1 may be trainee)
<b>FFT1</b> – Advanced Firefighter (separate from <b>TFLD/CRWB</b> positions)	2	2
<b>FAL2</b> – Intermediate Faller	2	0
Agency Certified Sawyers (any level)	0	2
<b>HELRL</b> – Helicopter Long-line/Remote Hook <sup>^</sup> or <b>HECM</b> – Helicopter Crew Member	1	1
<sup>^</sup> HELRL is not recognized by all NWCG member agencies.		

Home units will be responsible for recruitment of all WFM positions and detailer or trainee assignments. Recruitment should be based on standard WFM position descriptions and staffing needs.

## **Operational Staffing**

A WFM must have a minimum of seven qualified individuals for dispatch.

Type 1 and Type 2 WFMs: One of the core members must be the regularly assigned WFM leader or assistant, and no less than three others must be regular WFM members, for a minimum core of four personnel (e.g., a seven person WFM can have up to three of their “core” members replaced by fill-ins so long as four of the “core” members are still with the module and at least one of those four is either the “core” WFM leader or assistant.

WFMs may have personnel available for single resource assignments (e.g., details to write burn plans, training, perform fire effects work, fire assignments) provided that the assignment does not compromise the availability of the WFM during their established field season nor compromise crew performance during an assignment.

When WFMs are short-staffed, detailers may be used to augment the WFM. Detailers must be qualified, or designated as a trainee, as shown on their “Incident Qualifications Card” at a level commensurate with the position being filled and meet the WFMs fitness standards.

The WFM must provide logistical support for outside personnel detailed to the module.

## **Performance and Accountability**

The host incident Fire Management Officer or Incident Commander will make recommendations to the module's home unit in the event a WFM fails to meet the following minimum set of performance criteria:

- 1) Failure to maintain minimum standards and qualifications for the WFM Type.
- 2) Failure to maintain required core personnel.
- 3) Documentation of unsatisfactory performance as a WFM.
- 4) Incompliance with accepted safety and performance standards

Compliance to these standards is the responsibility of the WFM, home unit, and corresponding regional, or state office. WFMs are expected to operate with integrity and are duty bound to not misrepresent the WFM community. Leadership, at all levels, must take a fair approach to issues, and take corrective actions if necessary.

## **Evaluations**

The home unit supervisor will be responsible for the WFM leader's supervision, evaluation, and individual development plan (IDP).

WFM leaders will be responsible for providing performance evaluations for all WFM members.

## **Position Descriptions**

The home unit supervisor will be responsible for the WFM leader's supervision and the determination of each position description (PD) for the members of the WFM according to hosting agency regulations and procedures.

# Chapter 6: Certification

## Initial Certification

Modules seeking to be recognized as either a Type 1 or Type 2 WFM will complete the following certification process. Prior to initiating this certification process, the supervisor/leader of a prospective WFM program will focus on the following elements for program development:

- Multiple documented peer evaluations and mentoring assignments from existing Type 1 or Type 2 WFMs.
  - WFMs seeking Type 1 certification will have documented performance as a Type 2 WFM.
  - WFMs seeking Type 2 certification will have documented performance as a generic “module, fuels” or “module, suppression” (see *National Mobilization Guide*, Chapter 20, Non-Standard Overhead Groups, for more guidance on generic module types).
- Utilize the *NWCG Standards for Wildland Fire Module Operations* as the framework for program development.
- Develop administrative and supervisory support with the home unit.
- Receive performance evaluation(s) while on fire assignments.
- Initiate periodic performance reviews.
- Utilize imbedded mentors or experienced WFM leaders who integrate within the WFM to evaluate performance and provide written recommendations for preparing for certification.
- Utilize “shadow assignments” or opportunities to work with established WFMs for the purposes of preparing for certification.

The supervisor or leader of a prospective Type 1 or Type 2 WFM program will initiate the certification process for a WFM to become a fully qualified WFM through the following steps:

- 1) WFM leader will request WFM certification with the home unit supervisor and home unit fire management officer.
- 2) The requesting module leader and home unit fire management officer will complete a draft (without signatures) of the Wildland Fire Module Certification Review Checklist and the Wildland Fire Module Annual Mobilization Preparedness/Proficiency Checklist, (<https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/430>) and submit to the sponsoring agency’s representative on the Geographic Area Operations Committee along with a request for WFM certification.
- 3) When Wildland Fire Module Certification Review Checklist and the Wildland Fire Module Annual Mobilization Preparedness/Proficiency Checklist, (<https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/430>) are complete, the requesting modules’ home unit will contact the dispatching GACC who will contact the Geographic Area Operations Committee Chair to initiate WFM certification.
- 4) Geographic Area Operations Committee will assemble a certification team and identify a team leader. The certification team will be comprised of at least three individuals, including a team leader. Team composition should include: A current or former WFM leader at the appropriate level (Type 1 or 2); a unit or sub-unit fire management officer or other manager with WFM expertise; and a representative from the Geographic Area Operations Committee. The team leader and at least one other member will be independent of the host unit. Certification will be

based on compliance with the current *NWCG Standards for Wildland Fire Module Operations*.

- 5) Date of certification will be negotiated and confirmed.
  - a) The home unit is responsible for arranging accommodations and providing logistical support for the certification team.
  - b) The certification team will in brief with requesting module leader and home unit fire leadership to discuss objectives and agenda for review.
  - c) Certification team will meet with requesting crew for introductions and provide a briefing of planned activities and expectations.
  - d) A thorough review will be conducted of records, plans, crew evaluations, vehicles, facilities, equipment, safety, training, fitness, qualifications, etc.
  - e) Short-term individual simulations (i.e., sand table exercises, readiness) will be conducted.
  - f) Field simulation (drills) or other tests of module skill and competency will be conducted.
  - g) Requesting Module will conduct an “After Action Review.”
- 6) Certification team will make a recommendation on certification.
- 7) Certification team closes out with the requesting module and home unit.
- 8) Certification recommendation
  - a) If recommended for certification, the Wildland Fire Module Certification Review Checklist and the Wildland Fire Module Annual Mobilization Preparedness/Proficiency Checklist, (<https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/430>) are finalized and signed by the team leader and forwarded to the Geographic Area Operations Committee.
  - b) If not recommended, the certification team should identify the elements in which the module was deficient and discuss with the module leader and home unit supervisor how the module may meet those standards in the future.
- 9) If the Geographic Area Operations Committee endorses the certification recommendation they will sign the Wildland Fire Module Certification Review Checklist, (<https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/430>) and notify the home unit/agency, the module, and the Geographic Area Coordinating Group (GACG).
- 10) Final certification
  - a) The certification letter along with the completed WFM Certification Review Checklist will be forwarded by the GACG to the National Multi-Agency Coordination Group, the National Interagency Coordination Center, and the NWCG Wildland Fire Module Unit Chair (via the NWCG Executive Secretary) at the following email address:  
[BLM\\_FA\\_NWCG\\_Executive\\_Secretary@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_FA_NWCG_Executive_Secretary@blm.gov)
  - b) If not certified, the documentation and a letter of items not meeting standards will be left with the home fire management unit.

## Status Change

Integrity cannot be written into a document and it is impossible to address every conceivable scenario. It is the responsibility of the WFM leader, their first line supervisor, and agency administrator to objectively assess the module’s readiness and they are duty bound to not misrepresent the WFM

community. If in their estimation the module no longer meets the minimum requirements of the Wildland Fire Module Annual Mobilization Preparedness/Proficiency Checklist (<https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/430>) then it is their responsibility to change the module's status accordingly. (e.g., Type 1 WFM to Type 2 or Unavailable).

## **Decertification**

In the event the module does not meet the requirements of the Wildland Fire Module Annual Mobilization Preparedness/Proficiency Checklist, (<https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/430>) within one calendar year from the date of change in status the module and home unit shall:

- 1) Develop a plan to get the module up to standard prior to the start of the next season; or
- 2) Decertify the module.
- 3) If after two calendar years from the date of the status change the module is unable to meet the standards, a new certification process will be required as described under initial certification page 18.

## **Annual Readiness Review and Pre-Mobilization Process**

On an annual basis the module leader for all WFMs in good standing from the previous season are required to complete the Wildland Fire Module Annual Mobilization Preparedness/Proficiency Checklist, (<https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/430>) and send to the local GACC prior to making the module available for national mobilization each season. The annual review will be conducted while the module is fully staffed and has completed all required training needed prior to being operational. This process is designed to evaluate module preparedness and compliance with the standards contained in this document.

The WFM leader's first line supervisor must approve and sign the checklist and keep a copy on file at the home unit fire management office.

## **Chapter 7: Training**

The home unit is responsible for initiating IDP for WFM personnel and arranging the necessary training to enable employees to meet required qualifications.

The priority of training is to meet WFM required qualifications as outlined above. Additional training may be given as needed for employee development and agency needs. The WFM leader will be responsible to maintain records of each individual's qualifications and training needs. These will be available to requesting units in supporting employee development. The WFM leader will give their home unit supervisor a list of training needs for WFM members. All training shall be documented.

### **Training Definitions**

Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training:

All WFM personnel must receive 40 hours of annual training. Training will include, agency-specific fireline refresher (RT-130) and applicable OSHA-required safety training. Training hours should include, but is not limited to, firefighter safety, first aid, fire behavior, and WFM operating procedures. This training is not inclusive of agency-specific administrative requirements. The final responsibility for WFM availability will depend on the certification that all requirements for the WFM are complete.

### **Other Training or Field Exercises**

Other training to be accomplished should be based on WFM and individual needs identified by the WFM leader. Specific training objectives can be met through classroom training, field exercises, or on-the-job training.

In addition to the classroom portion of the training program, All WFM members will be required to demonstrate their physical ability to perform arduous duties while in the field.

Field exercises are essential for team building. They give supervisors an opportunity to observe, assess, instruct, and evaluate individual WFM members in the fieldwork environment. They also provide supervisors the opportunity to develop communication, stress the basics of tool use, and field safety. They give WFM members an opportunity to familiarize themselves with WFM operations, practice proper and safe tool use, and develop WFM cohesion.

### **Physical Fitness Training**

As part of the training program, all WFM personnel will be required to participate in a minimum of one hour of physical fitness training, 5 days a week, during periods of non-arduous assignments or stand-by. The physical fitness training program will focus on stretching, aerobic fitness, and strength building. All WFM personnel shall be notified of the current arduous duty fitness standard prior to the WFM start-up date in order to allow individuals sufficient time to accomplish pre-fire season physical conditioning as set in agency policy and guidance.

### **Fitness Standard**

All WFM personnel shall meet the sponsor agency's current WCT fitness standard for fireline personnel. Anyone having not completed the testing process within the timeframes established by their respective agency will not be available for operational assignments.

## **Fitness Goal**

As a part of fireline performance required of WFMs, the physical ability to perform arduous labor is critical to module morale, personal health, and safety standards. To accomplish this module members are encouraged to meet the following standard:

- 1.5 mile run in a time of 11:00 min. or less
- 45 sit-ups in 60 seconds
- 25 pushups in 60 seconds
- 7 pull-ups in 60 seconds



## Chapter 8: Safety Standards

WFMs shall comply with interagency and agency-specific safety standards. Safety shall always be the first priority in all activities. It is the responsibility of all personnel to communicate safety concerns to others either immediately or through briefings and direct communication with assigned personnel.

Specific safety guidance includes:

- Agency-specific health and safety guides
- Risk Assessment Process
- *Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations* (Red Book)
- *Incident Response Pocket Guide*, PMS 461
- *Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide*, PMS 510, and agency-specific aviation guides
- *NWCG Standards for Aerial Ignition*, PMS 501
- SAFENET
- Department of Transportation Regulations governing Transportation of Hazardous Materials

### Safety Compliance

Responsibility for compliance with these standards and the safe operation of a WFM ultimately lies with the WFM leader and each individual.

A WFM program will be reviewed in the event it is unable to meet any of the above minimum criteria. Program reviews will be conducted by the home unit supervisors and the WFM leader.

## References

*NWCG Standards for Interagency Incident Business Management*, PMS 902

(<https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/902>)

*Standards for Interagency Hotshot Crew Operations*, 2016

([https://www.nifc.gov/policies/policies\\_documents/StandardsInteragencyHotshotCrewOps.pdf](https://www.nifc.gov/policies/policies_documents/StandardsInteragencyHotshotCrewOps.pdf))

*Interagency Wildland Fire Module Field Guide*

([https://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/dispatch/overhead/Wildland\\_Fire\\_Modules/Field\\_Guide.pdf?pdf=Field\\_Guide](https://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/dispatch/overhead/Wildland_Fire_Modules/Field_Guide.pdf?pdf=Field_Guide))

*NWCG Glossary of Wildland Fire* (<https://www.nwcg.gov/glossary/a-z>)

*Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy*, February 13, 2009

([https://www.nifc.gov/policies/policies\\_documents/GIFWFMP.pdf](https://www.nifc.gov/policies/policies_documents/GIFWFMP.pdf))

*Review and Update of the 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy*, January 2001

(<https://www.nwcg.gov/sites/default/files/memos/eb-m-09-001a.pdf>)

*NIMS Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide*, PMS 310-1

(<https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/310-1>)

*Wildland Fire Module Certification Review Checklist*

<https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/430>

*WFM Annual Mobilization Preparedness/Proficiency Checklist*

<https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/430>

The *NWCG Standards for Wildland Fire Module Operations* is developed and maintained by the Fire Use Subcommittee (FUSC), under the direction of the Fuels Management Committee (FMC), an entity of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG).

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This publication is available electronically at <https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/430>.

Comments, questions, and recommendations shall be submitted to the appropriate agency program manager assigned to the Fire Use Subcommittee. View the complete roster at <https://www.nwcg.gov/committees/fire-use-subcommittee/roster>.

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