



2017 Southwest Area Priority Trainee Procedures (updated September 2016)

The Southwest Priority Trainee Program provides an avenue to mobilize priority trainees to incidents in support of interagency succession objectives. Nationally, Incident Management Teams (IMTs), single resource overhead and dispatchers provide the support structure for managing large incidents. As individuals retire, it is critical that we prepare for the future by training replacements to ensure that this key structural backbone remains intact. The end state vision is to produce a holistic system wherein all functional areas involved in the mobilization and training process join together to create a sustainable workforce.

Definition of a Priority Trainee

This designator reflects someone serving in a trainee position that is in critical need of receiving on the job training to: 1) meet a job requirement, 2) help fill a team shortage, or 3) career development.

Examples of a priority trainee are listed below.

1. **Position Job Requirement** – The trainee is currently assigned in a job that requires the qualification position to retain their employment. The trainee is subject to removal from their employed job if they do not meet the requirement. (Example: IFPM, FSFPM, and any other agency's similar program that have been documented and signed by the highest level authority for their agency). The trainee needs assignment to meet the requirements to perform fully in their present position or to recertify for a position due to a lapse in currency.
2. **Incident Management** – SWCG has identified critical positions on Incident Management Teams. These are IC, SOF, PIO, LOFR, PSC, FBAN, LTAN, FSC, LSC, OSC, and Air Branch positions. Reference the table on next page for all positions included in the Priority Trainee Program.
3. **Career Development** – Established Individual Development Plans (IDP's) for future advancement for career path.

Southwest Priority Trainee Program Process

Annually, the SWA Operations Committee under the SWCG will establish a process to prioritize and identify Priority Trainees. The Geographic Area Training Representative (GATR) will manage and maintain the Southwest list. The GATRs will coordinate with each other throughout the year and will share opportunities for mobilization of Priority Trainees across GACC boundaries. GATRs will coordinate with the GACC, IMT, NIMO, and hosting Agency Administrators to ensure trainee lists are implemented for mobilization.

Applicants to participate in the SWA Priority Trainee Program must be Agency employees (includes Federal, State, permanent FD/local Agency, and tribal employees). Federal/State ADs and Fire Department Supplemental employee trainees can still mobilize under normal dispatching process when no Priority Trainees are available.

Trainees are rated/scored on the Priority Trainee Nomination Form according to the following criteria:

- Qualification is needed for current position description (i.e. IFPM)
- Trainee position is required for career development and identified in the IDP.

- Trainee needs to re-certify or have a task book reissued for a position
- Trainee task book completion % and time left until expiration

Each of these criteria are assigned a point score and used to rank trainees for a given position, thus maximizing the opportunities to achieve incident assignments and task book completion. Once a trainee is recommended for certification by an evaluator, the GATR will work with the Zone Training Representative and remove the individual from the Priority Trainee List.

Trainees positions included in the Priority Trainee Program are:

Command	Aviation	Operations	Logistics	Planning	Finance	Dispatch
ICT1**	AOBD	OSC1	LSC1	PSC1	FSC1	IADP
ICT2**	ASGS	OSC2	LSC2	PSC2	FSC2	ACDP
ICT3	ATGS	OPBD	COML	RESL	TIME	CORD
SOF1	HMGB	DIVS	MEDL	SITL	PROC	EDSP
SOF2	HEB1		FDUL	DOCL	COMP	EDSD
PIO1	HEB2		SPUL	DMOB	COST	INTS
PIO2	SEMG		FACL	LTAN	INBA	MCCO
LOFR			GSUL	FBAN	BUYL	
			EQPM	SOPL	BUYM	
				TNSP	PTRC	
				ITSS	EQTR	
				GISS		
				HRSP		
				READ		
				REAF		

** ICT1 and ICT2 positions are subject to a different application process by the SWCG. IC trainees approved by the SWCG are prioritized and the list is given to the GATR for inclusion on the Master Priority Trainee list.

Individuals may only nominate for one Priority Trainee position. This ensures a focused approach on the one position and achieving multiple assignments to attain the needed qualification.

Tie Breaking Procedures for SWA Master List

The following methodology is used to address any point score ties *between* zones:

1. Highest PTB completion %
2. # of Assignments
3. Soonest PTB expiration
4. Other factors such as IDP, job requirement, and required training complete
5. Zone Priority
6. Alphabetical by last name

Performance Evaluations and Task Books

Training Specialists (TNSP) are responsible to document each assignment for a Priority Trainee including: PTB percentage completed and ensure completion of a Performance Evaluation. A copy of the trainee documentation package will be included in the incident documentation package and sent to the GATR.

IMT Trainees

Southwest IMTs will be allowed to carry six Primary Trainees on their roster. These are selected through the ICAP process. Additional trainees (up to 8) will be mobilized from the Priority Trainee List, subject to Agency Administrator approval. These 8 additional trainees may or may not be S-420/520 attendees. IMTs are asked to incorporate these trainees on every assignment. Once assigned to an incident, IMTs will determine what trainee position needs or opportunities they have and work with the Southwest Coordination Center or Geographic Area Training Representative (GATR) to fill those positions. Individual units hosting Incident Management Teams often have local trainees to be utilized as appropriate by the IMT. Subject to agency administrator approval, additional priority trainees may be mobilized from the Priority Trainee list.

Individuals who apply to Primary Trainee IMT positions through the ICAP system must consider that they may not be selected to an IMT. These individuals are encouraged to apply to both ICAP and the Priority Trainee Program. The Priority Trainee application period closes on October 31 each year and the area-wide list is published in early January. IMT Primary Trainee applicants who were not selected to IMTs will not be accepted if they did not previously submit a Priority Trainee application.

Primary IMT Members

Primary IMT members, including primary trainees, can be nominated for the Priority Trainee Program if applying for the positions in the table above. Before an individual accepts a Priority Trainee assignment, they must first obtain IC approval and secure an alternate.

Incoming IMTs to a Zone

When a Southwest IMT is mobilized to an incident in the Southwest, the 8 identified Priority Trainee positions will be filled off the Southwest area-wide list. Subject to Agency Administrator approval, additional trainees are mobilized by the IMT to include those Priority Trainees within the Zone or from the area-wide list.

Priority Trainee Relocation

Individuals on the Southwest Area Priority Trainee list who re-locate outside the Southwest Area (i.e. change jobs) will be removed from the list. The individual will be subject to the procedures identified in the receiving Geographic Area's Priority Trainee program (if applicable).

Individuals who re-locate to the Southwest Area after the nomination deadline will only be allowed to participate in the program if they were a Priority Trainee from previous Geographic Area. They will be lowest in priority for the given position; however, If the individual is still a trainee during the next advertisement cycle, they can apply and will be prioritized in accordance with established criteria.

ROSS Availability

Priority Trainees will be mobilized according to the highest priority *Available* trainee. If showing unavailable in ROSS, they will not be called for an assignment. The following are guidelines for ROSS availability:

- **Available Local** – the person will not be called for an out of dispatch zone PT single resource or IMT roster assignment. They will not be placed on the availability list shared between Geographic Area Training Representatives.
- **Available GACC** – the person may be called for any incident within the Southwest for single resource or IMT roster assignment. They will not be placed on the availability list shared between Geographic Area Training Representatives.

- **Available National** – the person may be called for any assignment within the Southwest and Nationally both as single resource or as part of an IMT roster assignment. They will be placed on the availability list shared between Geographic Area Training Representatives.

Any trainees identified and nominated for the program should be reasonably available for 1 or more assignments throughout the season. Those trainees who do not take assignments may be subject to a lower priority as lists are re-prioritized. The following guidelines will be used for those declining assignments when showing available:

1. Upon first declination of assignment and with a reasonable explanation, trainee will be skipped to next highest priority. Individual should be made unavailable until available again.
2. Upon second declination of assignment, trainee will be made unavailable and will drop in priority to the end of the list for that position.
3. Upon third declination of assignment, trainee will be removed from the list.

Dispatch Centers shall attempt to track these situations and notify the GATR.

Name requests received for individuals on *suppression (Incident Firecodes)* who are not the highest priority *Available* trainee will be denied.

The ordering unit may then request the highest priority *Available* trainee if they choose to do so.

Mobilization Process

The priority trainee list will be utilized for within and out of geographic area mobilization (see flow charts below).

Within Geographic Area



Out of Geographic Area



Roles and Responsibilities

Priority Trainee Applicant

- Ensure availability is accurate
- Ensure Position Task Book accomplishments is reported to GATR after every assignment
- Ensure a Performance Evaluation is completed by the incident supervisor and sent to the GATR and the Zone Training Representative
- Ensure documentation of assignment is completed by an IMT Training Specialist if one is available

Geographic Area Training Representative (GATR)

- Provides overall management of the PT Program
- Ensures available PT lists are compiled at least weekly
- Ensures distribution of available PT list to active Expanded Dispatch, TNSPs on IMTs, and other GATRs
- Facilitates movement of PTs between SWA and other Geo Areas
- Ensures PT list is available for IMT selection meeting in January of each year
- Assesses applicability of trainee assignments in terms of both quality and duration
- Works w/ GACC and expanded dispatch organizations to promote trainee mobilization in a seamless fashion
- Tracks statistics for trainee mobilization within and out of the geographic area

Southwest Agencies

- Ensures excellent communication flow within their respective agency exists on the PT Program
- Identifies and provides opportunities to trainee personnel to participate in the PT Program to include dissemination of the Procedures and Nomination Process
- Identifies an Agency Point of Contact (POC) for any questions or issues that arise

Zone Coordinating Groups

- Ensures all agencies and respective trainees are notified of the Procedures and Nomination Process
- Works with the Zone Training Representative on implementation procedures for the Zone to include collection and prioritization of nominations
- Assigns discretionary points to applicants taking into consideration such things as succession planning, agency objectives, IMT membership, development, etc.

Southwest Area Training Committee

- Receives the prioritized PT list from each Zone Representative and combine the lists by position to create a Southwest Area PT list and submit to the GATR
- Ensures good consistent communication within the Committee and GATR occurs

Zone Training Representative

- Represents their respective Zone's interests to the Southwest Area Training Committee
- Receives PT nomination forms from Unit Training Officers within their Zone
- Works with their Zone Coordinating Group on prioritization of nominations for the Zone
- Provides local PT list to incoming IMT for use on incident

Unit Training Officer

- Receives PT nomination forms for their respective unit's personnel
- Ensures accuracy of trainee nomination form and validate point scores related to Position Task Books and the Other Factors section of the nomination
- Sends the validated Unit PT nomination forms to the Zone Training Representative

IMT/Training Specialist

- Identifies PT opportunities within the IMT roster prior to and during incident assignments
- Communicates regularly with the GATR and SWCC to ensure these opportunities are communicated and ample assignments given for PTs

- Coordinates with other TNSPs, the GATR, and SWCC to reassign trainees from one incident to another, when there is opportunity
- Captures incident/trainee data and summarizes it for the GATR in the form of reports and spreadsheets
- Matches trainees with qualified trainers and ensures a performance evaluation is completed
- Reviews team rosters and IAPs to identify trainees that may not have signed up with the Training Specialist
- Develops a positive relationship with the Ordering Manager to facilitate the placement of trainees. Explains PT process for placing name requests
- Ensures the GATR and Zone Training Representative is notified when a trainee is recommended for certification by an evaluator

Third Tier Dispatch Offices

- Ensures timely, accurate ROSS availability of PTs
- Communicates with the Zone Training Representative and SWCC regularly with any issues or concerns related to the PT Program and PT assignments

Expanded Dispatch

- Consults the priority trainee list when assigning trainees to an incident
- Facilitates trainee mobilization

SWCC

- Ensures accurate availability reports for all SWA PTs are generated weekly
- Communicates with the GATR, Incident Commanders, and TNSPs to ensure ample PT assignments are being given with IMTs

Nomination Process and Timelines: The nomination and prioritization process for trainees is similar to the process already in place for interagency fire training. PT Nomination forms can be found on the Southwest Coordination Center Training webpage and must be sent to the Unit training Officer by Oct 31.

Timelines are as follows:

Timeframe	Task	Responsibility
October 1-31	Open the nomination period for Priority Trainees	GATR/SWCC
November 1-30	Zones prioritize lists and send to SWA Training Committee	Zone/Training Reps
Dec 1-Jan 10	Compile Zone lists and generate GACC-wide list	Training Committee/GATR
Jan 11-19	Collection of any errors in list and redistribute	Zones>GATR>SWCC

- Trainees will submit nominations to the Zone Training Representative
- The Zone Training Representatives will determine trainee priorities by position for the Zone and get Zone Board concurrence
- The Southwest GATR will compile and maintain the list and provide it to the Southwest Coordination Center for dissemination
- The SWCC will work with the GATR to mobilize a TNSP into the GACC as needed
- SWCC to generate weekly availability reports for Priority Trainees by Zone/Position

- When there is an opportunity for a trainee to mobilize within or outside of the Southwest Area, the dispatch centers will utilize the Priority Trainee list to fill the orders.

The Southwest Priority Trainee Program is the primary tool being utilized for career development, succession planning for incident response, and dispatch capacity as we develop the future of incident management in the Southwest. If you have any questions, please contact your respective Zone Training Representative.

Zone Training Representatives

Zone	Name	Email	Phone
Albuquerque (ABZ)	Anthony Meza	ameza@blm.gov	505-346-2660
Central West (CWZ)	Robert Martin	robert_martin@fws.gov	520-823-4292
Gila-Las Cruces (GLZ)	Glenda Womack	grwomack@fs.fed.us	575-388-8362
Northern Arizona (NAZ)	Jeff Walther	jwalther@fs.fed.us	928-527-3552
Pecos (PEZ)	Tiffany Fralie	tfralie@fs.fed.us	575-434-7353
Santa Fe (SNZ)	Renee Isackson	gisackson@fs.fed.us	505-438-7800
Southeast Arizona (SEZ)	Stephen Grater	stephen_grater@nps.gov	520-733-5132
Taos (TAZ)	Maria Valerio	mevalerio@fs.fed.us	575-758-6208
White Mountain (WMZ)	Rita Booth	rbooth@fs.fed.us	928-532-2711