

OPERATIONAL HANDBOOK FOR SOUTHWEST AREA TRAINING COUNCIL

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SOUTHWEST COORDINATING GROUP TRAINING COUNCIL CHARTER

I. **Authority**

The Memorandum of Agreement for the Southwest Coordinating Group (SWCG), signed 5/15/1991, by the cooperating agencies of the Southwest Area (SWA) authorizes establishment of the Southwest Area Training Council (SWATC). This charter sets forth guidelines and procedures by which the Southwest Area Training Council will operate.

II. **Purpose**

To provide an efficient, effective way to meet incident management training needs through an interagency forum, and to develop a process for coordinating the various agency-sponsored training efforts.

III. **Delegation to Zones**

The responsibility for oversight of all wildland fire training has been delegated by the SWCG to each zone fire management board. Therefore, the Council is directly responsible to the various zone boards for coordinating fire training within the Southwest Geographic Area.

The SWATC shall provide an effective, efficient method of meeting training needs as identified by the various member agencies' zones and the SWA.

IV. **Membership**

Membership of the Southwest Area Training Council shall consist of the following:

- A. Training coordinators of each incident management zone within the SWA.
- B. Federal, State, or Tribal training specialists at the Area level; option to be a member.
- C. Southwest Geographic Area Training Representative (GATR)
- D. SWCG liaison
- E. *Ad Hoc* members shall be added as needed, such as Type I and/or Type II Team Training Specialists, Aviation Training, Arizona and New Mexico state representatives at large, and/or State fire marshals

V. **Organization**

The Council shall select the following from SWA wildland fire management agencies or regular membership:

- A. Council Chair: (Current: Jerome Macdonald, 2005-2007)

- B. From the regular membership, a Vice-Chair will be selected and will replace the Chair when the position becomes vacant. (Current: Glenda Womack, 2005-2007)
- C. Recording Secretary (Current: Mary Zabinski)

These three officers shall serve a minimum of 2 years.

The selection of officers shall take place at the Fall meeting of the year in which their terms expire.

VI. Meetings

The Council shall meet twice yearly at a site to be selected at the previous meeting. These meetings shall be in Spring and Fall.

At least 2 conference calls will be held in alternate quarters--Summer and Winter--to be scheduled by the Chair. Each member or designated representative will attend.

VII. Special Circumstances

If the need should arise, any additional meetings or teleconferences can be requested by any zone board or representative and will be set up by the Chair.

This Charter, Operational Handbook, and the standing committee shall remain in effect until dissolved by the SWCG.

Recommended as revised by:

/s/ _____ Date
Jerome Macdonald, Chair
Southwest Area Training Council

Approved by:

/s/ _____ Date
PAM McAlpin, Chair
Southwest Coordinating Group

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

- I. The following procedures will govern operations of the Southwest Area Training Council.
 - A. Membership in the SWATC shall include the zone training coordinators from the nine zones who are members of the SWCG. Agency representation may include federal, state, or tribal training specialists at the Area level.
 - B. The Chair shall be appointed by the Council membership. The Chair shall serve a term of two years and shall be rotated through the signatory agencies of the SWCG. The Vice-Chair shall be selected from within the members from each zone.
 - C. The SWCG and/or this Training Council may appoint *Ad Hoc* members. These members will serve to meet special needs of the Council and will serve for one year.
- II. The following guidelines and procedures will govern the coordination of training.
 - A. The SWATC shall:
 1. Establish guidelines within the SWA for coordination and development of zone training programs.
 2. Identify interagency training issues and concerns in the SWA and make recommendations concerning these to the SWCG.
 3. Develop, maintain, and distribute wildland fire training information and materials. This information will include training courses, qualified instructors, and facilities available. This information is updated year-round on the SWA Wildland Fire Training website: <http://www.nationalfiretraining.net/sw/>
 4. Each zone training representative will compile a training needs analysis for their Zone by May 1 of each year. The GATR is responsible for developing a needs analysis tool, compiling the needs analysis from the zones, and distributing those findings, including posting on the SWA Wildland Fire Training website by June 1 of each year.
 5. The Training Council, in conjunction with the GATR, will utilize the Geographic Area Needs Analysis along with information from the Southwest Coordination Center and Southwest Area (SWA) incident management teams, to identify critical courses, ICS positions, and specific GACC needs.
 6. Assure courses are delivered to meet NWCG certification requirements. The Council may audit courses to assure course and unit objectives are met.
 7. Assist zone training representatives by providing a forum to coordinate training, share opportunities, and assist with delivering wildland fire training to best meet the needs of the zone.
 8. The SWATC will meet at least twice a year. Emphasis will be made on having members of the Council attend a zone meeting at least once a year. Additional

meetings can be called at the discretion of the chairperson. Conference calls will be held at least twice yearly.

9. The SWATC Chair will meet with the SWCG in a general meeting at least once a year to update the parent group on the Council's activities.
10. Review the SWA training standards and make recommendations to the SWCG on identified changes.

TRAINING COORDINATION

The SWATC shall coordinate Level 300 and -400 fire training among the various zones. The Council will facilitate inter-zone and intra-zone training.

The Council will provide liaison for training needs and concerns between the zone training coordinators and the SWCG.

The Council will make a concerted effort through training needs analysis to determine the most pressing training needs of local agencies, zones, and Southwest Area incident management teams, and provide publications and coordination for these training needs. If the Council identifies a pressing need for a specific course or courses in the GACC, the Council will work with the zones to make sure the course is offered.

SWATC will maintain Area and zone training offerings in the various zones. The training calendar shall be posted on the SWA Wildland Fire Training Website and updated to reflect the current situation.

The Council works with the national-level course development group at the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho, to host alpha and beta pilot tests of new courses as well as work with national cadres to sponsor courses within the Southwest Area.

The Council provides subject matter experts to the Course Development Unit and coordinates with adjacent geographic areas to provide training opportunities in critical courses.

Appendix

- **310-1, Wildland Fire & Prescribed Fire Qualification System Guide, January 2006;**
<http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/docs/310-1new.pdf>
- **NWCG Course Coordinator's Guide (May 2002, NFES 2226);**
<http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/training/PMS907.pdf>
- **IQCS Implementation Plan for the Southwest Area**

WILDLAND FIRE TRAINING RESPONSIBILITIES

The SWATC will solicit zones for high-demand courses or responsibilities for specific functional areas. To develop the annual course schedule, the Council will use Southwest Area needs, availability of instructors and budget, and location of trainees along with zone input provided by zone training representatives at the Spring and Fall meetings. The Council will be responsible for assuring the annual wildland fire training (300- and 400-level courses) scheduled to best meet the zones' capabilities of providing training. The SWATC will display this information on the Website. Each zone will have the flexibility to offer courses that meet critical training needs.

500- and 600-level courses are to be reviewed by the SWCG. Nominations will be submitted by the zone boards to the SWCG through the Southwest GATR who will compile and present to the SWCG for priority and selection decisions. The nomination process for these courses is posted on the National Wildland Fire Training Schedule website.

Individual zones will handle coordination of 100- and 200-level courses for various agencies within the zone. These courses can be announced on the SWA Wildland Fire Training Website or on zones' training Websites.

Courses may be listed on the National Calendar by the GATR. Zone training representatives may maintain zone calendars on the SWA Wildland Fire Training website as well by submitting course information to the Southwest GATR.

The use of Academy formats within functional areas will be encouraged to promote convenience for the trainee, maximize training opportunities, and reduce training costs for the trainee units.

COURSE COORDINATION

The SWA uses the "*NWCG Course Coordinator's Guide (May 2002, NFES 2226.*" A course coordinator will follow the format of the course announcements posted on the SWA Wildland Fire Training Schedule. Course coordinators shall provide a one-page course announcement for each 300- or 400-level course being offered by their zone to the Southwest GATR to be posted and maintained on the SWA Training Schedule along with the course listing.

The course coordinator can post trainee selections pre-course on the SWA Training Website by providing a class roster to the GATR. This feature can be utilized for high-demand courses listed on the Schedule.

The course coordinator can also post trainee completions post-course on the Southwest Area Training Website by providing a class roster to the GATR. This feature can be utilized for all training courses listed on the Schedule.

Course listings and individual announcements are to be sent to the Southwest GATR by August 1 of each year for publication as the ensuing year's training calendar.

100- and 200-level courses will be published as part of the SWA Wildland Fire Training Website either on the SWA Wildland Fire Training Schedule or on the zone schedules provided on the Website. Individual course announcements are not required for 100- and 200-level courses. Courses can be listed for a zone only or with a specific zone priority.

INCIDENT QUALIFICATIONS AND CERTIFICATION SYSTEM (IQCS)

IQCS is the Incident Qualifications and Certification System. IQCS is an information management system that tracks training and certifications for wildland firefighters. IQCS is an interagency application that allows the sharing of wildland firefighter training and certification data across all involved agencies (BLM, NPS, BIA, FWS, FS). IQCS also provides all-risk--that is, oil spills, HAZMAT, hurricane response, etc.--tracking functionality to personnel who perform emergency response duties. Refer to the "***IQCS Implementation Guide for the Southwest Area***" listed in the Appendix in which the certification and nomination process was discussed in detail.

LIAISON

The Council Chair shall meet once each year with the SWCG for exchange of needed information and discussion of training accomplishments and future training needs.

Additional meetings may be scheduled as needed.

Each zone training coordinator shall meet with their respective zone incident management board on an as needed basis. These meetings may be requested by either the zone training coordinator or the zone board.

INFORMATION

Updates

The Council shall keep the zone boards and the SWCG informed of:

- New course development
- Changes in qualification standards
- Changes in prerequisites, both course and qualifications, for acceptance of an applicant to any course

Each zone should come to the spring meeting with needs for courses (based on qualifications/currency analysis).

CHANGES, AMENDMENTS, DELETIONS

Any part of the Operational Handbook may be changed, amended, or deleted by a majority decision of the Council at a regular meeting.

Any such actions require notification of the zone boards and concurrence by the SWCG.