FOREST SERVICE FIRE AND AVIATION QUALIFICATIONS GUIDE

CHAPTER 3 – TRAINING DEVELOPMENT, LEADERSHIP TRAINING, REFRESHER TRAINING AND HISTORY

Effective Date: February 28, 2011, Updated January 20, 2023

UPDATES:

- Major changes:
    - 3.2 - Exhibit 01, List of Approved Equivalency Courses
        - Successful completion of CE-130 equivalent course for RT-130

        - Successful completion of USDA Forest Service National Sawyer Training Developing Thinking Sawyers; Module 1: Introduction to Saw Operations, Module 2.1 Chain Saw Basics, Module 2.2 – Chainsaw Brushing, Limbing and Bucking, Module 2.3 – Chain Saw Directional Felling, Module 7: Hung-Up Trees, and Module 5: Fireline Operations equivalent course for S-212.

        - Successful completion of CIM Field Evaluation equivalent to course S-520

        - Update: S-130 (2021 version) no longer equivalent for L-180
    - Minor format and editorial edits.

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3.1 – TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Courses should be taken in an ascending order of complexity, based on successively higher levels of responsibility and skills in fire and aviation management.

3.11 - INSTRUCTOR QUALIFICATIONS, TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

Certification of instructor qualifications is the responsibility of the employing agency. Instructor qualifications, training and certification standards are contained within the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) Standards for Course Delivery (PMS 901-1) at https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/901-1.

The Forest Service complies with the standards contained in the PMS 901-1. In addition, Forest Service instructors shall:

1. Complete either the instructor requirements in the PMS 901-1 for 200 and 300 level courses or the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1041, Fire Service Instructor, which the Forest Service has identified as an equivalency course, for those courses in the PMS 901-1.

2. Meet NWCG or IAT Instructor qualification guidelines before delivering NWCG courses which have incorporated Interagency Aviation Training (IAT) materials, or any A courses applicable to employees attempting to qualify for positions contained in FSFAQG.

Certification of lead and unit instructors for the "A" courses, who have not completed A- 220 Train-the-Trainer, is the decision of the National Aviation Training Program Manager, USFS-Washington Office Fire and Aviation Management

3.111 - LEAD INSTRUCTOR REQUIREMENTS FOR "L" COURSES

The L-180 Human Factors in the Wildland Fire Service and L-280 Followership to Leadership are training course packages available in the NWCG Publication Management System (PMS). Lead instructor requirements for these courses are defined in the PMS 901-1.

The L-380 Fireline Leadership, L-381 Incident Leadership, and L-480 Organizational Leadership in the Wildland Fire Service are training courses which do not have a standard NWCG course package available for lead instructors. Therefore, the U.S. Forest Service will use the following process to evaluate and approve providers, lead instructors, and the course packages which they develop to meet the intent and the criteria for these courses as established by the NWCG Leadership Subcommittee. The course descriptions and design criteria are available at:
http*://www.fireleadership.gov/courses/courses.html*

Certification of prospective providers and their lead instructors submitting a new course package for L-380 Fireline Leadership, L-381 Incident Leadership, or L-480 Organizational Leadership in the Wildland Fire Service must be done by an evaluation team comprised of:

1. A team leader designated by the NWCG Leadership Subcommittee.

2. At least one additional evaluator from any of the agencies participating in NWCG.

Certification of new lead instructors for an existing approved L-380, L-381, or L-480 course package shall be recommended by a peer evaluation from an individual who is currently certified as a lead instructor for that same course. The NWCG Leadership Subcommittee must then approve the recommendation. A format for these evaluation procedures is available upon request from the U.S. Forest Service representative to the NWCG Leadership Subcommittee.

http://www.fireleadership.gov/committee/committee.html

A list of approved providers and their respective certified lead instructors is available at:

http://www.fireleadership.gov/courses/courses.html

The L-580 Leadership is Action program is a series of continuing education offerings for senior level leaders in the wildland fire service. This program is managed by the L-580 Steering Committee. This steering committee is chartered under the NWCG Leadership Subcommittee and works in partnership with the National Advanced Fire and Resource Institute (NAFRI). The

U.S. Forest Service will recognize only offerings approved by this steering committee as L-580 events.

3.112 - CREDIT FOR TEACHING NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP TRAINING COURSES

When serving as an instructor, a unit or adjunct instructor may receive credit for attending a course, provided the following conditions are met:

1. Prior agreement with the lead instructor and course coordinator is reached for the unit or adjunct instructor to complete the course.

2. The unit or adjunct instructor completing the course must meet all course prerequisites.

3. The entire training session must be attended, with adequate participation in class or small group activities.

4. Any required pre-course work material must be successfully completed.

5. All unit and course exams must be successfully completed.

Once the above conditions have been met, the Lead Instructor may issue a course completion certificate to the unit or adjunct instructor.

3.12 - COURSE DELIVERY STANDARDS

The Forest Service shall comply with the course delivery standards contained within the PMS 901-1. Refer to the PMS 901-1 for those standards which can be found at the following website:

https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/901-1

3.13 - FOREST SERVICE FIRELINE SAFETY REFRESHER TRAINING

Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training (RT-130) is required for all positions as identified in FSFAQG and the Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide (PMS 310-1). Employees have a 13-month currency requirement for RT-130. Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training is provided to recognize hazards and mitigate risk, maintain safe practices and to reduce accidents and near misses. The intent of the annual fireline safety refresher training is to focus suppression and prescribed fire personnel on operations and decision-making issues related to incident safety.

The Mandatory Core Components listed in the Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations Chapter 13 must be sufficiently covered to ensure that personnel are aware of safety concerns, and procedures and can demonstrate proficiency in fire shelter deployment.

The Forest Service has No minimum refresher training hour requirements. Core components should reflect the quality of the material used and not the quantity.

Further guidance can be found in the most current version of the Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations located on the Forest Service Fire & Aviation Management Publications website: https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/fire/publications.

Additional information can be found on the NWCG Wildland Fire Safety Training (WFSTAR) website: https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/training-courses/rt-130.

3.2 - EQUIVALENCY COURSES

Equivalency courses are classes that are adequate substitutes for NWCG approved curriculum and that are approved by the Washington Office, Branch Chief for Fire Training and Education. Approved equivalency courses are listed in exhibit 01.

1. Process to Evaluate and Establish Equivalency Courses: The appropriate Regional Training Working Team or steering committee shall identify the need for an equivalency analysis of a specific course. The committee shall assign an evaluation team (see para. 2 regarding the team composition) to conduct the analysis, document their findings, and submit recommendations through agency channels to the Washington Office, Fire and Aviation Management, Branch Chief for Fire Training for an equivalency review.

    a. If the Branch Chief for Fire Training and Education determines that the equivalency course analysis is sufficient and the proposed course meets the NWCG certified course standards, the Branch Chief shall recognize the course as equivalent.

    b. The Branch Chief for Fire Training and Education may also recommend acceptance of the equivalency course(s) to the NWCG The Incident and Position Standards Committee (IPSC).

2. Evaluation Team Composition: The evaluation team shall be comprised of a minimum of

three of the following members, including: lead instructor, cadre member, and course developer or subject matter expert for the respective NWCG course. The evaluators shall be individuals either who have been involved within the past 3 years with instructing the NWCG course, or who are familiar with the course development and revision process.

3. Equivalency Courses: The Branch Chief for Fire Training and Education has determined that the courses listed in exhibit 01 are equivalent to the identified NWCG course. Persons who have successfully completed the identified equivalency course do not need to attend the corresponding NWCG course.

3.2 - EXHIBIT 01, LIST OF APPROVED EQUIVALENCY COURSES

NWCG Approved Curriculum	Approved Equivalency Course(s) and Experience
D-312 Aircraft Dispatcher	Bureau of Land Management Aviation Dispatcher This equivalency is retroactive for all individuals who previously completed the BLM Aviation Dispatcher course. Competency for D-312 should be granted in the employee's IQCS file.
L-180 - Human Factors on the Fireline	S-130 - Firefighter Training (2003 version). The 2003 version of S-130 incorporates L-180 into the course package. Individuals completing the 2003 version of S-130 should be given course completion certificates for both S-130 and L-180, both courses should be entered into the Incident Qualification and Certification System (IQCS). **Effective 11/30/2021:** L-180, Human Factors on the Fireline, is no longer included as part of S-130 (2021 version). Students that successfully complete S-130, Firefighter Training (2021 version) will no longer be given credit for completing L-180, Human Factors on the Fireline. The L-180 course will now be presented as a standalone course. This can be accomplished through facilitation of an Instructor-Led version of the course or directing students to complete the Self-Directed (Online) version of the course. Review the specifics at https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/training-courses/l-180/course-delivery.

NWCG Approved Curriculum	Approved Equivalency Course(s) and Experience
L-380 - Fireline Leadership This course was also delivered under the following titles in 2001-2003: FMO Leadership Workshop Leading in Fire Management	Employees who completed L-380 can be granted course competency in IQCS for the L-180 Human Factors on the Fireline and L-280 Followership to Leadership courses with the following justification statement: "Employee's Name" completed L-380 prior to L-180 and L-280. Competency for L-180 and L-280 should be granted in the employee's IQCS file.
L-381 - Incident Leadership	Employees who completed L-381 can be granted course competency in IQCS for L-180 Human Factors on the Fireline. Competency for L-180 should be granted in the employee's IQCS file.
L-480 Organizational Leadership in the Wildland Fire Service and S-420 Command and General Staff	Employees who complete "Intent Into Action" can be granted course competency in IQCS for S-420 and L-480. Course changed in 2015 to L-481, Advanced Leadership for Command and General Staff.
M-410 - Facilitative Instructor	National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1041, Fire Service Instructor I, with proficiency as set out in the PMS 901-1. National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1a and 1b (must complete both courses), with proficiency as set out in the PMS 901-1.
M-410 Facilitative Instructor and NFPA 1041	A-220 Train-the-Trainer (for delivery of the "A" course curriculum only)
RX-310	Successful completion of TFM Module IV Fire Effects and Landscape Ecology Module with a score of 70% or higher and letter of completion. OR Successful completion of University of Idaho FOR 526 Fire Ecology with a score of 70 % or higher.
RT-130, Wildland Fire Safety Training Annual Refresher	Successful completion of Continuing Education 130 (CE-130) in the Wildland Fire Learning Portal. Competency for RT-130 should be granted in IQCS and CE-130 completion certificate uploaded into IQCS utilizing the document upload for RT-130.

NWCG Approved Curriculum	**Approved Equivalency Course(s) and Experience**
S-110 - Basic Wildland Fire Orientation	Experience in operations positions on an incident. S-110 is designed for non-operations personnel slated for a first on-incident assignment. Many of the Technical Specialist positions listed in chapter 20 reflect S-110 as required training. However, if the incumbent has had fireline experience or previous incident experience, S-110 is not required. In these instances, course competency for S-110 should be granted in IQCS with a justification statement explaining that the individual has previous incident experience.
S-212, Wildland Fire Chainsaws	Successful completion of USDA Forest Service National Sawyer Training Developing Thinking Sawyers; Module 1: Introduction to Saw Operations, Module 2.1 Chain Saw Basics, Module 2.2 – Chainsaw Brushing, Limbing and Bucking, Module 2.3 – Chain Saw Directional Felling, Module 7: Hung-Up Trees, and Module 5: Fireline Operations. Please note all six modules must be successfully completed. Competency for S-212 should be granted in IQCS and completion certificate uploaded into IQCS utilizing the document upload for S-212.
S-336 - Fire Suppression Tactics	Successful completion of either: S-230 (1996 version) - Single Resource Boss AND S-215 - Fire Operations in the Urban Interface OR S-330 - Task Force/Strike Team Leader AND S-215 - Fire Operations in the Urban Interface
S-520, Advanced Incident Management	Employees who successfully complete a Complex Incident Management (CIM) Field Evaluation. Competency for S-520 should be granted in IQCS and completion documentation uploaded into IQCS utilizing the document upload for S-520.
S-580 - Advanced Fire Use Applications	Managing Wildland Fire for Resource Benefits (offered in Region 1). Applies only to Strategic Operational Planner qualifications.

3.21 - HISTORICAL INFORMATION FOR EQUIVALENCY COURSES

In 2002 the Forest Service developed an equivalency process for evaluating courses which adequately substitute for NWCG courses. The following courses were removed from the NWCG curriculum, but are provided for historical documentation in an employee's master file record (FSH 5109.17, sec. 22.1, Record Keeping).

3.21 - EXHIBIT 01, LIST OF COURSES REMOVED FROM NWCG CURRICULUM

NWCG Approved Curriculum	Approved Equivalency Course(s)
S-201/S-281 - Supervisory Concepts and Techniques (Prior to 10/1/2003) Note: Removed from the NWCG curriculum in October 2003. Credit should not be given for the course after 9/30/2003.	Forest Service Corporate Training Practical Leadership Skills for New First-Line Supervisors. Note: The Forest service does not recognize S-201/S-281 as equivalent to L-280 Followership to Leadership.
S-301/S-381 - Leadership and Organizational Development Note: Removed from Forest Service recognition in July 2003. Removed from the NWCG curriculum in October 2004.	L-380 Fireline Leadership. This course was also delivered under the following titles in 2001-2003: FMO Leadership Workshop Leading in Fire Management
Interagency Aviation Management and Safety (IAMS)	The following modules may be offered at the Aviation Centered Education (ACE) or Regional Workshops and are equivalent to the NWCG IAMS course for identified positions: Supervisory Dispatcher (EDSP): A-101 Basic Aircraft Safety A-104 Aircraft Capabilities and Limitations A-106 Aircraft Mishap Reporting A-109 Aircraft Radio Use A-112 Mission Planning and Flight Request Process A-202 Interagency Aviation Organizations A-203 Basic Airspace A-206 Aviation Acquisition/Procurement I A-207 Aircraft Dispatching A-302 Personal Responsibility and Liability

NWCG Approved Curriculum	Approved Equivalency Course(s)
	A-303 Human Factors in Aviation
	A-305 Risk Management
	A-307 Aviation Policy and Regulations II
	Helicopter Manager:
	A-101 Aviation Safety A-103 Helicopter Safety
	A-104 Overview of Aircraft Capabilities and Limitations
	A-105 Aviation Life Support and Equipment
	A-106 Aviation Mishap Reporting
	A-107 Aviation Policy and Regulations
	A-108 Pre-Flight Checklist and Briefing/Debriefing
	A-112 Mission Planning and Flight Request Process
	A-113 Crash Survival
Interagency Aviation Management and Safety (IAMS)	Air Operations Branch Director (AOBD), Air Tactical Group Supervisor (ATGS), Air Support Group Supervisor (ASGS), Air Tanker/Fixed Wing Coordinator (ATCO), Ramp Manager (RAMP), and Fixed Wing Base Manager (FWBM):
	A-101 Basic Aircraft Safety
	A-102 Fixed Wing Safety
	A-103 Helicopter Safety
	A-105 Aviation Life Support Equipment
	A-106 Aircraft Mishap Reporting
	A-107 Aviation Policy and Regulations 1
	A-109 Aircraft Radio Use
	A-112 Mission Planning and Flight Request Process
	A-113 Crash Survival
	A-202 Interagency Aviation Organizations
	A-203 Basic Airspace
	A-204 Aircraft Capabilities and Limitations
	A-206 Aviation Acquisition/Procurement I
	A-311 Aviation Planning
	A-301 Implementing Aviation Safety and

NWCG Approved Curriculum	Approved Equivalency Course(s)
	Accident Programs
	A-302 Personal Responsibility and Liability
	A-303 Human Factors in Aviation
	A-305 Risk Management Implementing Aviation Safety and Accident Programs
	A-302 Personal Responsibility and Liability
	A-303 Human Factors in Aviation
	A-305 Risk Management

More information on NWCG course history as well as course replacements is located at:

http://training.nwcg.gov/pdfs/NWCG%20Curriculum%20History.pdf

3.22 – INTERCHANGEABLE COURSES

NWCG has approved interchangeable courses. A description of the interchangeable course guidelines and approved interchangeable courses can be found in the PMS 901-1: https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/901-1.

The ICS-100 and ICS-200 courses accessible in AgLearn have not been deemed to be interchangeable.

For positions in this handbook which require I-100 and I-200, equivalency can be met by successfully completing one of the approved interchangeable courses listed in the PMS 901-1.

3.23 - COURSE DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

The NWCG Course Development and Standards Division provide historical information on course development which includes course numbering and course title changes. Information is available on the following website, under "Curriculum History": https://www.nwcg.gov/training-qualification-links.

3.3 - DEVELOPMENT

3.31 - SUPERVISORY DEVELOPMENT/LEADERSHIP

If an employee has not yet completed the Forest Service second 40 hours of supervision training as required in FSH 6109.13 (the Branch of Corporate Training course entitled, "Leadership Skills for Experienced Managers and Supervisors"), then completion of L-380 Fireline Leadership, or L-381 Incident Leadership, or L-480 Organizational Leadership in the Wildland Fire Service have been deemed as equivalent courses. However, completion of "Leadership Skills for Experienced Managers and Supervisors" has not been deemed to be an equivalent course to L-380, L-381, or L-480.

The contents and format of the second 40 hours of supervisor training are determined by the supervisor or management of the local unit and should be adapted to the needs of the employee's job.

Provided that the employee's supervisor approves L-380 or L-381, or L-480 as part of the employee's Individual Development Plan (IDP) as well as recorded in the IQCS Incident Responder Development Plan (IRDP), these training courses should meet the supervisory training requirement. Further direction regarding supervision training is found in FSH 6109.13.