

associations are highly recommended. These MOU's should be done at the local level with educational institutions, and at a regional geographic board level with national contractor associations.

C. Certification of non-NWCG member agency instructors and students is not the responsibility of NWCG, but rather that of educational institutions and/or recognized contractors associations. This particularly includes contract instructors. This responsibility includes assurance that both instructors and students meet or exceed appropriate NWCG prerequisite qualifications and currency requirements.

NWCG Approved January 12, 1994

### **III. Private Contractors:**

For purposes herein, "private contractors" includes private sector individual, companies or corporations who provide training, suppression or prescribed fire services for financial reimbursement.

A. All contracts with private sector contractors should stipulate applicable "General" Statements above and be enforced via usual contractual procedures. A generic contract with standard language format outlining these stipulations is suggested.

B. NWCG vigorously encourages recognized contractors' associations to establish oversight committees and to monitor member compliance with both these and related association training and certification guidelines.

C. Private sector contractors are encouraged to avail themselves of training opportunities provided by local community colleges or universities. This type of training is a prime reason for the existence of community colleges. At their discretion, NWCG members may wish to provide training to contractor or other non-member employees and issue a certificate of completion for the classroom training. A certificate of training completion states that the individual completed the classroom requirements for a given position but does not certify an individual as being qualified for the position.

D. Private sector instructors should receive certification from appropriate educational institutions or recognized contractors associations. (See IIC above.)

*Elmer Hurd*  
Chairman, NWCG



# NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP

FEB 3 1994

## Memorandum

To: Members  
Working Team Chairs

From: Chairman

Subject: Training, Qualifications and Certification

At the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) meeting on January 12, 1994, the membership approved a final version of the position paper entitled "Training, Qualifications and Certification for Non-NWCG Entities." A copy of the document is attached.

Members are reminded to make the paper available to their regional offices and to their members on the Geographic Area Coordination Groups.



Attachment

cc: Vice

FEB 3 1994

Training, Qualifications and Certification for Non-NWCG Entities

With the vast expansion of private sector contractors in the wildland fire suppression and prescribed fire business, NWCG must set forth guidelines regarding training, qualifications and certification for non-NWCG member entities.

This NWCG position paper provides guidance to member agencies, private sector contractors, and educational institutions such that all will be treated similarly and will mutually benefit by others' capabilities, while still remaining within legal and contractual constraints and establishes NWCG standards.

**NWCG POSITION:**

**I. General:**

A. All wildland fire training which will ultimately benefit NWCG members (such as that utilized by contractors) shall meet or exceed NWCG standards, as identified in instructional objectives contained in each course package and in NWCG 310-1, "Wildland Fire Qualifications Guide."

B. Instructor qualifications and presentation standards shall meet or exceed those outlined in NFES 2226, "NWCG Course Coordinator's Guide."

C. NWCG recommends that member agencies not certify contractors' employees or educational institutions' trainees or instructors except where formal agreements are in place.

D. NWCG course certificates shall only be issued to successful graduates of NWCG member-sponsored (or member designee-sponsored) training. Educational institutions should utilize their respective certificates, indicating completion of NWCG training courses. (Exceptions may occur under II B below.)

E. Any entity who deletes NWCG training material from course packages, and then presents that modified material, may not represent that course as an NWCG training course. However, materials may be added to enhance NWCG training packages.

F. NWCG course materials are available from the NWCG Publication Management System at the National Interagency Fire Center.

G. Proper use of performance-based NWCG position task books (PTB's), as outlined in the PTB instructions, should be required of contractors and educational institutions. They should document actual incident experience of contractors' employees or institutions' students (trainees).

H. Contractors' and educational institutions' trainees are strongly encouraged to obtain task book performance evaluation on NWCG members' incidents whenever possible. This facilitates incident experience verification if necessary.

I. As consistent with NWCG 310-1 "Wildland Fire Qualifications Guide," NWCG member agency personnel may sign off on individual tasks of contractors' and educational institutions' trainees.

J. Geographic Area Coordination Groups may enter into MOU agreements with recognized contractor associations to allow the association to certify their members employees qualifications, and for the board to accept this certification for purposes of employment provided: (1) The association meets the guidelines in section IA, IB, IIC, IIIC, and IIID of this position statement; (2) The geographic board reviews the procedures of the association annually to insure compliance with these guidelines; (3) Positions certified are at the Leader level or lower.

## II. Training Management:

A. NWCG encourages member agencies, at the local level, to assist educational institutions in an advisory and support capacity, establishing or guiding wildland fire training programs consistent with applicable laws, regulations and policies. Programs should include both classroom and field performance-based training.

B. Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's) to formalize training advisory and support arrangements between NWCG members and educational institutions or recognized contractor associations are highly recommended. These MOU's should be done at the local level with educational institutions, and at a regional geographic board level with national contractor associations.

C. Certification of non-NWCG member agency instructors and students is not the responsibility of NWCG, but rather that of educational institutions and/or recognized contractors associations. This particularly includes contract instructors. This responsibility includes assurance that both instructors and students meet or exceed appropriate NWCG prerequisite qualifications and currency requirements.

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Elmer Hurd  
Chairman, NWCG



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Washington  
Office

14th & Independence SW  
P.O. Box 96090  
Washington, DC 20090-6090

Reply to: 5100

Date: 20 AUG 1993

Subject: Training and Certification Standards for Contractors

To: Regional Foresters and Area Director

Earlier this spring, F&AM submitted the proposed NWCG standards for training qualification and certification of private contractors to the Office of the General Council for an opinion. Enclosed is their response. It serves as a good reminder that we are obligated to assign firefighting duties to only qualified personnel regardless of whether they are regular employees or not.

It is important that we provide oversight to private contractors and ensure that all contractors employed on fires meet the basic training and experience requirements established for the jobs they are performing. The NWCG is in the process of defining an interagency policy for dealing with this issue. Until that policy is enacted, please establish procedures to confirm that the process of certification is being achieved. You should monitor individual performance and be certain that performance evaluations are complete and thorough.

Private individuals offering firefighting services are becoming more common. We must manage these resources effectively in terms of cost and operational efficiency as well as safety. Attention to qualification and certification will help us in that goal.

MARY JO LAVIN  
Acting Director  
Fire and Aviation Management

Enclosure



Caring for the Land and Serving People

FS-6200-28b(3/92)

## APPENDIX B

### *NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP*

Feb 3, 1994

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