



NWCG Meeting Notes

September 16, 2025

Executive Board Primary Members (EB): Aitor Bidaburu (USFA) — Chair, Erik Litzenberg (IAFC) — Vice Chair, Brian Achziger (BLM)Heath Cota (USFS), Jim Durglo (ITC), Garth Fisher (BIA), Anne Jewell (DoD), Darryl Jones (NASF), Russ Babiak (NPS — Acting), Eric Fransted (FWS)
Associate Members: Annie Benoit (OWF), Heath Hockenberry (NWS), Steve Weidner (NASA), Mike Rubenstein (IMTA)

NWCG Staff: Katie Wood (NWCG Program Manager), Sarah Lee (Deputy Program Manager), David Schultz (Coordinator), Steven Gaskill (Coordinator), Toni Suminski (Training Program Manager), Chelsea McKinney (Publications Manager), Darci Drinkwater (Executive Secretary), Michael Rodriguez (Executive Secretary acting), Joe Schindel (Audiovisual Specialist, new EB Facilitator)

Guests: Michael Froelich (IPSC), Shawn Steber (ETC), Clint Hamilton (FSPPEs)

Topic & Notes	Decision/Action Item
(I) Incident Management Team Course Steering Committee (IMTCSC) – Monthly Update: • S-320, Introduction to Incident Management Teams is in the final stages and will be sent to publications by November 1st. The course should be certified by December 2025. • S-420, Intermediate Incident Management is progressing. An alpha test course is scheduled for the first week in December in Tucson, followed by a beta test course in Northern California in late March or early April. • IMTCSC will strategize on how IMT courses will build on each other. Each course is intended to be a prerequisite for the next course. • Additional funding may be necessary for any contractor support to S-520. • IPSC and the IMTCSC are continuing to work on a 420 transition plan.	
(D) ETC-EA-25-01, Pre-2006 Fire Shelter Degradation and Discontinuation of Use: • Key improvements to post-2006 shelters ○ Silane treatment: Stronger, water-resistant adhesive bonds. ○ Improved silica cloth: Enabled a one-piece floor and better durability. ○ Double-stitched seams: Reduced seam damage during deployment. ○ Redesigned shake handle: Easier deployment, especially with gloves. • Timeline of Key Events ○ 2002: M-2002 shelter approved by Fire Directors. • 2006: Updated silane treatment — stronger laminated bond, improves durability, and resistance to water. • 2008 — 2009: Phased implementation completed.	• APPROVAL of ETC Advisory 25-01 with edits requested. • DECISION: To use “should” vs. “shall,” in future NWCG bulletins and advisories.

Additional information beyond these meeting notes (i.e., handouts, presentations, maps, etc.) will require a FOIA request to ensure proper privacy regulations are followed. Please request via FOIA Online website <https://www.doi.gov/foia/make-a-request>.



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• 2020: Entrapments in Bridger Foothills and Dolan Fires reveal degradation in pre-2006 shelters. NTDP documents degradation & delamination in pre-2006 shelters deployed during entrapment. • 2021 — 2022: NTDP testing confirms performance differences; Cache Memo 22-02: Remove pre-2006 shelters, maintain ready reserve inventory until supply allows replacement. ◦ 2025: Laguna Fire entrapment renews discussions to remove older shelters. • Entrapment Case Studies ◦ Bridger Foothills (2020): Pre-2006 shelter shared by two firefighters. • Dolan Fire (2020): 12 shelters deployed, six were pre-2006. ◦ Laguna Fire (2025): Both shelter types deployed; performance differences noted. • Recommendation ◦ Remove pre-2006 shelters from service. ◦ Despite past effectiveness, testing shows significant degradation in older shelters. As fire conditions worsen, outcomes for pre-2006 shelter users will likely diverge negatively from those using post-2006 shelters. • Discussion • NWCG Advisories and Bulletins should be fact based and leave out federal-specific policy (Red Book) references. • Concerning the use of “should” vs. “shall,”” the EB agreed that “should” is most appropriate, as NWCG does not create policy.	
(I) Training Program and Incident Performance and Training Modernization (IPTM) Monthly Update: • FY2025 Closeout / FY2026 Priorities ◦ Continue IPTM implementation. ◦ Develop internal SOPs for Training Program. ◦ Implement evaluation and maintenance plans. ◦ Strengthen engagement with delivery community. ◦ Improve NWCG online courses and course catalog. ◦ Implement 2026 Annual Work Plan. • Non-IPTM Course Progress • S-290 (Blended): Certified; debut Oct 7, 2025, at the Texas Wildfire Academy. • L-280: Final review; debut Oct 7, 2025, at the Texas Wildfire Academy. • S-390: Final materials complete; portal launch by December 2025.	

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• S-490: Test course Oct 20, NAFRI; portal launch by December 2025. • IPTM Project Highlights ○ Project Manager: Kelly Houghton selected. • Story map: Live and routinely updated. ○ Pending updates: FBAN, LTAN. • IPTM Course Development • M-280 (Resource Advisor, Fireline): Alpha test Aug 2025; certification by Dec 2025. • S-219 (Firing Operations): Certified, live on portal. • S-131 & S-231: Alpha tests Oct 7 (Texas Wildfire Academy); completion by year-end (no 2026 PMS 310-1 impacts) • S-203 (Introduction to Incident Information): Alpha: Nov 17-21, 2025 in Las Vegas, NV; Beta: Feb 2026, Rocky Mountain Area; and certification projected May 2026. • S-229 (Single Resource Boss): Delayed; completion March 2026 (affects 310-1 updates) • Planning • Call Order 8: Delayed to Jan/Feb due to staffing. Confirmed positions: ICT4, HMGB, HEQB, SEMG, and RAMP. ○ Courses slated for revision: ▪ S-200 (Initial Attack IC) ▪ S-236 (Heavy Equipment Boss) ▪ S-273 (SEAT Manager) ▪ S-372 (Helicopter Manager) ○ Call Order 9: Initiation late spring; low-effort updates for positions lacking formal training (deliverables: updated IPDs, IPSs, PTBs). • Key Takeaways • Staffing challenges are slowing down IPTM and non-IPTM projects. • IPTM will not meet Sept 30, 2028, completion target at this rate. • Multiple courses are on track for certification by year-end. • FY2026 priorities: IPTM implementation, evaluation/maintenance plans, and SOP development.	
(I) Presentation: Understanding International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), Their Partners, How They Interact, Complexities, and Topic Issues: • About IAFC ○ Location: McLean, Virginia	

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○ Type: Non-profit, over 150 years old ○ Scope: Represents ~30,000 fire departments and ~1.2 million responders ○ Membership: ~12,000 members ○ Structure: ▪ Executive Director/CEO and ~30 staff • Board of Directors: 5-person executive committee and 13 elected members • Mission & Focus • Mission: Provide leadership, education, and advocacy for fire-rescue and EMS leaders globally ○ Core Values: Lead, Educate, Serve, Include ○ Activities: Advocacy, conferences, programs, policy development, and professional guides • Organizational Structure • Divisions: Western, Eastern, Great Lakes, Missouri Valley, New England, Southeastern, Southwestern, and Canadian. ○ Sections: Company Officers, EMS, EV Management, EFO, Federal and Military, Fire and Life Safety, Industrial Fire Chiefs, Metro, Safety Health and Survival, VCOS. • Committees: Hazardous Materials, Emergency Management, Wildfire Policy, and Training & Education. • Wildfire Programs Division (Wildfire Policy Committee) ○ Staffed by contracted SMEs and instructors ○ Services include: ▪ CWPP development ▪ I-FDX (Incident Fire Decision Support) ▪ Training delivery and exercises ▪ GIS, web/software development ▪ Strategic sourcing and marketing materials ▪ NWCG Involvement • IAFC's Senior Wildland Fire Advisor is on the NWCG Executive Board ○ Engages in policy, legislation, insurance, and private resource discussions ○ CS-FAC (Fire Adapted Communities), landscape resilience, and safe/effective response ○ Supports NWCG priorities	

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(I) Annual Meeting — Current Progress and Draft Agenda: • Zeph Cunningham has agreed to facilitate the two-day meeting in February. • Orange County Fire Chief, Brian Fennessy will be a keynote speaker for Leading through Change, based on his wildland fire experience in multiple agencies and multiple years working with NWCG. • NWCG will facilitate discussions on renewed <i>NWCG Operating Principles and Guidelines</i>, PMS 900 and how processes will work under the reorganization.	

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