



NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP

NWCG Letter 25-001

January 15, 2025

Re: 2025 NWCG Executive Board Annual Letter

I am honored to present the 2025 Annual Letter for the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG).

Your dedication to our mission and the outstanding contributions of every member are the foundation of our success. As we look ahead, the Incident Performance and Training Modernization (IPTM) project stands as our top priority. While IPTM is crucial, we must also remain steadfast in our mission: to provide national leadership that fosters interoperable wildland fire operations among our federal, state, local, Tribal, and territorial partners.

Significant Accomplishments and Milestones in 2024

- **IPTM Effort:** The implementation of IPTM has progressed significantly, with 43 of the 115 incident positions either completed or currently underway. This achievement is made possible by the contributions of over 110 subject matter experts from the field. The Executive Board (EB) is grateful for the staffing and contracted resources that have supported the successful advancement of the IPTM project.
- **Next Generation Position Task Book (Next Gen PTB):** The development of the Next Gen PTB has been approved as an updated evaluation tool aligned with the newly established Incident Position Standards. This tool promotes constructive dialogue, clearly outlines evaluation tasks, and enhances the likelihood of successful performance outcomes.
- **Complex Incident Management (CIM) Support:** Ongoing support for CIM has been demonstrated through the alignment of the Branch Director positions, the removal of the Type 1 Command and General Staff incident position qualification pathways, and the development of two new Incident Management Team courses. The S-320, *Introduction to Incident Management Teams*, course has successfully completed alpha and beta testing phases.
- **Publications and Products:** NWCG has produced or updated over 80 publications and products in 2024 alone; notably concluding a multi-year effort to develop the *NWCG Standards for Rapid Extraction Module Support*, PMS 552, and revise the *NWCG Standards for Course Delivery*, PMS 901-1.
- **Safety Warnings and Equipment Bulletins:** NWCG issued six Safety Warnings and Equipment Bulletins aimed at notifying the wildland fire community about time-sensitive hazards with potential or imminent threats to life or property. Key issues addressed include food safety, fuel containers, personal protective equipment, and respirator usage.
- **Website Migration:** The 14-month migration of the [nwcg.gov](https://www.nwcg.gov) website was successfully completed, which included over 7,000 web pages, two Drupal platform changes, and a transition

to a cloud server. Additionally, the *NWCG Glossary of Wildland Fire*, PMS 205, and the *NWCG Data Standards*, PMS 910, that are managed in the EDG database system were fully integrated into a web view through the migration.

EB Membership Changes in 2024

The past year witnessed several changes in the EB membership. We would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation for the significant service and contributions of:

- Dave Hason (USDA Forest Service)
- Shane McDonald (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)
- Steven Shaw (Bureau of Land Management, detailer)

We also want to extend a warm welcome to our new EB members and thank them for their commitment to join our team:

- Brian Achziger, Bureau of Land Management
- Heath Cota, USDA Forest Service, Fire and Aviation Management
- Jon Wallace, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

NWCG Priorities for 2025

In 2025, our primary focus will be on clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of the entire NWCG organization, including the invaluable volunteers who serve on committees and as subject matter experts that make our initiatives possible.

Drawing from feedback received during the 2024 NWCG Annual Meeting, we recognize that transparency in workflow processes and better defining decision space for committees, subgroups, program staff, and the EB is essential. These elements will be significant focal points for us in the coming year. We have already begun working on enhancing our workflow and processes, which will be presented at the 2025 NWCG Annual Meeting on February 18, 2025. We encourage all key players to attend this virtual meeting, as your participation is vital to our collective success.

Other key priorities and considerations for 2025 include:

- Firefighter Health and Wellness: We will consistently prioritize the mental and physical wellbeing of firefighters in all aspects of our mission to foster a safe and effective wildfire workforce.
- Ensuring IPTM Success: We are committed to ensuring the success of IPTM by providing essential resources and reference materials. These will clearly define the decision-making framework, standards for conflict resolution, agency alignment guidance, and workflow processes to address the concerns raised by various committees.
- Flexibility and Responsiveness: NWCG must remain a flexible and agile organization, responsive to the wildland fire community. This requires us to continuously assess emerging needs and stay open to the challenges and issues highlighted by state, local, tribal, and federal agencies.

In closing, I extend my deepest gratitude to each NWCG committee member and the staff for your dedication and remarkable contributions. I am confident that, together, we will continue to make significant strides in the challenging and vital work that lies ahead.

With appreciation,

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Erik Litzenberg, International Association of Fire Chiefs, Vice Chair
Garth Fisher, Bureau of Indian Affairs
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Anne Jewell, Department of Defense
Jim Durglo, Intertribal Timber Council
Erin Horsburgh, National Park Service
Heath Cota, USDA Forest Service
Greg Smith, National Association of State Foresters
Jon Wallace, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Kim VanHemelryck, Office of Wildland Fire (Associate Member)
Heath Hockenberry, National Weather Service (Associate Member)
Parmial Kopardekar (PK), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Associate Member)