




Incident Position Standards Committee

IPSC-2025-002

January 14, 2025

TO: NWCG Executive Board Members and Katie Wood, NWCG Program Manager
FROM: Michael Froelich, Chair, Incident and Position Standards Committee
SUBJECT: Support of recommendations for further development of Incident Management Team Courses

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Michael Froelich
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Purpose: The Incident Management Team Course Steering Committee (IMTCSC) provided recommendations to Incident Position Standards Committee (IPSC) for next steps and a course of action moving forward for the incident management team course development. IPSC reviewed and supports these recommendations (see attached).

Background: NWCG Tasking Memorandum 23-001 tasked IPSC to establish basic and advanced incident management courses to support Complex Incident Management (CIM).

Contact: Michael Froelich, Chair, Incident and Position Standards Committee

Distribution:

IPSC Committee Members

IPSC NWCG Coordinator

Attachment: IMTCSC Recommendations for 2025 Next Steps Briefing Paper



NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP

NWCG Briefing Paper

January 6, 2025

TO: Michael Froelich, NWCG Incident and Position Standards Committee (IPSC) Chair

FROM: Bill Miller, NWCG IMT Course Steering Committee Co-Chair
Jay Mickey, NWCG IMT Course Steering Committee Co-Chair

SUBJECT: IMTCSC Recommendations for 2025 Next Steps

Purpose: The purpose of this briefing paper is to provide recommendations for next steps and a course of action moving forward for the Incident Management Team Course Steering Committee (IMTCSC) following the beta delivery of S-320, which was held in Madison, WI in November 2024.

Recommendations for Consideration:

1. The IMTCSC recommends that a third pilot of the S-320 Introduction to Incident Management Teams (IMTs) Course be delivered in the spring of 2025. The intent of this final pilot will be to validate the readiness of the course for open delivery with a focus on including the Training and Delivery Committee (TDC) staff and Geographic Area Training Representatives (GATRs).
2. The IMTCSC recommends a new intermediate course be developed following the finalization of S-320. With the development of the S-320 Introduction to IMTs being targeted at individuals with limited-to-no training and/or IMT expertise, there remains a substantial training gap between the S-320 course and the existing Complex/Advanced level IMT courses.
 - It is not recommended to stretch down the existing advanced courses to pick up where S-320 will leave off. This would not set the system or students up for success in the field where complexities are increasing annually.
 - Opposed to having the IMTCSC begin development of a new advanced incident management team course, the committee would begin development of a new intermediate level course in 2025. This would require an update to the current IMTCSC Tasking Memo.
 - If approved, the IMTCSC would remain the steward of S-320 and the proposed Intermediate Course. The existing advanced course steering committees could remain in place as stewards of S-520 and CIMC, but with the expectation that the two Steering Committees coordinate on an annual basis regarding updates to any of the IMT training courses moving forward and ensure continuity of curriculum.

There is additional rationale listed on the attached pages for review. Thank you considering these recommendations and working with the IMTCSC to improve our IMT training program for the future.

Contact: Bill Miller, bill.miller@usda.gov; Jay Mickey, jay_mickey@nps.gov

Attachments: Supplemental Rationale for Recommendations

1. S-320 3rd Pilot Delivery Objectives:

- Test Improvements to the Instructor Guide (IG). The committee wants to ensure that cadre have enough information and supporting material included in the IG to deliver the course as intended and with consistency, without support from the Steering Committee or its liaisons.
- Test a new Practice Simulation Incident. The IMTCSC is looking to replace the current “planned event” with an all-hazard response incident. It was observed in the alpha and beta courses that cadre had difficulty in delivering curriculum focused on a planned event.
- Improve-All Hazard materials.
- Improve Incident Strategic Alignment Process (ISAP) course materials to focus solely on the concept of the four pillars, as those are cornerstones to any incident response. However, the introduction of ISAP as an approach to strategic decision-making should be reserved for more advanced courses focusing on that level of decision-making.
- Recruit a student pool that meets the target audience for the course. The past two pilots had numerous students in attendance that had more experience than that identified as the target audience. This is to be expected to some extent while we are still in a transition period system-wide, but for the final pilot we’d like to focus on target audience students.

2. Rationale for an Intermediate IMT Course:

- The target audience for S-320 is individuals who have not yet opened type 3 Position Taskbooks (PTBs) for Command and General Staff positions. Following 2 beta deliveries of S-320 students meeting that target, with little to know experience or training, have provided feedback that this course is introducing a lot of new information and should not be any more advanced. Simulations are very basic with a focus of getting students to understand the basics of each position, the planning process, and how to work as a team.
- To step from this, along with some type 3 experience in the field, to attending an advanced level course designed to train students in responding to the complex incidents we are experiencing today is far too large of a training gap.
- The existing Complex Incident Management Course (CIMC) and Advanced Incident Management (S-520) are currently delivering excellent training and

education for those seeking Complex C&G Qualifications. However, cadre have observed a trend over the last several years that students that are not prepared to succeed at that level of expectation, requiring additional coaching at more basic processes such as speaking at planning and C&G meetings and identifying and communicating viable strategies. Therefore, less time is spent on realistic scenarios such as multi-branch incidents, managing complex logistical operations (ICP, forward operating bases, etc.), and coordinating with multiple IMTs on a singular incident.

- The existing CIMC and S-520 Steering Committees believe more advanced concepts should be covered during these trainings in the future, opposed to less complex simulations and concepts. In recent sessions there been a notable lack of experience and readiness among the CIMC/S-520 Students.
- NWCG Executive Board has conveyed a desire for an IMT training program to train people what right looks like prior them practicing. Having a 3-tiered training system for Incident Management Team Command and General Staff allows students to learn the process, reinforce the process and then challenge team process with the true complexities seen at the advanced level, as type 1 and 2 complexities still exist.