



## NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP

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May 3, 2019

TO: NWCG Executive Board

FROM: NWCG Endorsement Task Team

SUBJECT: NWCG NIMS NQS Position Endorsement Tasking

On June 28, 2018, the NWCG Executive Board established a task team to coordinate the development of a NWCG endorsement process for NIMS National Qualifications System (NQS) positions (Attachment 1). In response to that tasking, this memorandum recommends initial actions, identifies additional endorsements-related work that will need to be accomplished, and provides background information.

### **Itemized Responses to the Tasking Recommendations:**

#### **Task 1: Ensure the intent of the NIMS NQS position standards are maintained.**

The proposed NWCG Endorsements Analysis Process (Attachment 2) will meet this tasking requirement.

The *NIMS Guideline for the National Qualification System (November 2017)* states the following:

A set of NIMS Job Titles/Position Qualifications define the minimum criteria that personnel serving in specific incident-related positions must attain before deploying to an incident. These criteria describe not only required capabilities, but also describe specific education, training, experience, physical/medical fitness, currency, and professional and technical licenses and certifications, when appropriate. (Page 4)

Authorities Having Jurisdiction (AHJs) may augment the NIMS Position Qualifications minimum criteria to meet specific needs, hazards, or risks within their jurisdiction, organization, or agency. When an AHJ requests a resource through mutual aid, if the resource needs qualifications beyond the NIMS position qualifications, the AHJ documents that requirement as part of the request. Resource providers can use position endorsements to validate individuals' additional capabilities, typically associated with specific hazards that augment the minimum qualifications for the position. (Page 5)

Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) is the NIMS term for entities that have the authority and responsibility to develop, implement, maintain, and oversee the qualification, certification, and credentialing process within their organization or jurisdiction. AHJs include state, tribal, or Federal Government departments and agencies, training commissions, NGOs, or companies, as well as local organizations, such as police, fire, public health, or public works departments. (Page 5)

By definition, the NWCG member agencies are Authorities Having Jurisdiction and may augment (endorse) the NIMS position requirements. The member agencies have collectively agreed to use the NWCG wildland fire positions for national mobilization across their individual jurisdictions. This will include NWCG-endorsed NIMS positions. By using the NIMS positions as baseline positions when establishing endorsements, the NWCG is working in accordance with the NIMS NQS guidelines and ensuring that the intent of the NIMS position standards is maintained.

**Task 2: Establish business practices for development and integration of wildland fire specific positions and qualifications that differ from NIMS NQS qualification requirements.**

The proposed NWCG Endorsements Analysis Process (Attachment 2) will meet this tasking requirement.

The task team determined that there are 42 NWCG positions common to NIMS positions (Attachment 3) that should go through the endorsements analysis process. The process will analyze differences between the NIMS positions and the NWCG incident position standards (position descriptions and qualification requirements for training, experience, physical fitness, and position currency) to determine whether an NWCG endorsement is warranted.

The process identifies the NWCG committees and other entities that must engage in the process.

The task team recommends assigning the NWCG NIMS Integration Committee (NIMSIC) to lead the NWCG Endorsements Analysis Process.

**Task 3: Ensure the process integrates wildland fire business systems (e.g. IQCS, IQS, ROSS/IROC).**

Wildland fire business systems leads from IQCS, IQS and ROSS/IROC were engaged throughout the development of the process. All systems have the capability to support endorsements. Positions recognized under NQS that NWCG has determined will require a wildland fire endorsement will be recognized by the wildland fire business systems, and endorsement processes will be implemented based on relevant data within those systems.

**Task 4: Recommend changes to appropriate publications for incorporating new endorsement business practices.**

The task team recommends posting the following on the NWCG website: the NWCG Endorsements Analysis Process; information on endorsed positions once those are established; updates to NWCG publications (training, PTBs, PMS 310-1) as necessary.

**Additional endorsements-related work:**

Endorsement-related work outside the direct scope of the proposed NWCG Endorsements Analysis Process will need to be accomplished. Some of this work may be permanent in nature as NIMS positions and NWCG position evolve over time. The task team recommends that, in

addition to leading the analysis process, the NIMS Integration Committee be assigned to keep track of and provide leadership on these efforts.

The endorsements-related work that needs to be accomplished includes:

- Designate wildland fire specific roles and responsibilities within the Incident Position Descriptions (IPDs).
- Ensure position training plans include wildland fire specific training and performance elements.
- Design, develop and implement training (instructor led, independent study, on-the-job training) that supports wildland fire endorsements.
- Develop standards and procedures for ordering and filling wildland fire endorsed resources.
- Educate incident management teams, agency administrators, and dispatchers regarding endorsement and mobilizing wildland fire endorsed positions.

**Background:** The first endorsement tasking was issued by the NWCG Executive Board in 2014 (Attachment 4). At the time of that tasking, FEMA had yet to release the NQS. The task team took the proposal as far as they could in preparation for the release of NQS (Attachment 5), and it was determined by the Executive Board that another tasking would be issued when NQS was finalized. The NQS was released by FEMA in November 2017.

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**Attachments:**

Attachment 1: Tasking Memo TM-18-002

Attachment 2: NWCG Endorsement Analysis Process

Attachment 3: Positions to be Analyzed for Endorsement

Attachment 4: Tasking Memo TM-14-04

Attachment 5: 2014 Endorsement Briefing Paper