



NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP

National Interagency Fire Center
3833 S. Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Memorandum

To: Fire Directors, NWCWG Working Team Chairs, and GACG Chairs
From: NWCWG Chair *Kirk Rowland*
Date: January 25, 2008
Subject: NWCWG Recognition of the USFA Skills Crosswalk

Statement of Recognition

NWCWG recognizes the utility and validity of the *USFA Skills Crosswalk* (Crosswalk) as a tool to apply and credit structural firefighter's skills, competencies and aptitudes toward NWCWG certification for the following positions: Firefighter 2 (FFT2), Firefighter 1 (FFT1), Engine Boss (ENGB), and Strike Team Leader, Engine (STEN). Candidates must meet stated requirements for eligibility to use the Crosswalk.

All curriculum requirements must be fulfilled. In addition, certification is dependent on completion of required tasks and demonstration of skills and competencies, as specified the related NWCWG PTB or equivalent means. Specific information on eligibility, requirements, documentation, roles and responsibilities in the implementation, and use of the Crosswalk can be found on the USFA web site:

http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/fireservice/subjects/wildfire/crosswalk_overview.shtm

Use of the Crosswalk as a training or certification tool by State and local government is voluntary. It is recognized that each State and locality utilizes differing standards and procedures for wildland training and certification. Jurisdictions should review the document, consider the procedures and requirements in the context of their current training systems, and cooperatively assess the suitability of the *Crosswalk* to meet their needs.

Background

The *Crosswalk* was part of several initiatives recommended in the 2002 report to Congress "Changing Role and Needs of Local, Rural, and Volunteer Fire Departments in the Wildland Urban Interface". The report summarized the need for enhanced funding and technical assistance efforts in order to improve safety, capacity, and capability of local

cooperators undertaking wildland suppression activities. Training-related activities were a major focus of the report. NWCG directed an interagency task group to develop opportunities for enhanced local training activities and reduction of redundancies between wildland and structural training and certification processes.

The *Crosswalk* process recognizes the fire suppression skill sets of firefighters trained to a given standard that are applicable to specific wildland position certifications. It also identifies and targets deficiency areas or competency “gaps”. This process minimizes academic and practical training redundancies. Logistical and scheduling needs of local cooperators, identified as a barrier to completion of wildland training opportunities in the past, have been addressed by the “modularized” classroom and practical training sessions used in this process.

The Crosswalk is an essential tool in the structure-to-wildland training program, and its use is accepted and endorsed by NWCG through this Memorandum. However, it is but one of several assessment methodologies that must be utilized. Safe and effective performance in any of these positions cannot be assured by academic measures alone. Each wildland position is characterized by definitive identified behaviors, competencies, and practices that can only be fully mastered through repetition, experience under diverse circumstances, and practical application in field settings. These applications include performance of structured practical exercises, incident simulations, initiation of verbal and written assessments, and other appropriate drills to test and refresh skills.

The designated AHJ *must* base an individual’s position certification decisions on a thoughtful and comprehensive consideration of their training, experience, and demonstrated performance. The AHJ, in close coordination with the firefighter, must practice due diligence in accurate documenting training and experience.

Further Information

For further information regarding the implementation of the Crosswalk, or for technical guidance, contact Kelly Hawk, Bureau of Land Management, at (208) 387-5984, or Mike Dougherty, U.S. Fire Administration, at (208) 387-5698

cc: NWCG Members