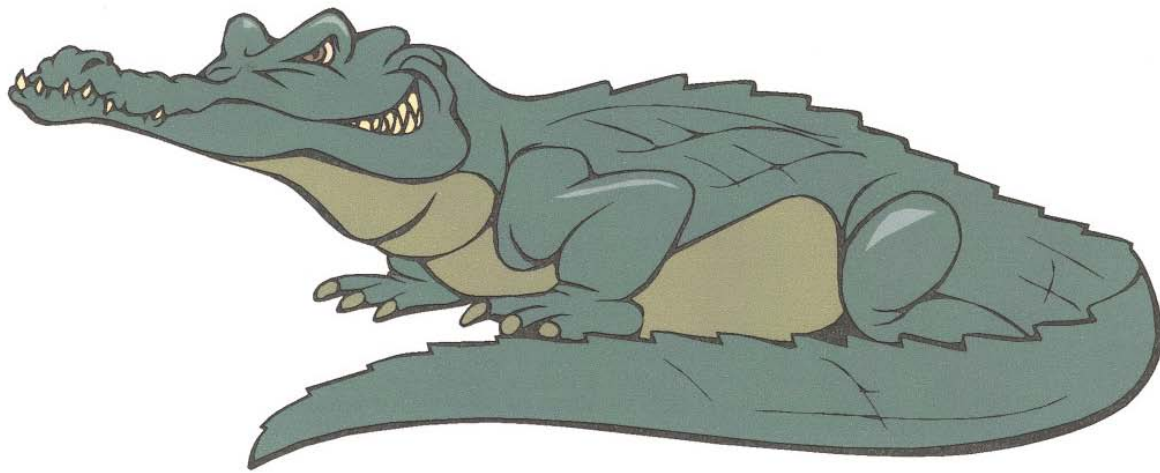


**GEOGRAPHIC AREA TRAINING REPRESENTATIVES  
OPERATING GUIDELINES**



Revised 6/12/2009

## **Introduction:**

This document provides a reference for current operational policies, procedures, and guidelines for managing wildland fire training delivery in a cost effective and efficient manner. All Geographic Area Training Representatives (GATR) will reference this document for guidance and direction in their role as a GATR. This document is reviewed and updated annually at the spring meeting.

## **Membership:**

GATR are selected, by their governing Geographic Area Coordinating Groups, and/or Boards of Directors, to provide cost effective and efficient interagency wildland fire management training responsive to the needs and direction of their respective Geographic Area's, and in support of the National training effort. The GATR performs as a training specialist within their Geographic Area and must be able to perform the specific roles and responsibilities as defined below:

## **Specific Roles and Responsibilities of the GATR:**

- ❑ Responsible for the scheduling, coordination, delivery, and evaluation of 300-400 level training program within their Geographic Areas (GA).
- ❑ GATR represent NWCG training delivery issues/recommendations to the GA and National level.
- ❑ Responsible for forwarding recommendations and delivery issues to the NWCG TWT.
- ❑ Coordinates with other GATR to share courses, cadres, and training materials to ensure cost effective, efficient training delivery throughout the Geographic Areas.
- ❑ Serves as the single point of contact for training nomination coordination and dissemination among all GA's.
- ❑ Administrative responsibility for the GA training web page.
- ❑ Coordination of Subject Matter Expert and Field Reviewers for NWCG development.
- ❑ Provide an inter-Geographic forum to share innovative training ideas, concepts and new ways of doing business.
- ❑ Responsible for implementation of the training work flow process of IQCS.

(See Appendix A for current list of the GATR)

## **Advisors:**

Advisors to the GATR are agency training representatives (AMD, BLM, USFS, FWS, BIA, State, and NPS) with responsibility for representing their agency training delivery issues and program updates. Meeting attendance is dependent on agenda topics and coordinated through the GATR chairperson.

## **Liaison:**

The National TWT assigns a liaison to the group. See Appendix A and TWT web site for current Liaison (<http://www.fire.blm.gov/training/twt/>). The liaison is responsible for meeting with the GATR at least once per year to discuss training delivery and coordination issues to be forwarded to the National TWT. The liaison facilitates issue resolution and reviews other training related issues by bringing them to the attention of the proper National groups.

## **Chairperson/Co-Chairperson:**

The Co-Chairperson will be elected, by the GATR's and will serve a two year term. At the conclusion of the two year term, the Co-Chairperson will assume the Chairperson and a new Co-Chairperson will be elected (effective May, 2009). The term for both current positions began at the completion of the spring meeting 2009 and will end at the completion of the spring meeting 2011. The spring meeting will be used for transition from Co-Chairperson to Chairperson. The Chairperson will facilitate the election of the new Co-Chairperson. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Co-Chairperson will assume the duties of the chairperson. Additionally, the Co-Chairperson will assist the Chairperson in their duties as needed. The Chairperson is responsible for meeting management, and solicitation and development of agenda items. The Chairperson will maintain an electronic file with documentation of all GATR meetings. The Chairperson will be responsible for sending a letter of consideration for selection of new GATR's. See appendix H for the template.

### **Logistics Coordinator:**

The GATR Chair will select and assign a Logistics Coordinator to the group. Their commitment should be a minimum of two years. Every effort will be given to ensure that the outgoing Logistics Coordinator attends and mentors the incoming Logistics Coordinator at their last meeting. If the Logistics Coordinator is unavailable to attend the meeting, the Chairperson will coordinate a replacement for that meeting. The Logistics Coordinator is responsible for recording, finalizing, and disseminating meeting minutes, updating and disseminating GATR mailing lists and correspondence of all GATR meetings.

### **Meeting Facilitator:**

The GATR Chair will select and assign a Meeting Facilitator to the group. The Facilitator will commit to a minimum two-year term and make every effort to host their last meeting with the incoming facilitator to assure continuity in transition. The Facilitator is responsible for developing and maintaining meeting action logs, developing meeting agendas, and coordinating the logistics of all GATR meetings. The May meeting agenda will be coordinated with the TWT Logistics Coordinator.

### **Meetings:**

Meetings will be held twice annually. One meeting will be held in May in conjunction with the TWT, to address and identify national training issues. Issues should be identified prior to the TWT meeting. The participants will be the primary GATR from each Geographic Area (see Appendix A), and a NAFRI representative. Advisors, Agency Training Officers, Training Managers, Training Specialists and Geographic Area Training Committee Chairpersons, may be invited to attend and represent issues specific to the GATR agenda. The Chairperson has the responsibility for invitations and meeting agenda topics. The attendees will meet before and after meeting with the TWT.

The second meeting will be held the second week of November, annually. The primary purpose of this meeting is to facilitate the coordination of interagency training nominations amongst the Geographic Areas and NAFRI. The meeting will identify the need for further course sharing and/or additional course needs among the Geographic Area's.

### **Meeting Topics:**

Geographic Area training needs analysis and tentative Geographic Area course schedules will be on the May agenda each year and will consist of each geographic area discussing tentative 300-400 level courses planned for the following training season. Potential Geographic Area course sharing and course rotations throughout Geographic Areas will be discussed and locations identified. A list of Geographic Area courses will be available at the conclusion of the meeting. Additional topics of common interest or concern will be identified and discussed with the TWT at the May meeting, annually.

### **GATR Sub-Committee:**

In 1999, the GATR assigned and established a sub-committee, the "Training Information and Communications Systems (TICS)" group. Appendix C is the annual TICS report of accomplishments (updated in May, annually).

### **Geographic Area Shared Course:**

A Geographic Area shared course is open to a limited number of students from outside the geographic area. This is an opportunity to ensure Geographic Areas, without enough students or cadre to host the course, are given placement opportunities in the hosting GA course.

The GATR have identified the courses that are difficult and/or costly to deliver in one GA, and have agreed to a rotational cycle (see Appendix B) to provide the most cost effective delivery (e.g. S-440 Planning Section Chief). Historically, there have only been enough candidates nationally to host one course (rather than sponsoring 2-3 courses across the GA with 4-5 people, it is more cost effective and efficient to host one course with 30 people, full capacity – one cadre, not several etc.); therefore, the course presentation is rotated throughout the GA's. A listing of the course rotation is provided in **Appendix B** and updated by the GATR at their May meeting, annually.

### **GATR Nomination Process:**

Nominations for courses outside the geographic area will be submitted to the designated hosting Area GATR on an NWCG Interagency Training Nomination/Agreement to Collect Funds Form by November 8th of each year. No hand-written nominations will be exchanged from GATR to GATR. A cover page of all nominations submitted to each GA will be compiled and forwarded from the requesting GATR to the hosting GATR (example format in Appendix F). See the National Training Web Page for the official NWCG nomination form and nomination processes specific to each GA.

### **Course Scheduling:**

Each GA will post 300-400 level training course schedules on the National Search Page and their GA home pages. It is recognized that certain courses are for within-area nominees only therefore, courses will be advertised to reflect within-area only nominees to avoid the unnecessary nominations.

### **Course Equivalency:**

Course equivalency is an agency responsibility as per the 310-1 Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualifications Guide. A review process to determine course equivalency has been defined in the Field Manager's Course Guide and for the Forest Service in their 5109-17 manual.

### **Course Development and Review Subject Matter Expert (SME) Process:**

The NWCG Development Unit Leader will solicit names for upcoming NWCG course revisions on an annual basis. The Development Unit Leader will send an email to the TWT and GATRs notifying them when the open season period for the nominations begins. After the open season closes, a list of the SMEs that have been nominated will be sent to the GATRs for review. Any feedback or priorities from the GATRs regarding the SMEs from the respective areas will be taken into consideration by the Development Unit when making final selections.

### **Appendices:**

- Appendix A. Geographic Area Training Representatives
- Appendix B. Geographic Area Course Rotation Schedule
- Appendix C. TICS Annual Report
- Appendix D. Recommended Meeting Agenda Topics
- Appendix E. S-495 Process for Course Delivery
- Appendix F. Example – Geographic Area to Geographic Area/NAFRI Consolidated Course Nominee List
- Appendix G. S-443 Process for Course Delivery

## **APPENDIX A**

### **GEOGRAPHIC AREA TRAINING REPRESENTATIVES**

A current list can be found at:

<http://www.nationalfiretraining.net/userfiles/Main/gatrlist.pdf>

## APPENDIX B

(Revise annually in May)

### Rotation of difficult courses as determined by history, and defined by the GATR:

	2009	2010	2011
S-346	CA/NW	NR	AK/CA/EA/NR
S-349	NW	NR	CA/NR
S-354	NR/CA	GB/NW	CA/EA/RM/SA
S-356	NR	GB/NW	CA/RM/SA
S-378	NR/SA	RM/SW	CA/NR/NW
S-400	CA/NW/GB	SW	NR/CA
S-403	NR/NW	RM/SA	
S-404	GB	NR	CA/NW/SA
S-430	SW	GB/NR	SA/CA
S-440	NW	NR	CA/NR
S-445	NW/NR	GB	CA/SA
S-481	NW	CA	GB
S-450	NR	GB/NW	CA/RM
S-460	NW	CA	SW
S-470	GB	SW	NW/CA
M-581	NW/NR	GB/SA	SA/SW/CA/GB
LFML	SA/SW	NW/NR	RM/NR/GB/CA/NW/SW

NR – Northern Rockies  
RM – Rocky Mountain  
SW – Southwest  
GB – Great Basin  
CA – California  
NW – Northwest  
SA – Southern  
EA – Eastern  
AK – Alaska

## APPENDIX C

(Note: Revise annually in May)

### TRAINING INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION SYSTEM (TICS) COMMITTEE

#### 2009 ANNUAL REPORT

##### **Committee Membership:**

Renee Beams, Chairperson, Northwest Training Center; Diana VanCurler, Northwest Training Center; Rosie LeMire, Northern Rockies Training Center; Kim Bang, Rocky Mountain Training Center; Xharley Luevano, Southwest Area; Madonna Lengerich, Great Basin Training Center; Terri Silva, California; Debra Burgos, Southern Area; Frank Gromer, Eastern Area; Melissa Wegner, Alaska; Deborah Corner, NAFRI; and Computer Technical Advisor, Jill Jolly.

##### **Background:**

In 1999, under the Charter of the Geographic Area Training Representatives (GATR), the Training Information Communication Systems (TICS) group was established as a sub-committee to provide improved customer service and to reduce duplication of administrative training functions. The TICS group proceeded with the development and implementation of the National Wildland Fire Training web page ([www.nationalfiretraining.net](http://www.nationalfiretraining.net)). The web page was designed and evaluated through field users from each Geographic Area and proved to be very successful. The web page provides a central location for all interagency training administration such as catalogs, schedules, and the National Wildland Coordinating Group (NWCG) training nomination form.

##### **Specific Accomplishments 2004 through 2008:**

Most Geographic Areas and NAFRI have developed training web pages that reside on the National Wildland Fire Training web page [www.nationalfiretraining.net](http://www.nationalfiretraining.net). The National Wildland Fire Training web page is reviewed and maintained annually by TICS members. Rosie LeMire, Northern Rockies Training Center is the web master for the National page.

The TICS group was assigned to work with the Incident Qualifications Certification System (IQCS) group to assist with the implementation of the training side of the IQCS database. The TICS continue to work with the IQCS Team in testing the nomination process in IQCS.

In FY09, the new web design was finished and is being tested during FY09 training season; NAFRI's web page will stay the same. June FY09 the TICS will go over the information gathered by the field and makes the needed changes to the web.

The GATR's will all try to use IQCS in FY10, Alaska will be the only one that will not.

The group has identified the following issues to work on in the future:

- ▣ Will we have all courses on the National page? GATR will work with TICS to decide

## APPENDIX D

### Recommended Meeting Agenda Topics

#### **November Meeting Topics:**

- ☒ Nomination exchanges
- ☒ Identify and determine additional course scheduling/course sharing opportunities
- ☒ Site visits
- ☒ Review Geographic Area needs analysis
- ☒ NWCG Development Update
- ☒ Additional Topics/Presentations from SME's as needed

#### **May Meeting Topics:**

- ☒ Delivery issues/recommendations for the TWT
- ☒ Course schedule sharing and identification
- ☒ Geographic Area Training needs analysis shared
- ☒ Update/revise GATR operating plan
- ☒ Review GATR charter
- ☒ Update GATR course rotation schedule (Appendix B)
- ☒ Update TICS annual report in operations guide (Appendix C)
- ☒ NWCG Development Update
- ☒ Additional Topics/Presentations from SME's as needed
- ☒ Program updates/coordination with AMD representative, and other new program coordinators/advisors (i.e., Leadership Committee Chair, IQCS Representative, etc.)

## APPENDIX E

### S-495 Operation Plan Wildland Fire Training Center (WFTC) McClellan California 11/15/06

Overview:

In 2006 Region 5 agreed to host both S-492 Long Term Risk Assessment and S-493 Farsite Fire Area Simulator at WFTC. This was to begin in the 2007/2008 training season.

More nominations will be accepted than available slots. Final selection into the courses is made solely on successful completion of the pre-work. Allocation adjustments can be done utilizing the regional needs assessment.

These two courses have traditionally been very difficult to put on. Both courses have 15-20 hours of pre-qualifying work. After 'acceptance' into the class, another 20-40 hours of study time is required. The courses actual classroom time is 32 and 36 hours respectively.

The agreed upon capacity for S-492 is 35-40 students, and 60 for S-493.

Operational Plan:

For the 2007/2008 and future years, all nominations for both courses will go through the GEOGRAPHIC AREA TRAINING REPRESENTATIVES (GATR) utilizing the standard process. Each geographic areas allocations will be completed by the GATR's and based on a regional needs assessment. These prioritized nominations will then be sent to the cadre leaders for both sessions after the November GATR meeting.

A National Cadre currently exists and will present the course, however the Geographic areas should be preparing individuals to replace cadre members when a vacancy occurs.

WFTC will:

- Prepare announcements
- Post to web pages
- Accept nominations with prioritization completed from each GATR
- Complete the IQCS rostering
- Assemble course binders (all copied materials submitted each year by the cadres – as the materials are updated annually)
- Purchase CDs/Jump Drives and other required materials
- Setup classroom/meeting room and laptops for students and cadre
- Provide Business Center services/support for cadre needs during sessions
- Process and submit tuition billings to ASC

Course Coordinator will:

- Set the course date & critical date timelines based on the nominations process deadline of November 15<sup>th</sup> of each year. Each student will be given four months to complete prior to scheduling the session.
- Advises cadre of nomination and pre-work status.
- Coordinate with the cadre on pre work testing/grading and any other distance learning
- Send results of pre work back to each respective GATR by January 31<sup>st</sup>.
- Selection into the courses is based on successful completion of the pre-work.
- Notify each GATR with the final selections by February 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Appendix F – Geographic Area Listing of Course Nominees and Priority List**

# RMA Nominations for NAFRI Courses

updated  
12/08/03

	<b>DATES</b>	<b>LAST NAME</b>	<b>FIRST NAME</b>	<b>UNIT</b>	<b>AGENCY</b>	<b>ZONE PRIORITY</b>	<b>AREA PRIORITY</b>
<b>FML</b>	02/10-12/2004	Moore	Ralph	SBP	NPS	1	NPS Priority
		Ruhs	John	KRD	BLM	1	1
		Striker	Don	MRP	NPS	1	NPS Priority
<b>NFDRS</b>	02/17-26/2004	Poirier	Gwenan J.	CSO	BLM	1	1
		Spencer	Royce	RAD	BLM	1	2
<b>RX-510 (RX540)</b>	01/26-30/2004	Ayala	Edward	SJF	USFS	1	2
		Connell	Rick	SHF	USFS		1
		Kurth	Jay	BHF	USFS		5
		Lange	John	SUA	BIA	2	6
		Lata	Mary	NBF	USFS	1	4
		Oxford	K. Ross	GJD	BLM	1	7
		Strom	Kirk	CAD	BLM	1	3
<b>S-580</b>	03/22-26/2004	Allen	Eric	WCP	NPS	1	NPS Priority
		Ayala	Edward	SJF	USFS	1	6
		Beckerman	Dale R.	CRC	BLM	2	8
		Brinton	Sarah	SJF	USFS	2	11
		Cahur	Mark D.	MBR	USFS	1	4
		Connell	Rick	SHF	USFS	1	5
		Harris	Gardner	CRC	BLM	4	12
		Hessler	Mike	PSF	USFS	1	3
		Hutton	Cliff	CRC	BLM	3	2
		Johnson	Laura	SJF	USFS	3	10
		Johnson	Sean	SHF	USFS	2	9
		Kerrigan	Michael	PSF	USFS	2	7
		Oxford	K. Ross	GJD	BLM	1	1

<b>S-590</b>	03/07-19/2004	Connell	Rick	SHF	USFS	1	3
		Kerrigan	Michael	PSF	USFS	1	1
		Stover	Al	SDS	State	1	2
<b>M-580</b>	02/25-03/04/04	Astell	Marcell	RAD	BLM	1	9
		Ausmus	Desa	CRD	BLM	1	3
		Garcia	Brian	CSO	BLM	1	8
		Gardner	Gaelon	RSD	BLM	1	4
		Gonnoud	Tom	MBF	USFS		5
		Lincoln	Anna	GJD	BLM	2	7
		Pfister	Kevin	BHF	USFS		2
		Rogers	Lynae	GJD	BLM	1	6
		Wilson	Pam	SJF	USFS	1	10
		Zachman	Dennis	CSO	BLM	2	1
<b>M-581</b>	04/19-23/04	Aitchison	George	RSD	BLM	1	2
		Gonnoud	Tom	MBF	USFS		5
		Kanseah	Karma	GJD	BLM	2	4
		Kurth	Jay	BHF	USFS		3
		Pfister	Kevin	BHF	USFS		6
		Romero	Frankie	WRF	USFS	1	1
<b>D-510</b>	03/29-04/04/04	Bedonie	Frank	RMC	USFS		
		Bozarth	Debbie K.	RMC	USFS		
		Doyle	Jayne	WOD	BLM		
		Farrell	Margaret	BKF	USFS		

## NR Nominations for RM - 2004/2005

Zone Name	Zone Priority	Course Number	Course Title	Course Location
<b>I-300 Intermediate ICS</b>				
NIZ	1		Chris Nicoletta	Sterling Co
<b>M-410 Facilitative Instructor</b>				
NIZ	1		Jeff Casey	Denver
<b>S-336 Fire Suppression Tactics</b>				
NIZ	1		Chris Nicoletta	Sterling CO
<b>S-390 Introduction To Wildland Fire Behavior Calculations</b>				
NDZ	1		Ben L. Dempsey	Great Plains Dispatch Center
NDZ	2		Jesse L. Olsen	Great Plains Dispatch Center
<b>S-403 Information Officer</b>				
SCMZ	1		Kari Vannice	Rapid City
<b>RX-300 Prescribed Fire Burn Boss</b>				
SCMZ	1		Chris Moore	Montrose
<b>RX-310 Introductions To Fire Effects</b>				
NIZ	1		Chris Nicoletta	Grand Junction
NDZ	2		Ben L. Dempsey	Great Plains Dispatch Center

### S-443 Nomination Process

#### Background:

Infrared Interpreters are considered Technical Specialists and are no longer recognized as a position in the 310-1. Therefore, S-443 is not considered an NWCG course at this time. IRINs are recognized in the 5109 and carry certain liabilities with their position. Therefore, S-443 is mandatory for USFS personnel and highly recommended for other potential interpreters. Training, including S-443 and OJT/mentoring afterward, for potential infrared interpreters continues to be coordinated by the National Infrared Operations Group. The National Infrared Coordinator will keep a roster of currently qualified IRIN's and evaluate the need and location for future training sessions. Once the need and location has been determined, the National infrared Coordinator and the hosting GATR will make contact and coordinate details.

#### Nominations Flow Process:

Ideally, the hosting GATR will have enough time to advertize S-443 on the national website as part of their annual training schedule. The nominations should go through the normal channels for prioritization. After the nomination deadline, the GATR will turn the nominations over to the National Infrared Coordinator and coordinate final selections.

#### National Infrared Coordinator / GATR - Roles and Responsibilities:

The National Infrared Coordinator keeps a list of qualified instructors and will be responsible for assembling the cadre, corresponding with the selected students, and ordering the necessary equipment. Other Course Coordinator responsibilities will need to be worked out in conjunction with the hosting GATR. These may include, but are not limited to, the documentation of student completion, IQCS inputs, classroom set-up, tuition payments when applicable, and payments for instructor travel expenses.

Revised 11-21-08

## APPENDIX H



Date

To: Chair or selection board for GATR

From: GATR Chairperson

Subject: Geographic Area Training Representative (GATR)

I would like to thank you for your past support and contribution in allowing (outgoing GATR name) to serve as a member of the GATR Group. In consideration of your GATR replacement, I ask that you review the following history and duties in assigning a representative to serve as your GATR.

The GATR's are a group chartered to assist in the implementation, coordination and evaluation of fire, aviation, and all risk training programs for NWCG member agencies and their sponsors. The members must be an integral part of their GA training program with knowledge in fire management training delivery and be working in a training specialist position within their Geographic Area.

The membership of the group has evolved over the years; the original group consisted of only a few Forest Service Training Officers who met to exchange information on 400 level course presentations and to exchange nominations from one geographic area to another. Today the group is national in scope with interagency representatives from each geographic area representing all agencies in their respective area. Several members have been with the group for a lengthy period of time and this has provided corporate history and stability. The stability of the group is important to be able to provide consistent input and guidance, including political and technological changes inherent in the complex environment of training development and delivery. It takes new members several meetings to gain an understanding of their role and expected participation as an integral member of the GATR. Therefore, rotation of membership is not recommended.

As per the GATR operations guide please consider the following membership role and specific roles and responsibilities of the GATR in making your selection. This will ensure that your GATR is best able to provide leadership and effectively represent your geographic area training program as well as contribute to the national training effort:

### **Membership:**

GATR's are selected, by their governing Geographic Area Coordinating Groups, and/or Boards of Directors, to provide cost effective and efficient interagency wildland fire management training responsive to the needs and direction of their respective Geographic Area's, and in support of the National training effort. The GATR performs as a training specialist within their

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- ☒ Responsible for forwarding recommendations and delivery issues to the NWCG Training Working Team.
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- ☒ Serves as the single point of contact for training nomination coordination and dissemination among all GA's.
- ☒ Administrative responsibility for the GA training web page.
- ☒ Coordination of Subject Matter Experts and Field Reviewers for NWCG Course development.
- ☒ Provide an inter-Geographic forum to share innovative training ideas, concepts and new ways of doing business.
- ☒ Responsible for implementation of the training work flow process of IQCS.

For the complete GATR operations guide:

[http://nationalfiretraining.net/userfiles/Main/gatr\\_ops\\_plan.pdf](http://nationalfiretraining.net/userfiles/Main/gatr_ops_plan.pdf)

I appreciate your time and consideration in selecting your GATR. Please feel free to contact me with questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

*Renée Beams*

Geographic Area Training Representative Chair