



NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP

National Interagency Fire Center
3833 S. Development Avenue
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MEMORANDUM

Reference: NWCG#042-2010

To: NWCG Committee Chairs
Geographic Area Coordinating Group (GACG) Chairs
National IC/AC Council Chair

From: NWCG Chair *William Raage*

Date: December 6, 2010

Subject: Implementation of Revised Complexity Analysis/Organizational Needs
Assessment for 2011

Over recent years, a Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) complexity analysis tool has been used by Agency Administrators as a means for analyzing incident complexity and providing guidance for the type of incident management organization needed. During recent fire seasons, it has become apparent that the existing Complexity Analysis is not serving fire managers in the best possible way. The current analysis is not fully responsive to changes in fire complexity prevalent in today's environment. Additionally, the WFSA has been replaced by the Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS), but there is no current capability in WFDSS for managers to analyze incident complexity and evaluate organizational needs.

The subject of revising this analysis process has been raised to the NWCG Executive Board and after some discussion, it was agreed to pursue a new process. A Task Team was convened and directed to review this issue and provide recommendations whether a new complexity analysis/organizational needs assessment tool is needed and, if so, how it should be designed.

The Task Team provided the following key recommendations to NWCG based on discussions with Incident Commanders, State and Federal Agency Administrators, and Fire Program Managers:

- There is a need for a new Complexity Analysis/Organization Needs Assessment Tool.
- Given the changes in implementation of the Federal Fire Policy and an increase in large fires being managed by Type 3 IMTs, the Risk and Complexity tools should be applicable for Type 3 fires.

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Implementation of Revised
Complexity Analysis/Organizational
Needs Assessment for 2011

- The “YES/NO” checklist for Type 1/2/3 fires is inadequate. A more thorough assessment should be created in a format similar to the Wildland Fire Relative Risk Assessment. (Reference the Wildland Fire Use Implementation Procedures Reference Guide, May 2005).
- Relative Risk is estimated on all fires and can serve as the foundation for this assessment, but should also include External Influences (Socio-political), Land Ownership, Firefighting Resources Committed, Existing Skills on Host Unit, and Safety Management.
- Specific fire complexity is not the desired outcome. Guidance for the type of management organization to implement proposed actions is the outcome.

Following this Task Team report, a draft Organizational Needs Assessment was developed and field tested at a variety of units and locations in 2010. Feedback from this test was reviewed and incorporated as appropriate. The revised version has been reviewed by the NWCG Executive Board and accepted as a replacement for the existing Complexity Analysis for 2011. The Organizational Needs Assessment will provide managers information pertaining to type 1, 2, and 3 organizations while types 4 and 5 will continue to be addressed through the Incident Complexity Analysis for Type 4 and 5. Wildland fire management agencies will incorporate use of these processes commensurate with their needs.

The new Organizational Needs Assessment:

- will have information about its use and a link to an electronic website included in agency references for fire and aviation standards (“Red Book” and “Blue Book”),
- will be incorporated into WFDSS as soon as development permits, and
- will be available as a stand-alone power point and text document for use outside of WFDSS, as needed.

As implementation proceeds, agencies can consolidate feedback and lessons learned and provide this information back to NWCG. The process may evolve and continue to develop as this feedback occurs and as the NWCG Incident Management Team Succession Planning Project is finalized and implemented. Attached are the revised Organizational Needs Assessment with guidelines for use and a power point file version that can be completed electronically.

Attachment A: Organizational Needs Assessment – Process and Directions for Use
Attachment B: PowerPoint – Wildland Fire Relative Risk Assessment

cc: NWCG Executive Board