

# **Fire Danger Committee Charter**

## **Fire Environment Working Team**

### **National Wildfire Coordinating Group**

#### **I. Background**

The National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS) has existed as the national system for rating fire danger since 1972. It was developed by USDA-Forest Service Research and is supported by that agency's Division of Fire and Aviation Management. Over the period since initial release, numerous modifications and enhancements have been suggested to improve the function and application of the system resulting in revisions in 1978 and 1988. In 1988 the USDA-FS, Director of Fire and Aviation Management, established an interagency advisory group to oversee the application and use of the NFDRS. This group was known as the National Advisory Group for Fire Danger Rating (NAGFDR). In 1995 to facilitate the national application of fire danger rating and to ensure that notification of modifications were communicated to all wildland fire agencies, NAGFDR was placed under the joint jurisdiction of the Director of Fire and Aviation Management and the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG). In 1999, NAGFDR was designated as the NWCG Fire Danger Working Team (FDWT) solely under their jurisdiction. In 2005, the FDWT was replaced by the Fire Danger Committee under the Fire Environment Working Team (FENWT).

#### **II. Name**

The Fire Danger Committee of FENWT; hereafter referred to as the FDC.

#### **III. Authority**

This Committee is established pursuant to the charter authority granted to the Fire Environment Working Team by NWCG through the Memorandum of Understanding establishing the NWCG and the Interagency Agreement for Meteorological Services. The FDC has the authority to develop and execute an annual program of work as approved by FENWT.

#### **IV. Purpose**

To support FENWT in advancing the mission of NWCG in providing leadership in establishing and maintaining consistent nationwide policies, standards, and procedures for wildland fire management. The FDC's specific focus is Fire Danger Rating.

The objectives of the FDC are:

- Advocate and direct advancements in the science and application of fire danger rating to support the vision statement which describes NFDRS as a trusted and robust decision support tool.
- Facilitate consistent and standardized use of fire danger information to support management decisions made by wildland fire agencies in fire prevention, preparedness, suppression, fire use activities, and enhancing firefighter safety.
- Provide leadership and technical expertise to support development and implementation of NFDRS curriculum and training courses.
- Provide an interagency forum to collect, address, and make recommendations on applications, training, and enhancements for NFDRS.
- Provide coordinated leadership for the interagency community using NFDRS in addressing issues such as system application, quality and standards of inputs and outputs, information flow and access, operational continuity, training, problem identification and technological advancements.
- Provide and facilitate communication among users, research and development, and systems support.

V. Membership

FDC membership shall consist of NFDRS practitioners, specialists and program managers from NWCG agencies and NWS. Technical specialists and subject matter experts may be used as needed. Replacement members are selected by the Chair in coordination with the FENWT.

Short duration task groups may be organized as needed, subject to approval by the FENWT leadership. Task groups will submit budgets and operating plans to FENWT for approval in time to meet NWCG fiscal scheduling. Task group membership, like the FDC, will strive to achieve full NWCG agency and NWS representation.

VI. Organization

The FDC is under the direction of the FENWT. The Chair of the FDC is a member of the FENWT and serves as the liaison to this parent working team. FDC leadership shall consist of a chair appointed by the FENWT and a vice-chair/secretary.

VII. Cooperation and Coordination

It is one of the FDC's objectives to reflect a spirit of cooperation and coordination with other committees and teams especially on projects where cooperative input is required.

FDC activities, products, projects, or recommendations that may affect another FENWT committee or NWCG working team shall be coordinated with FENWT and the committee affected. The concurrence of that committee will be evident and documented prior to presentation to FENWT for approval or implementation.

VIII. Meetings

Regular FDC meetings will be held at least every six months, at a time and place determined by the members. It is expected that meetings will be held to the minimum necessary to accomplish the defined purposes of the FDC. Conference calls or other remote meetings may be held as needed, or in lieu of regular meetings.

Agenda and briefing papers will be distributed to all FDC members two (2) weeks prior to scheduled meetings. Notes of the meetings will be forwarded to the FENWT Executive Secretary and posted on the FENWT and FDC's websites in a timely manner.

Travel expenses for state representatives will be appropriated for in the FDC's Budget.

IX. Responsibility

Chair:

- Represents the FDC as a member of FENWT.
- Serves as FDC spoke person when it is deemed appropriate especially with outside individuals or groups.
- Ensures members know their roles and responsibilities the FDC and their constituency.
- Convenes meetings at such times and places as deemed necessary by the FDC or FENWT.
- Presides over the meetings.
- Recommends the need for further resources and authority when it becomes evident.
- Creates and assigns work to subgroups as deemed necessary by the FDC.
- Selects ad hoc subject matter experts to assist in issue resolution.
- Prepares and signs correspondence approved by the FDC.
- Drafts program of work and budget proposals for FENWT approval.
- Sets agenda for regularly scheduled meetings.
- Schedules special meetings as needed.
- Submits an annual project status and accomplishment report to the FENWT chair in time to meet NWCG guidelines.

Vice-Chair/Secretary:

- Is responsible for the tracking of all on-going projects and the development and implementation of FDC procedures.
- Provides follow-up on assigned projects to ensure timely completion.
- Documents all meeting agreements in the form of minutes.
- Maintains the permanent file of FDC activities.
- Sends meeting announcements, agenda items, etc., to membership and other interested parties.
- Distributes meeting minutes to FENWT.

Members and technical advisors:

- Solicit issues or agenda items from the constituents they represent for inclusion in the FDC meeting agendas.
- Attend all regularly scheduled meetings.
- Represent fire danger rating for your constituency
- Provide to the chair, three weeks prior to the next scheduled meeting, any briefing papers concerning issues to be included on the upcoming meeting's agenda.
- Report team activities and developments to constituents according to the communication plan.

Subject Matter Experts:

- Assemble data or other information requested by the chair into written documents (if warranted) for presentation and peer review by the FDC.

X. Reports and Meeting Notes

Written annual reports are made to FENWT chair. Verbatim minutes are not necessary, but an accurate summary of the actions taken at each meeting is required. Sufficient records should be kept to analyze the performance of the FDC and to keep the FDC on task and progressing toward its goal. FDC budget requests and strategic planning need to coincide with NWCG's mission. These need to be submitted as necessary to ensure that the FDC is fulfilling its' mission and meeting FDC objectives. Any special reports or findings will be appropriately published after being approved and funded by NWCG.

XI. Charter Amendments

Proposed changes to this Charter will be submitted to the chair who shall determine if the changes are appropriate and necessary. If they are deemed appropriate and necessary, the revised Charter will be brought to the FDC for concurrence. If affirmed, the modification will be forwarded to the Chair, FENWT, for approval. All modifications to this Charter will be filed as supplements to the original Charter.

XII. Charter Approval - This Fire Danger Committee Charter is effective on the date of signature by the FENWT Chair. Charter revisions are made on the recommendation by the FDC and with the concurrence of the FENWT Chair.

/S/ Paul Schlobohm

April 14, 2005

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FENWT Chair

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Date