

Charter

Fire Weather Working Team

I BACKGROUND

The National Weather Service (NWS) has provided fire weather services to the fire agencies since 1914. Every administration since 1981, in an effort to reduce the deficit, has proposed reducing or eliminating a portion of the NWS fire weather service. In 1984 the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) established a Fire Weather Working Team (FWWT) to examine the NWS fire weather program, identify the users needs, look at alternative ways of obtaining the service, and identify opportunities for improving the fire weather program. The FWWT submitted its report to the NWCG in 1986. The FWWT was then re-established as a National Fire Weather Advisory Group (NFWAG). This group continued to try and determine users current and future needs and also monitored the NWS Modernization and Restructuring (MAR). As MAR progressed the NWCG agencies continued to be concerned about the ability of the NWS to meet their needs. In 1994, NFWAG and the NWS sponsored an Intergovernmental Fire Weather Users Summit in Santa Monica, California. The summit outlined users current and future needs and made recommendations on how the fire weather program should be done in the future. In 1996 the NWS was directed by Congress to eliminate non-federal/non-wildfire services. In 1997 NWCG sunset NFWAG and re-established a FWWT.

II NAME

The name of the group is the Fire Weather Working Team of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (hereinafter cited as the working team or FWWT).

III AUTHORITY

This working team is established pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding establishing the NWCG on 16 March 1976 signed by the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior.

IV MISSION

Provide for the coordination and use of meteorological services in support of wildland fire management and resources management programs.

V OBJECTIVES

In relation to the fire weather program team objectives are to:

- Identify "customer" requirements for meteorological products and services and ensure these are readily available.
- Provide and coordinate strategic planning for meteorological products and services.
- Coordinate organizational funding initiatives.
- Provide national interagency program assessment, advice on policy, and operational guidance.
- Coordinate planning and implementation of joint activities.
- Coordinate research and development programs and activities.
- Facilitate the improvement in products and services as well as the expertise of the user community.
- Coordinate activities with National Advisory Group on Fire Danger Rating (NAGFDR) and NWCG working groups.

VI ORGANIZATION

The team operates under the direction of the NWCG. A member of the NWCG is assigned responsibility as a liaison to assist the working team when necessary, and it is through this individual that the working team relates and reports to the NWCG.

VII TEAM MEMBERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The number of members of this working team shall not exceed ten including the team leader and technical advisors. Team members will be selected from the participating (NWCG) federal and state agencies and will reflect a mix of agency administrators, fire program managers, fire weather meteorologists, and other fire program specialists. Team members and replacement members are selected by the Team Leader in consultation with the Liaison from a roster supplied by NWCG. The Team Leader may invite additional non-voting Technical Advisors to serve on the working team. The National Weather Service (DOC, NOAA) will provide a Technical Advisor.

VIII ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Team Leader will be elected by the members of the FWWT, and approved by the liaison, for a term of two years. The Team Leader has the following authorities and responsibilities:

- Convene meetings and schedule agenda items
- Ensure the team remains focused and accomplishes tasks

- Serves as the initial point-of-contact for other NWCG working teams, and other organizations
- Establish subgroups or task groups as necessary
- Secures and allocates resources and manage the working team budget
- Delegates tasks as appropriate
- Ensures completion of administrative duties
- Provides orientation to new team members
- Ensure all voting NWCG agencies have a designated point of contact on the working team
- Serves as point of contact for user agencies on the Co-op Agreement with the NWS.

Team members have the following responsibilities:

- Represent the interests of their constituents and agencies as well as the interest of users and participating agencies not directly represented on the working team.
- Provide advice to the team in areas of their expertise.
- Share information with other team members and fire program users outside the formal working team framework.
- Members will ensure that FWWT minutes are distributed to their constituents and agencies.

The Executive Secretary will be elected by the members of the FWWT, and approved by the liaison, for a term of two years. The Executive Secretary has the following authorities and responsibilities:

- Summarize critical meeting discussions and action items in meeting notes and distribute to all working team members and the distribution list.
- Assumes the responsibility of the Team Leader in his/her absence.
- Maintain records of working team activities and deliberations.

IX MEETINGS AND REPORTS

A. Meetings: The working team will meet in person at least once a year. Additional meetings may be called by the Team Leader as needed. Meetings will be scheduled and agendas will be provided in advance to working team members and to the Liaison. All recommendations will be based upon unanimous consent of the voting members. Six team members will normally constitute a quorum, however the working team may meet with fewer members at the recommendation of the Team Leader and the approval of the Liaison. Individuals with special expertise from outside the working team may be asked to participate when appropriate. Attendance by non-working team individuals at working team meetings should have the concurrence of the Team Leader. Task groups within or outside the working team may meet for specific task assignments at the discretion of the Team Leader.

B. Reports: Special finding and reports will be appropriately published after being approved by the NWCG. Work plans will be submitted to the Liaison annually. Meeting schedules, financial considerations, recommended areas of investigation, work schedules, and work area descriptions will be submitted with the work plan.

X APPROVAL

This charter is effective as of the date of the approval by the NWCG Chair. The charter may be revised upon recommendations of a majority of the working team members and with the concurrence of the NWCG Liaison.