



**INTERIM CHARTER
SAFETY AND HEALTH WORKING TEAM
NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP**

I. BACKGROUND

This Team is formed as a working team of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG). The NWCG was formed January 1974 to expand operational cooperation and coordination of the United States Departments of Agriculture and Interior and the various member agencies within these Departments and the National Association of State Foresters (NASF). The Team chartered here is one of a number of support teams established by the NWCG to analyze specific problem areas in fire management and recommend solutions.

The Team was originally chartered in 1987 as the Fireline Safety Committee, with the primary responsibility of serving as a “national clearinghouse” for major forest/wildland fire suppression accident data analysis and dissemination. In 1992, it was recognized that the required workload had expanded far beyond that of data and trend analysis, and a new charter for a full Working Team was approved.

II. NAME

The name of this Team is the Safety and Health Working Team of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group, hereinafter referred to as the Team.

III. AUTHORITY

This Team is established pursuant to the charter authority granted to the parent National Wildfire Coordinating Group via the Memorandum of Understanding establishing the Group, March 16, 1976.

IV. PURPOSE

The purpose and mission of this Team is to improve firefighter health, safety and effectiveness through emphasis on excellence in workforce development, leadership and the establishment of standards. Through data collection and analysis the team will validate and prioritize safety issues for resolution and communication to the field and management. Team principles will emphasize the values embodied in High Reliability Organizations (HROs) and help promote HRO concepts within the National Wildfire Coordinating Group.

V. MEMBERSHIP

The number of voting members of this Team shall not exceed eight (8) including the Team Chair (one member from each of the Federal agencies and one member from each of the three NASF regions). The term of each member is indefinite. Team members are selected by the respective agency's NWCG Parent Group representative.

Team Chairmanship will be limited to a three year term. The Team Chair will be approved by NWCG. After the third year, the Team may re-elect current Chair/Vice Chair or select a new Chair and/or Vice Chair.

Technical advisors may be added as appropriate; for example, a Technical Advisor from the USDA-Forest Service's Missoula Technology and Development Center provides standing assistance to the Team. Technical advisors are non voting members.

VI. TEAM AND VICE CHAIR AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

Under the auspices of the NWCG, the Team Chair has the following authority and responsibilities under NWCG oversight:

- Is authorized to convene meetings and schedule agenda items.
- May make specific work assignments to Team members and/or appoint subgroups from outside Team membership to work on specific projects.
- Will distribute copies of the Team minutes within 30 days after a meeting to Team members, NWCG Liaison, NWCG Executive Secretary, the NWCG SHWT website, and to other interested or affected parties.
- Represents the Team in presenting recommendations to the NWCG, other working teams, and as appropriate, in contacts with outside individuals or groups.
- May recommend to the NWCG Liaison the need for further resources and authorities, as they become evident.
- Keeps the NWCG Executive Secretary advised annually as to meeting dates and locations.

The Team may identify a Vice Chair to carry out the duties of the Chair in that person's absence.

VII. MEETINGS AND REPORTS

A. Meetings

Meetings will be scheduled and agendas will be provided in advance to members of the Team and coordinated with the NWCG Liaison. Meeting locations and dates will be established one year in advance and posted on the NWCG web site.

Additional meetings will be scheduled at the request of NWCG, or as determined by the Team Chair. Subgroups within or outside Team membership may meet at the direction of the Team Chair. Individuals from outside the Team membership, having necessary expertise, may be asked to participate when appropriate.

Travel costs of the meetings will normally be borne by the agencies that sponsor Team membership; state representation is borne by the annual NWCG budget allocated to the Team for two State representatives. A third State representative travel when assigned will be borne by the NASF region. Meeting facility costs will typically be rotated between member organizations.

Five Team members will normally constitute a quorum, but the Team may meet with fewer members at the discretion of the SHWT chair in concurrence with the NWCG Liaison.

B. Reports

Annually an accomplishment report, three year budget and a summary of fatalities, entrapments, and serious accidents will be completed and forwarded to the NWCG liaison. Special findings and other reports will be submitted to the NWCG liaison.

VIII. APPROVAL

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

NWCG Chair: 

Date: 3/5/07