

National Wildfire Coordinating Group Operations and Training Committee

Date: 7 December 2018

OTC-2018-11

To: Angie Simpson, Chair, Fuels Management Committee

From: Steve Shaw, Chair, Operations and Training Committee

Subject: OTC Concurrence of RX-301 and RX-341 Delivery Recommendations

Thank you for your July 2018 correspondence documenting Fuels Management Committee's (FMC) assessment of RX-301, Prescribed Fire Implementation and RX-341, Prescribed Fire Burn Plan Preparation, along with the Prescribed Fire Burn Boss Type 2 (RXB2) qualification.

OTC concurs with the following FMC recommendations:

1. Encourage geographic areas to deliver RX-301 and RX-341 as separate courses whenever feasible.
2. When separate delivery is not feasible, allow for RX-301 and RX-341 to be delivered in a combined format. When delivering in a combined format, the following requirements must be met:
 - a. Pre-selection assessments for both courses may be administered separately or combined into a single assessment. A minimum score of 70% is required on all assessments for acceptance into the course.
 - b. A minimum of 44 instructor-led training hours are required. This includes 32 hours for the entirety of RX-341 and 12 additional hours for RX-301.
 - c. NWCG certificates for both RX-301 and RX-341 will be awarded for successful completion of the combined delivery.
3. Change the target audience of RX-341 to, "Personnel desiring to be qualified as Prescribed Fire Burn Boss Type 2 (RXB2). Other positions that would benefit from the course are Firing Boss (FIRB) and Fire Effects Monitor (FEMO). Additionally, agencies, organizations, or personnel who are involved in the preparation, implementation, or review of prescribed fire plans, such as air regulators, fire ecologist, landowners, prescribed fire consultants, fire planners, and others, may also benefit from the course." This change will be reflected in next update of the *Field Managers Course Guide*, PMS 901-1 (anticipate May 2019).
4. Through the NWCG Executive Board, request prioritization of simultaneous revision of RX-301 and RX-341 within NWCG Training and Development. RX-341 should be revised to a workshop style training course that emphasizes burn plan planning process, use of applicable modeling tools, and policy requirements.
5. Following revision of RX-301 and RX-341, require both courses for RXB2 qualification.

For questions or concerns, please contact Steve Shaw, Chair, OTC, at srshaw@blm.gov.

Thank you,



Chair, Operations and Training Committee

Cc: Garth Fisher, Chair, NWCG Executive Board
Melissa Wegner, Chair, Geographic Area Training Representatives
Sean Cross, NWCG Program Manager
Josh Haney, NWCG Training Program Manager

Attachments: RX-301/RX-341 Concurrent Delivery Method – Additional Notes to Cadre
RX-301-RX-341 Sample Agenda

RX-301/RX-341 Concurrent Delivery Method – Additional Notes to Cadre

Throughout the week, continue to emphasize both the planning and implementation side of things. As you know there are certain aspects of the training that are easy concepts to grasp because all of the students have spent a long career in fire management and many of the elements of the prescribed fire plan (communications, public and personnel safety, medical, briefing, firing plan, etc.) from the implementation side of things are nothing new. Ensure you touch on those elements but don't spend an excessive amount of time if it is apparent all students already have a firm grasp on those elements. The one thing to make sure of is while they are thinking of these elements, to do so in the frame of prescribed fire and clarify how these might be similar but could also be *different* from their wildfire experience.

The following are concepts that deserve emphasis throughout the week and if not addressed during the 32 hours of instruction devoted to RX-341, then these may be good candidate topics to address during the 12 hours of instruction devoted to RX-301 topics that were not adequately covered as part of the RX-341 instruction, especially the STEX/TDGS exercises:

1. Agency Administrator Ignition Authorization and the dynamics between that of the Burn Boss and the AA. What does this look like and are they prepared to answer all of the questions? Do *they* support the plan?
2. Pre-burn considerations and notifications. What is important? Each burn is different and may have specific impacts that require a lot of work prior to the day of implementation but are still considered part of implementation. What might some of these things look like?
3. Liability – We always have a lot of questions about liability from students. Over the past several years we have had either an attorney come from the USDA Office of General Counsel or a USDI Field Solicitors Office to instruct this section. The focus is on liability as it specifically relates to prescribed fire but then does at times go into wildfire, hazard trees, etc. Discussions include negligence, gross negligence, scope of duties, etc. When we have someone from the outside provide the instruction on this unit it is much better received by the students; the attorneys can do a much better job since they understand the terminology on the liability side.
4. Contingency Plan – When does this need to be implemented and how? (This is also one that gets a lot of focus on the planning side of things.)
5. Wildfire Declaration – What does this look like? We talk relationships with FMO, AA, Burn Boss, and how this helps with making the decision. We have an instructor that has had an escape or a near escape talk about their experience. This one stimulates a lot of discussion.
6. STEX or TDGS (Rotation of 4 or 5 scenarios): We use these to focus on things that we as instructors struggled with understanding when we were starting out as Burn Bosses.
 - a. Agency Administrator Ignition Authorization – Training Objective – Burn Boss briefing the Agency Administrator and working through the Ignition Auth.
 - b. Smoke Management and Air Quality – Training Objective – Make decisions regarding public safety and prescription parameters during active ignition.
 - c. Wildfire Declaration – Training Objective – Wildfire declaration.
 - d. Aerial Ignition – Training Objective – What kind of planning goes into this? Specifically what is required/needed in the burn plan and needed leading up to the day of implementation? And what is needed to be done on the day of implementation.
 - e. Prescribed Fire Timeline – How is a burn window selected? What needs to be done starting from this point through implementation?
7. Operational Leadership – What is your role?

Example Agenda for Combined Delivery of
 RX-341 Prescribed Fire Plan Preparation RX-301 Prescribed Fire Implementation

MONDAY			
Time	Unit	Description	Instructor(s)
0730 – 0930	Unit 0	Introduction and Review of Pre-Course Material	
0930 – 1000	Unit 1	Policies and Guidelines	
1000 – 1130	Unit 2	NEPA Specialist – Goals and Objectives, Constraints	
1130 – 1230		LUNCH	
1230 – 1430	Unit 4	Complexity Analysis and Risk Assessment	
1430 – 1700	Unit 5	Prescription Development	
1700 – 1730		Field Trip Discussion/Preparation	
TUESDAY			
Time	Unit	Description	Instructor(s)
0730 – 0830	Unit 6	Smoke Management and Air Quality	
0830 – 0900	Unit 7A	Pre-Burn Considerations	
0900 – 1030	Units 7F, 7G, 7A, 7C	Communications, Public and Personnel Safety and Medical, Briefing, Post-Burn, Scheduling, Ignition Plan and Test Fire	
1030 – 1130	Unit 7D	Holding Plan	
1130 – 1230	Unit 8	Monitoring	
1230 – 1600	Unit 3	Description of the Rx Fire Area	
		<i>Brown Bag Lunch/Burn Site Visit</i>	
1600 – 1730		Group Session #1	
1900 - 2100		Modeling Tools: BehavePlus, IFTDSS, etc. – Optional	

(#) = Rx 301 Unit #'s

Example Agenda for Combined Delivery of
RX-341 Prescribed Fire Plan Preparation RX-301 Prescribed Fire Implementation

WEDNESDAY			
Time	Unit	Description	Instructor(s)
0730 – 0800	Unit 7B	Organization and Equipment	
0800 – 0830	Unit 9 (8)	Funding, Post-Burn Activities, and Appendices	
0830 – 0930	Unit 10	Final Complexity Analysis	
0930 – 1000	Unit 11(4)	Reviews, Approvals and Signatures, Technical Review, Go/No-Go	
1000 – 1130	(Unit 3)	Liability	
1130 – 1230		LUNCH	
1230 - 1330	(Unit 3)	Liability	
1330 – 1530	Unit 7E (7)	Contingency Plan, Wildfire Declaration and Declared Wildfire Review	
1530 – 1730		Group Session #2	
THURSDAY			
Time	Unit	Description	Instructor(s)
0730 – 1130	(Units 5 & 6)	Pre-Burn/Daily Operations (TGDS)	
1130 – 1230	(Unit 2)	Operational Leadership in Prescribed Fire	
1230 – 1700		Group Session #3	
		Working Lunch – Burn Plan due by 1700	
1700 – 1730		Student Questions on Presentations Final Exam Questions Handout/Discuss West Speers Burn Plan	
FRIDAY			
Time	Unit	Description	Instructor(s)
0730 – 0830		Technical Review of Students Burn Plans	
0830 - 0900		Test Review	
0900 – 1100		Burn Plan Presentations/Peer Review	
1100 – 1300		West Speers Final Exam	
1300 – 1400		LUNCH – Brown Bag/Close-out	

(#) = Rx 301 Unit #'s