

Leadplane Training Lesson Plan

Fire Size Up

12-03-N9065-HO

Objective:

To develop the student's proficiency in the fire size up (Phase 2).

Content:

The main objective of a fire size up is to relay to dispatch and fire managers what the incident is like and information for sound decision making. A fire size up is a list of items that describe the fire behavior, where it is burning, and what the fire is burning in. A good fire size up can determine what resources are needed and dictate strategy and tactics. Every dispatch, district, and geographic area has a slightly different list of items for a fire size up. Here is a list of the items that will be very helpful to dispatch or the firefighters on the ground. Like giving a target description, know what information will be conveyed before the transmission is started. Be concise, accurate and to the point.

It is helpful to be proficient in fire size ups. During the high recon, a quick fire size up will help to determine tactics.

Fire Size

This is a learned skill and takes practice. A football field is approximately one acre.

Fuel Type

Describe the fuel type that the fire is burning in. Keep it simple and use grass, brush, timber, or a mix of the three.

Character of the Fire

Describe the fire as actively burning or smoldering. Are trees and brush torching, is there spotting, and what percentage of the fire is active.

Position on Slope

Describe as the upper third, middle third, or lower third if there is terrain. Position can also be described as ridge top, hill top or flat terrain.

Aspect

Give the cardinal direction of the slope the fire is burning on.

Spread Potential

Look at the factors that influence fire behavior and gauge the spread potential. These are listed on the operational tactics lesson plan. Keep it simple as in low, moderate, or high spread potential.

Hazards

These could be hazards to aircraft as well as firefighters. High tension power lines, cliffs, towers, inaccessible terrain, etc.

Winds

Estimate the wind speed in miles per hour. Note that there is a big difference between knots and mph at the low wind speeds but use the receiver's terminology.

Weather

Communicate any winds that might hinder aircraft operations as well as firefighting operations. Thunderstorms and lightning are always important weather factors to pass on.

Road Access

This is important to pass on because it will influence what resources are sent to the fire. Aerial delivered resources vs. ground transported resources.

Values at Risk

This would include mainly structures, but could also be historical or cultural resources, agriculture, animals, etc. This detail will influence what resources will be made available to the fire.

Completion Standards:

The lesson is complete when the student can demonstrate a fire size up with minimal deficiencies noted. The fire size up will be accomplished without the reliance on the evaluator.