



26 April 2021

Complex Incident Management Team (CIMT): Action Plan for Implementation

The adoption of Complex Incident Management as the new business model for wildland fire requires systemic changes to be implemented by the subgroups under the authority of the Fire Management Board (FMB), NWCG Executive Board, and National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC). Existing Type 1 and Type 2 Incident Management Teams (IMTs) will be renamed, resulting in one configuration of IMT for all large, complex fires. This change requires commitment and coordination among the agencies, partners, and cooperators to align qualifications, expectations, and standards and to more efficiently manage the IMTs and their individual members.

This Action Plan is intended to identify the key components requiring direct modification to support the implementation and subsequent use of CIMTs. Formal taskings will be drafted by IWDG for issuance by the appropriate channels. Recommended timelines are based upon a target of full implementation by January 2024.

These changes apply specifically to the following NWCG Command and General Staff (C&G) positions: Incident Commander Type 1 (ICT1) and 2 (ICT2), Safety Officer Type 1 (SOF1) and 2 (SOF2), Public Information Officer Type 1 (PIO1) and 2 (PIO2), Operations Section Chief Type 1 (OSC1) and 2 (OSC2), Planning Section Chief Type 1 (PSC1) and 2 (PSC2), Finance/Administration Section Chief Type 1 (FSC1) and 2 (FSC2), Logistics Section Chief Type 1 (LSC1) and 2 (LSC2). Additionally, the changes affect Type 3 and Area Command positions but do not specifically change them at this time.

For additional background and supporting documents, please refer to the IWDG webpage.

<https://www.nwcg.gov/partners/iwdg>

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Training and Qualification

NWCG Executive Board – Incident and Positions Standards Committee (IPSC), Position Naming Board (PNB), Steering Committees, and Training Delivery Committee (TDC)

Tasking: IPSC and its subgroups must realign the standards for qualifications, training, and position typing from a two-tier system to a single system to support CIMT C&G personnel. Identify transition plan for those currently qualified as Type 1 and 2 C&G.

NWCG Standards for Wildland Fire Position Qualifications, PMS 310-1

Revised Incident Position Descriptions (IPD) and Position Task Books for all C&G positions

New Position Mnemonics for C&G

S-420, Command and General Staff, and S-520, Advanced Incident Management

IWDG recommends piloting a new course blending existing objectives, content, methodology, and best practices from S-420 and S-520. Request current S-520/620 steering committee and cadre assistance in the development of geographic area steering committees and cadres to facilitate this new training. Emphasize simulations, sand table exercises, and strategic planning sessions. In near term, rely heavily on experienced personnel to assist in training and mentoring less experienced personnel; however, encourage a focus on overall knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience, rather than a focus on current qualification as either Type 1 or Type 2.

Development of an S-320 course targeting personnel desiring qualification as Type 3 C&G

IWDG recommends immediate review of the O-305 and O-325 courses. An S-320 course should focus on the understanding the planning P, producing ICS Forms, and working as a C&G.

Complex Incident Management Course (CIMC)

IWDG recommends coordination and discussion with CIMC Steering Committee to ensure realignment as appropriate to match NWCG course revision.

Timeline:

Draft IPDs, PTBs, Mnemonics, and Qualifications: January 2022

Revised CIMT Course January 2023

Revised PMS 310-1: October 2023

S-320 Course Availability: January 2024

CIMT Mobilization

NMAC – Coordinating Group Advisory Council (CGAC), National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC)

NWCG Executive Board – National Coordination System Committee (NCSC)

Tasking: CGAC must address the following:

- Determine a sustainable number of teams necessary to meet the needs of the geographic area.
- Provide more direct coordinating group oversight to IMTs and all aspects of IMT succession.
- Actively recruit and retain more ICs.
- Provide participation incentives for ICs and IMT members.
- Efficiently manage IMT rotations to reduce fatigue and create more equitable distribution of assignments.
- Ensure an interagency and intergovernmental composition of IMTs.
- Utilize a geographic area pool to fill necessary positions on IMTs that are not part of the IMT's roster of core positions (between 20 and 30).

Incident Resource Ordering Capability (IROC)

National Mobilization Guide

IWDG recommends NMAC oversight of all CIMTs at appropriate National Planning Level.

Geographic Area Mobilization Guides

IWDG recommends consideration of an altered rotation to address the following:

- Increased use of out-of-GACC CIMTs to reduce strain on home-GACC CIMTs during particularly busy periods.
 - Establishment of guidance and/or rotations that are more inclusive of out-of-GACC CIMTs is beneficial and levels experience, opportunities, and assignments for all personnel and CIMTs geographically and nationally.
- Equitable dispersal of CIMTs throughout the core geographic fire season and throughout the calendar year, with recognition of the following:
 - CIMT will require year-round rosters for many teams which have not previously maintained availability beyond core geographic fire season. However, more IMTs and personnel will be included, reducing the frequency and duration of availability for all.

Timeline:

Multiple Geographic Area Pilots of IMTs with Core Membership and Utilization of Pool: 2022, with report out in January 2023

- Option 1: Build rotation roster with master roster core members plus other positions/individuals name selected from geographic area pool.
- Option 2: Build rotation roster with master roster core members. Use mobilization order/pre-order to fill all other positions needed from the pool.
- Additional options may be proposed for consideration and pilot.

CIMT Composition

NMAC – National Incident Commander/Area Commander Council (NICACC)

Tasking: NICACC must address the following:

- Define the core members of an IMT roster to focus on C&G and key Unit Leader positions with a goal of limiting rosters to critical positions necessary for efficient team function and interaction (potentially between 20 and 30 positions). Utilize a pool concept to access additional individuals with skill sets needed for specific incidents. And identify when name requests are an appropriate avenue for filling orders.
- Develop successional strategies that address IMT trainee needs and identify the necessary coordination and interaction with coordinating groups to enable ICs to succeed in managing IMTs.
- Compose teams that are scalable in size and complexity to deal with a broader range of incident types.
- Provide input on length of availability periods and duration of commitments to enable the Geographic Area Coordinating Groups to better manage IMT rotations and assignments.
- Actively engage with Geographic Area Coordinating Groups to manage work/rest and life balance issues for IMTs during extended periods of high activity (PL4 and PL5).

Timeline:

Identify Core Team Membership: January 2022

Initial Geographic Area Pilot of IMTs with Core Membership and Utilization of Pool: 2022, with report out in January 2023

Additional Systems and Documents

Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS)

IWDG recommends review to validate accuracy and determine what edits will be necessary to continue supporting local units in large fire management.

Organizational Needs Assessment (ONA)

IWDG recommends maintaining Type 1 and Type 2 incidents to avoid contradiction with the National Incident Management System (NIMS). CIMTs would be capable of responding to either type of incident. However, review of the ONA should occur to replace references to Type 1 and 2 IMTs with CIMT.

Wildland Fire Risk and Complexity Analysis

https://www.nwcg.gov/sites/default/files/publications/pms210_rca.pdf

IWDG recommends review of the document and its components to validate its accuracy and determine whether CIMT adoption will cause any necessary revisions.

Agency Purview, Policy, and Directives

FMB, NASF, IAFC, etc.

Updates and revisions will be required from a cursory standpoint to replace references to Type 1 and 2 IMTs with CIMTs. Additionally, agency policies and practices must be updated to reflect the systemic changes. Key documents identified include:

Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations (Red Book)

<https://www.nifc.gov/standards/guides/red-book>

Agency Administrators

Tasking: Dissemination of IWDG Memo 21-02, The Agency Role in Adoption of Complex Incident Management Teams through issuance of agency-specific communication to ensure this change is widely understood and supported at all levels.

Agency administrators and agency executives play a strategic role in creating an environment favorable to successful incident workforce management. Several critical actions were identified:

- Create agency administrator incentives for employee participation on IMTs.
 - Agency executives should commend Agency Administrators for allowing and even encouraging participation on IMTs. Achieving other priority resource management objectives should fall to a lower priority during critical fire response times. This should be a clear change in priorities supported at all levels.
 - Set IMT participation as a possible way to achieve performance goals for all employees.
 - Incentivize participation and qualifications for non-fire employees, and identify opportunities to recognize fire qualifications and fire management positions as successional crosswalks within the agency.
- Rebuild local capacity that will support incident management teams.
 - Agency decisions to centralize finance, acquisition, fleet, and other support services force IMTs to bring that capability with them. This puts IMTs in direct competition for agency resources, particularly during the western fire season when agency fourth quarter accounting occurs.
 - CGAC is already investigating remote situation units, remote decision support units, and other functional modules that can reduce capability gaps on IMTs. Incorporating this sort of management capability into local workforce planning will strengthen and sustain this effort.
 - It takes several years to reach Command and General Staff (C&G) level, resulting in employees also holding high-level management positions in their day job while committing to IMTs. The competing demands and responsibilities make participation challenging. Mandatory retirement ages compound this situation for permanent fire employees.
- Develop the skills and tool sets necessary for scaling incident management appropriate to the incident.
- Build agency administrator capacity for managing a changing incident management/incident workforce environment.
- Collaborate with IMTs to establish mutual standard expectations for operations and engagement.