



NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP

National Interagency Fire Center
3833 S. Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

MEMORANDUM

Reference: NWCG#001-2010

To: Fire Management Officers and Human Resource Management Officers

From: NWCG Chair *William Raage*

Date: January 14, 2010

Subject: IFPM: Classification of Local Dispatch Center Manager Positions

Background: The current Interagency Fire Program Management (IFPM) Qualifications Standards and Guide Implementation Plan stipulates that all IFPM fire positions (including local Dispatch Center Manager positions) classifiable at GS-11 grade and above are to be classified as professional (GS-0401) positions based on the required competencies and job complexity.

Concern has surfaced within the unit interagency fire management community that this requirement may be inappropriate for the local unit level Dispatch Center Manager position. The actual work of some local level Dispatch Center Manager positions is not properly aligned with a professional series. There is not a requirement to apply professional knowledge of an advanced type in a field of science as typically gained through a bachelor's or higher degree. Competencies are not dependent on application of professional scientific knowledge.

The work of some local Dispatch Center Managers actually requires application of extensive practical knowledge and skill related to fire suppression strategy, tactics, incident management, logistical support, resource allocation, and interagency coordination. This practical knowledge and skill can be effectively gained through specialized experience and applicable training. Full scientific knowledge of the respective professional field is not essential for the successful performance of the duties of the position. These positions would more appropriately be classified in a non professional series.

The flexibility to classify these positions in other than a professional series is supported by the IFPM Implementation Plan Competency Matrix for the journey and expert level Dispatch Center Manager position. This Matrix does not identify a specific requirement for professional

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knowledge relevant to competencies in performing the work of the local Dispatch Center Manager position.

History also shows that federal local Dispatch Center Manager positions have been classified in non professional series and that incumbents of those positions have performed the work in a fully successful or higher manner.

DECISION: Local Dispatch Center Manager positions will be exempt from the IFPM Implementation Plan stipulation requiring all IFPM fire positions at the GS-11 grade and above be classified as professional positions. Local fire managers are granted flexibility to properly define the paramount work requirements of their respective Dispatch Center Manager positions and to use unit developed position descriptions which are to be carefully analyzed and classified in the proper series commensurate with the appropriate knowledge and competencies required for successful performance of the work.

cc: NWCG Executive Board