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## 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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# Phase 1

## Training and Qualification

*NWCG Executive Board issue tasking(s) as appropriate to Incident and Positions Standards Committee (IPSC), Position Naming Board (PNB), Steering Committees, Training Delivery Committee (TDC), and NWCG Staff by October 2021 to address the following:*

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, and identify a 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.

*NWCG Executive Board issue tasking to NIMS Integration Committee (NIMSIC) and other committees as appropriate to coordinate with US Fire Administration to establish IMT standards which reflect team capability and support evolving and devolving incidents.*

### Timeline:

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

Revised CIMT Course January 2023

Revised PMS 310-1: January 2024

IMT Standards: January 2024

S-320 Course Availability: January 2024

## CIMT Mobilization

*NMAC establish one standard criterion for typing CIMTs for all Geographic Areas. This includes:*

- One standard scalable organization to accommodate complexity of Type 1 and 2 incidents and implementation across all Geographic Areas.
- One IMT type for national coordination.

- One metric for priority ranking.
- One form of CIMT allocation.
- One set of factors to help ensure support and interoperability throughout the fire community.
- One set of rules and procedure for all agency and executive support.
- One system, Incident Command Application Process (ICAP), for all IMT applications and selections.

*In coordination with NWCG Executive Board and the National Coordination System Committee (NCSC), NMAC issue taskings to Coordinating Group Advisory Council (CGAC) and National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) by October 2021 to address necessary changes to the following:*

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.

Provide criteria for Geographic Area pilots in 2022, with report outs by January 2023 to ensure adjustments can be made for continued pilots in 2023.

Timeline:

Multiple Geographic Areas Participate in Initial Pilots of CIMTs: 2022

Require use of ICAP by all Geographic Areas: 2022.

## **CIMT Composition**

*NMAC issue taskings to National Incident Commander/Area Commander Council (NICACC) by November 2021 to address the following:*

Tasking: NICACC must address the following:

- 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:

Initial Geographic Area Pilot of CIMTs: 2022, with report out in January 2023

## **Additional Systems and Documents**

*FMB must task responsible groups with review and updates to the following:*

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

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

*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](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.

*NMAC must task a responsible entity with annual update to decisional data sets to include:*

- Team mobilizations by geographic area, by ordering entity, and by type.
- IMT member composition by employment type and employment agency.

*NMAC must establish standardized Preparedness Level (PL) criteria, drawdown levels, IMT operating procedures, and other operating plans for all Geographic Areas.*

Timeline:

Establish Responsibility for Annual Data Review: November 2021

Provide Annual IMT/CIMT Data Analysis: January 2022

Standardized PL criteria, drawdown levels, IMT operating procedures, and other operating plans for all Geographic Areas: January 2023

## Agency Purview, Policy, and Directives

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.

*FMB must ensure agency communications and leadership support implementation of change by disseminating IWDG Memo 21-02, The Agency Role in Adoption of Complex Incident Management Teams, <https://www.nwccg.gov/sites/default/files/docs/eb-iwdg-m-21-02.pdf>, through issuance of agency-specific communication to ensure this change is widely understood and supported at all levels. See CIMT Communications Plan outline on page 6.*

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 and supervisor 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 IMTs.
  - 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 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.

*FMB must establish personnel support for implementation of CIMTs, to include a full-time position to coordinate with the chartering entities, cooperating/partner groups, and IWDG membership. This position should serve as chair and manage the administrative functions of IWDG.*

*FMB must work with non-fire management federal agencies and non-federal entities to establish agreements and processes for paying employees while working on CIMTs and federal wildland fires.*

### Timeline:

Full-Time Position Support: January 2022

Active Agreements with Non-Fire and Non-Federal Agencies: December 2023

## CIMT Communication Plan

Broad communication with all stakeholders and audiences is necessary for the successful change to CIMT. Stakeholders must be educated on the system weaknesses, the intent of the change, and the benefit to them. Established agency and interagency/intergovernmental communications methods and systems should be used for formal direction and guidance. Personal contacts, through briefings and meetings, are particularly important in the near term. Less formal methods, such as email announcements and social media, are appropriate for secondary audiences and general updates. As systems components change, the revised standards and processes will make up a considerable portion of communication avenues to secondary audiences. (For example, revisions to the Mobilization Guides are communicated to users annually.)

Primary Audience/ Stakeholder	Intent	Method of Delivery	Responsible	Target Deadline	Status
Agency Executives	Support and Direction	Memo/Formal Communications Paths	FMB		
Agency Administrators	Support and Adoption	Agency communication channels – IWDG Memo 21-02	FMB		
Incident Commanders	Implementation	Tasking Memo	NMAC		
Geographic Area Coordinating Groups	Implementation	Tasking Memo	NMAC		
NWCG Committees	Implementation	Tasking Memo	NWCG		

Secondary Audience/ Stakeholder	Intent	Method of Delivery	Responsible	Target Deadline	Status
Incident Management Team Members	Support and Implementation	IMT Meetings – CIMT StoryMap	NMAC		
Dispatch Centers	Information		NMAC/		
General Audience	Information	Announcement	NWCG		

## Phase 2

Progress and dates on proposed Phase 2 actions will be defined as Phase 1 actions are complete.

### **CIMT Mobilization**

*NMAC issue taskings to Coordinating Group Advisory Council (CGAC) and National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) to discuss and pursue the potential utilization of 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).*

Multiple Geographic Areas may participate in pilots of IMTs with core membership and utilization of a membership pool to build the rotation roster:

- 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 issue taskings to National Incident Commander/Area Commander Council (NICACC) to discuss and pursue defining 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.*

Multiple Geographic Areas may participate in pilots of IMTs with core membership and utilization of a membership pool to build the rotation roster based on each Geographic Area's Coordinating Group decision and direction.