

From:
To: vipr@usda.gov
Subject: IBPA Implementation Guidance - Adjustments to Wildland Fire Preparedness Activities for the 2020 Fire Year in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic (CR0356)
Date: Thursday, April 2, 2020 9:15:42 AM
Attachments:

To (Bcc): FS-pdl wo ops aqm vipr liaisons; FS-pdl wo ops aqm vipr users; FS-pdl wo ops aqm fabb, CETT

In a letter dated Mar 24, 2020, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service adopted a Fire Management Board's (FMB) memo as operational guidance for the 2020 Fire Year. This email is intended to provide implementation guidance to FAM Contract Operations and AQM Fire Contracting Officers working under the I-BPA program.

The FMB memo provides federal agencies with guidance on adjusting wildland fire preparedness activities including annual medical clearance, Work Capacity Test (WCT), Basic Firefighter Training, and RT-130 Wildland Fire Safety Training Annual Refresher (WFSTAR). Specific to contracted resources/agreement holders under the I-BPA program the annual medical clearance does not apply and that reference in the FMB memo is for federal agency personnel only. The letter provides federal agencies certain exceptions to preparedness activities and distinguishes two categories of firefighter/responder: Those "new to the federal firefighting workforce" and those "incumbent/returning firefighters/transferred federal firefighters".

The guidance in the FMB memo for firefighters/responders "new to the federal firefighting workforce" apply to contracts and I-BPA agreements with requirements for these activities, specifically WCT and Basic Firefighter Training. Precautions in the FMB memo for reducing possible exposure during on-going and future WCT and Basic Firefighter Training are suggestions that may change over time due to the dynamic nature of the pandemic. Administrators of these activities are encouraged to use best practices available to ensure the safety of participants while executing these activities.

The exceptions in the FMB memo for "incumbent/returning firefighters/transferred federal firefighters" include the extension of current (2019) WCT competency at the previously attained level and RT-130 competency achieved in 2019, for contract resources and operators working under I-BPA agreements. Under the exception these competencies may be extended for one year past the expiration date of the current 2019 WCT or RT-130. This does not prohibit or prevent a private contractor from conducting WCT or RT-130 training but provides options to help companies mitigate risk of exposure due to the pandemic and to ensure sufficient firefighting resources are available for the 2020 Fire Year. Any operator who does not have a current (2019) WCT or RT-130 is not covered by these exceptions and will not be able to respond under an I-BPA until the required training is complete.

FAM Contract Operations personnel, in conjunction with Regional Acquisition Management/Contracting Officer's, will need to communicate to their contractors and I-BPA

agreement holders how this implementation guidance affects them. Additional information regarding changed processes under the I-BPA program in response to the COVID-19 pandemic will be available in the coming days at the Acquisition Management–Incident Procurement webpage at https://www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/vipr.php?tab=tab_d.

If there are additional questions about this information Contract Ops and Contracting Officers can contact Ron George, Ivory Carr, or Jason Brandt.

Thank you for your support to the I-BPA program as we navigate the unique challenges this year.

Ref: CR0356



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