

# Arizona State Wildfire Qualifications Review Committee Bylaws

## Article 1. Name

1.1: The name of this committee shall be Arizona State Wildfire Qualifications Review Committee.

## Article 2. Purpose and Powers

2.1: This Committee is formed to provide oversight for the certification of individuals participating in wildland firefighting assignments who are seeking certification in positions that have potential to supervise personnel from agencies other than their own. The wildland firefighting positions that require review by the Committee are included in the table below. Committee approval must be obtained before a firefighter can initiate a new task book for all positions that require review by the committee.

<b>Wildland Fire Qualification System Section</b>	<b>Positions Reviewed by the Committee</b>
Area Command	All positions are reviewed by the Committee
Command and General Staff	ICT4, ICT3, ICT2, ICT1 SOFR, SOF2, SOF1 PIO2, PIO1, LOFR
Prescribed Fire	All positions are reviewed by the Committee
Operations	Single Resource Boss Strike Team Leader TFLD, DIVS, STPS OSC2, OPBD
Planning	Unit Leader, PSC2 FOBS, FBAN, LTAN, SOPL
Logistics	Unit Leader, LSC2 SUBD, SVBD
Finance/Administration	Unit Leader, FSC2
Dispatch	EDSP, CORD
Prevention and Investigation	No positions are reviewed by the Committee
Air Operations	HMGB, SEMG HEB2, HEB1, ASGS, AOBD HLCO, ATCO, ATGS * See Note Below

\* Certification for Air Operations positions are reviewed/approved by the Arizona State Aviation Officer.

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The Committee shall review the qualification files for Arizona State Forestry Division personnel and for individuals who operate under a current cooperative fire rate agreement with the Arizona State Forestry Division (State Forestry). The Committee will make a recommendation to the State Forestry Fire Management Officer regarding qualifications authorized for inclusion on the state issued Wildland Qualification Cards (Red Cards).

2.2 No statement in these bylaws will conflict with the State Forester's authority to qualify individuals outside regular committee meetings under emergency circumstances as specified by the State Forester.

2.3 The Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualification System published by the NWCG (PMS 310-1) shall be the recognized authority for defining standards for certification. In addition, the Arizona State Forestry Division Policy Memo No. 25 (Policy #25) titled "Minimum Experience Requirements for Red Card Certification" shall be used to supplement the PMS 310-1; outlining minimum experience not defined by the NWCG that is required by Arizona State Forestry for certification in Operations, Command & General Staff, and Area Command positions. The Arizona State Forestry Policy #25 may require criteria that is in excess of the PMS 310-1 but can not require criteria less than the PMS 310-1.

## **Article 3. Membership**

3.1 Membership of this committee shall consist of:

The State Forestry training officer (1)

The State Forestry training specialist (1)

The State Forestry district forester from each district (3)

Two local fire department representatives from each district (6)

One alternate local fire department representative from each district (3)

In order to maintain the required quorum when a primary local fire department representative is absent, the alternate from their district will have full voting privileges

3.2 The fire department representatives will be selected by their local district forester and shall serve for a minimum of 3 years. Once the three year minimum has been satisfied their Committee membership will not expire. When a fire department representative wishes to terminate their membership (after the minimum term is served), they are expected to give ample notice to their district forester so a replacement can be selected without disruption to the operations of the committee.

3.3 All committee members will be knowledgeable about wildland fire and wildland fire training, ICS, the Wildland and Prescribed fire Qualification System as supported by the NWCG (PMS 310-1), and the Arizona State Forestry Division Policy Memo No. 25 titled "Minimum Experience Requirements for Red Card Certification."

3.4 There will be no dues or other charges for membership on the committee.

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## **Article 4. Officers**

4.1 The officers of this committee shall be a Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. The State Training Officer will be the permanent Chair and the State Training Specialist shall serve as Vice and secretary.

4.2 The Chair shall act as a facilitator in conducting the business of the committee. The Vice Chair shall act as Chair in the absence of the State Training Officer. The secretary shall take notes at meetings to document the activities of the committee and distribute such minutes to the membership. In the event that the Vice Chair acts as Chair during a committee meeting, the secretary will select a member of the committee to document the activities of the committee during the meeting. After the meeting the secretary will use the notes to compile and distribute the minutes of the meeting.

4.5 Arizona State Forestry Division will be the depository for meeting minutes and other documents produced by the Committee.

## **Article 5. Meetings and Tasks**

5.1 Meetings to review individual qualification files shall be conducted at least bi-annually; once in the late fall following fire season and once in the early spring before the next fire season begins. Additional meetings can be scheduled with a majority vote of the committee and as the need dictates.

5.2 Committee Review Meetings are open meetings and anyone is invited to attend. There are absolutely no restrictions regarding this. Meetings are open to Fire Department personnel, State Forestry personnel, Federal personnel; anyone wishing to sit in is encouraged to attend.

5.3 Requests for certifications will be considered during the bi-annual review meetings. The candidates Incident Qualification System records (IQS) and training files will be evaluated to assess whether or not their documented training and experience meets the criteria that is required. The Committee will either approve the request or will identify what is lacking in the person's training or experience that must be addressed before the request will be approved. The Committee may also offer a recommendation for the candidate's professional training and development.

5.4 If a Position Task Book (PTB) is not completed in 3 years from the date of its initiation (or first task being evaluated), the PTB will expire. If the initiation of the task book was previously reviewed and approved by the Committee, the training specialist may authorize a new task book to be initiated. Any completed PTB evaluations must be submitted to the training specialist before initiating the new task book. In alignment with the 310-1, prior experience may be taken into account in completion of the new PTB at the discretion of the Certifying Official. All qualification standards identified in the current 310-1 must be applied at the time of the new PTB initiation. Evaluations from both task books can be submitted to the committee to document depth of experience.

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5.5 Once the Committee has approved a firefighter to initiate a Specific Task Book from the Combined Single Resource Boss Task Book (i.e. Engine Boss, Single Recourse) the training specialist may authorize that a second Specific Task Book may be issued (i.e. Firing Boss, Single Resource).

5.6 Requests for certifications made between the spring and fall meetings (i.e. during fire season) will be considered by the committee and processed only as time permits and when activity is low. During a busy fire season the request may not be considered until after the fire season. Given the opportunity, requests will be managed by the committee via an email review. The IQS Master Record and a summary will be emailed to the committee members. Members of the Committee will reply via email with their vote and/or recommendations within the timeframe indicated in the email. The first 7 committee members who reply (along with all other members who reply by the date of the 7<sup>th</sup> voter) will constitute the quorum. The “alternate” committee members are permitted to vote during an email review.

5.7 If there is an “Immediate Need” for certification review during the fire season and the Committee is unavailable to process an email request, the associated District Forester will conduct an individual review of a firefighters training file. The District Forester must ensure all required documentation (per 310-1 & Policy #25) has been submitted. There must be no question that the person is qualified to advance and they have submitted all the documentation that is required for the position they are seeking. If the District Forester determines the records meet the criteria they can grant an “Interim” (i.e. temporary) approval of the qualification. They will send an email notice to the Arizona State Forestry FMO and the training specialist. The training specialist will process the qualification and issue an updated Red Card. The person’s training file will be reviewed by the Committee at the next committee review meeting.

5.8 Deadlines for submitting requests for committee review will be posted on the State Forestry website (Firefighter Training page). Any requests that do not meet the deadline will be added to a wait list. Requests on the wait list will be considered on a “first come, first served” basis and as time allows at the end of the meeting. There is no guarantee that requests received past the deadline will be reviewed during the meeting. The requests that are not reviewed during the meeting will be managed via email review or will be placed on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled review meeting.

5.9 The Committee will review performance issues that happen during an incident (i.e. inability to follow direction, inability to perform, receiving a poor performance evaluation). They will give their recommendation only regarding the status of the person’s qualifications (i.e. revoke qualifications, hold as a trainee, etc...). The Committee will not make recommendations regarding disciplinary actions.

5.10 The secretary will post the meeting minutes (excluding personnel findings) to the State Forestry website ([www.azsf.az.gov](http://www.azsf.az.gov)) no more than 7 days after the review meeting.

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5.11 Red Cards will be issued no later than April 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. An Individual Firefighter Experience Record must be submitted no later than December 1<sup>st</sup> each year. This provides documentation of wildland fire assignments and ensures the firefighter's relevant qualifications stay current.

When the Committee holds a qualifications review meeting late in the spring, the Qualification Cards that need revision will be issued within one month following the meeting.

5.12 It is the Firefighter's responsibility to submit any required documentation within 2 weeks after a committee decision (i.e. task book cover sheets for trainee positions, certificates or experience records needed to satisfy a "pending" approval, etc...). Documentation that is submitted after the two week requirement will be processed as time allows given the activity of fire season. Qualifications will not be updated without the required documentation.

5.13 Special meetings may be scheduled by a majority vote of the membership.

5.14 To conduct the business of this committee a quorum consisting of no less than seven (7) committee members must be present or available through teleconferencing.

5.15 The committee secretary will ensure the bylaws are updated with any amendments made by the committee and will post the current by-laws to the State Forestry website.

5.16 Red Cards issued by Arizona State Forestry Division will have a space for the local fire department Fire Chief or Training Officer to enter the actual dates of Refresher Training and Pack Test results. The Red Cards will not be valid until the local fire department Fire Chief or Training Officer enters that information. This will require the receiving party to document their pack test (see section 6.5 below) and refresher training prior to April 1 each year.

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## **Article 6. Evaluation Guidelines**

6.1 The Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualification System published by the NWCG (PMS 310-1) shall be the recognized authority for defining standards for certification. In addition, the Arizona State Forestry Division Policy Memo No. 25 (Policy #25) titled “Minimum Experience Requirements for Red Card Certification” will be used to supplement PMS 310-1. It is allowable for the State Forestry Policy #25 to require criteria in excess of the PMS 310-1 but will not require criteria less than the PMS 310-1.

6.2 Candidate’s training files will include copies of their training certificates, individual firefighter experience records and copies of the title, certification, and evaluation pages of their task books. Documentation that is incomplete will be returned. When the missing information has been entered, the documentation will be accepted and processed.

6.2 When evaluating a candidate’s training records, time will be provided to candidates to provide additional documentation and information in case of incomplete files. The amount of time will be determined by the committee at the time deficiencies are noted.

6.3 If approved documentation is not available (lost or destroyed) the committee shall determine what substitute information will be acceptable. Examples include signed letters from the chief of the department with specific information including candidates name, date and location of training/experience, name of trainer/evaluator. Printouts from the federal IQCS (Incident Qualifications and Certification System) will be accepted in lieu of formal training and experience records for former federal employees whose original records are no longer available.

6.4 No position qualifications will be grandfathered after 1995.

6.5 Certification of physical fitness and the annual fireline safety refresher is the responsibility of the individual’s home unit. The Cooperative Agreements signed by the Fire Department/District ensures compliance with these required standards. This information will be documented on the Red Cards by the Fire Chief or training officer.

6.6 Committee recommendations shall be passed by a majority of the voting members present.

6.7 Persons disagreeing with the findings of the committee may appeal to the committee through the chair or co-chair for re-evaluation by appearing either in person or providing additional written materials. Those persons disagreeing with the committee and using Incident Qualifications cards not approved by the committee will be suspended for 30 to 90 days at the discretion of the committee. Such persons will show unavailable in dispatch records for the stated time period.

## **Article 7. Amendment**

7.1 These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the committee at any regularly scheduled meeting.