

MINIMUM QUALIFICATION STANDARDS

GEOGRAPHIC AREA FIRE PROGRAM MANAGER

OPM Standard Requirements - GS-401

Bachelor's degree in biological sciences, agriculture, natural resource management, or a related discipline appropriate to the position being filled; OR a combination of education and experience as defined in the Supplemental Qualification Standard for the GS-0401 Fire Management Specialist. Additional information can be obtained from OPM's Qualification Standards Operating Manual, Group Coverage Qualification Standard for Professional and Scientific Positions and the Individual occupational requirements for the 401 series. The Supplemental Qualification Standard for the GS-0401 Fire Management Specialist and assistance in interpreting the standard are posted at <http://www.ifpm.nifc.gov/>. OPM's Qualification Standards Operating Manual is posted at <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/>

Common grade level: GS-13 *(Note: Actual grade level will depend on the duties and responsibilities of the position.)*

Specialized Experience -

Applicants must have a minimum of one year of creditable specialized wildland fire management experience equivalent to the next lower grade level.

Specialized experience is that experience which has provided the applicant with the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to successfully function in the wildland fire management position applied for. Possession of the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities can be evidenced by:

- reviewing and evaluating fire management plans for ecological soundness and technical adequacy
- conducting field inspections before and after prescribed or wildland fires to determine if objectives were achieved and/or evaluate the effectiveness of actions taken
- developing analyses on the ecological role of fire and its use and/or exclusion, and smoke management

In addition to fire program management, appropriate experience must have included either prescribed fire/fuels management - OR - fire management operations including:

Prescribed fire/fuels management - experience in a broad range of activities such as:

- inventory methods and procedures
- fuel treatment methods and programming
- land use planning and environmental coordination
- evaluating prescribed burn plans or fire management plans to ensure containment is possible and identify contingencies if containment is not obtained.

Fire management operations - analyzing and applying fire management strategies, plus experience in at least five of the following activities:

- mobilization and dispatch coordination
- fire prevention and education
- training
- logistics
- equipment development and deployment
- fire communication systems
- suppression and preparedness
- aviation

The above specialized experiences may be evidenced by the following or similar positions:

- Fire Program Manager
- OR**
- Geographic-level fire program staff lead
- OR**
- National-level Fire Program staff lead
- OR**
- Agency Administrator of a unit having a fire program
- OR**
- Experience as an immediate supervisor of a Unit Fire Program Manager

NWCG Incident Management Qualifications - Currency Not Required

Primary Core Requirement	Secondary Core Requirement
TFLD	ICT3 or T2 C&G or RXB2

Additional required training as presented in the following courses or agency equivalent:

- “Fire Program Management” or “Local Fire Management Leadership” or “Fire Management Leadership”

Selective Factor Justifications

- The TFLD qualification provides the incumbent with the knowledge of fire behavior, suppression, resources, equipment, tools, methods and techniques sufficient to safely, efficiently, and effectively manage moderately complex fire situations.
- Previous experience as an ICT3, RXB2 or T2 Command and General Staff position are foundational skills to provide the incumbent with the ability to oversee and manage multiple and complex wildland fire programs over a large geographical area.
- The training courses M-581 (Fire Program Management) or Fire Management Leadership (National –NFML, or Local -LFML) is designed to provide the incumbent with the in-depth knowledge of management and leadership of a complex fire program, as well as reference material and tools to be successful. This course enables the incumbent to identify the principles, policies and procedures to effectively and safely lead, plan, and manage a Fire Management Program.

Employee Development Training

Employee should receive the following developmental training (or agency equivalent) to fully achieve competencies:

- I-300 “Intermediate ICS”
- I-400 “Advanced ICS”
- M-580 “Fire in Ecosystem Management”
- RX-410 (formerly RX-450) “Smoke Management Techniques”
- S-491 “National Fire Danger Rating System”
- S-580 “Advanced Fire Use Applications”/“National Park & Wilderness Fire Management”
- 40-hour Supervisory Training
- Agency fire planning and budgeting process training
- Aviation safety, operations, and management training
- Leadership and organizational skills training
- M-480 “Multi-Agency Coordination Group”
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) training

Competency Descriptors for Geographic Area Fire Program Manager

Geographic Area Fire Program Manager Position Descriptor

A Geographic Area Fire Program Manager provides fire management policy, guidance, and oversight to the units for the protection and enhancement of the wildland environment. A geographic area fire program manager oversees the integration of fire-related environmental, social, political, economic and technological information into land management activities to meet desired geographic area (hereafter referred to as "area") and units within the geographic area (hereafter referred to as "units") objectives. The manager initiates most actions based upon his/her experience in and knowledge of the functional and programmatic responsibilities. The supervisor provides direction in terms of broad mission objectives concerning major policies and administrative matters.

Guiding principle: Competency descriptors addressed in this document will be the standard for all fire management functions at this level. Any assigned subordinate staff positions having similar duties as herein described, would utilize elements within this document. Competency descriptions for such assigned subordinate staff will not be separately identified.

EXPERTISE LEVELS DEFINITIONS

WORKING – W

Definition: The minimum level of experience and/or training that it takes to produce work of acceptable quality.

JOURNEY – J

Definition: Has sufficient experience to be considered a seasoned employee. Is skilled in performing the more difficult tasks related to the function. Has received advanced training in the function.

EXPERT – E

Definition: Reflects the quality of experience and/or training needed to perform the most challenging aspects of the position.

"Program Complexity Levels" refers to those determined from the complexity analysis process. Some positions do not vary in the expertise levels of competencies, regardless of the complexity of the program to which they are assigned. Others have only a minimum level of competency expertise defined, recognizing that there is too wide a variety of programs within and between agencies to define all situations. The remainder have either two or three levels of competency expertise, based on their unit's program complexity.

Example of Expertise and Complexity Levels

<u>Competencies</u>	Low	Moderate	High
Knowledge of processes and sources of training.	W	J	J

In this example, a “W” Working level of expertise is required in a Low complexity fire program; a “J” Journey level of expertise is required in both Moderate and High complexity fire programs.

I. Program Management

Description

This element identifies the knowledge, skills and abilities required for providing leadership and coordination in all facets of the fire management program, including policy development, policy compliance, budget oversight and development, personnel management, interagency relations, and monitoring and evaluation of mission accomplishment.

Outline

A. Develop, implement and evaluate programs in support of mission accomplishments.

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Knowledge of the Office of Personnel Management’s Executive Core Qualifications (ECQ 1-5) and associated Leadership Competencies, including “Leading Change,” “Leading People,” Results Driven,” Business Acumen,” and “Building Coalitions/Communications.”	J
Knowledge of natural resource management concepts, principles, and practices applicable to the full range of duties associated with fire management.	J
Knowledge of the integration of related fields, such as: forestry, range, recreation, wildlife, soil, air, water.	J
Knowledge of the ecological response to the presence or absence of fire in a variety of area/regional ecosystems, and social and political climates.	J
Knowledge of fire protection, fuels management and fire use techniques, methods and procedures.	J
Knowledge of fire-related computer application programs, existing fire research information databases, and applications.	J
Knowledge of program monitoring and evaluation processes and procedures.	J
Knowledge of reporting requirements and procedures.	J
Ability to identify and define fire-related management issues, resolve these issues with available research, and make recommendations.	E
Ability to predict and interpret ecological effects of fire or its absence and anticipate social and political responses.	J

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Ability to apply sound fire management principles and practices on a programmatic basis in a variety of ecosystems and social and political climates.	E
Ability to apply corrective actions to increase efficiencies and effectiveness.	J
Ability to monitor and evaluate fire management program elements for a variety of units and determine their effectiveness in meeting area management goals and objectives to emphasize program accountability.	J

B. Develop, implement and evaluate fire management budgets.

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Knowledge of agency and interagency fire business management practices and procedures.	J
Knowledge of agency budgetary process, financial regulations, policies and guidelines.	J
Knowledge of agency financial management systems, contracting, procurement, and payroll.	J
Ability to develop, implement and monitor area fire management budgets, and monitor and oversee unit budgets.	J

C. Develop and maintain interagency partnerships.

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Knowledge of national cooperative programs such as Cooperative Forest Fire Protection and Federal Excess Property Procurement.	J
Knowledge of organization and function of cooperating interagency fire organizations, such as the National Wildfire Coordinating Group, National Multi-agency Coordinating Group, geographic area coordinating groups, and state, tribal, and local groups.	J
Knowledge of tribal self-determination (contracts) and self-governance (compacts).	W

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Skill in developing Cooperative Agreements, Memoranda of Understanding, and Memoranda of Agreement.	J
Skill in developing geographic area interagency charters, policies, programs and procedures.	J
Ability to interact as a fully-functional member of external and internal teams.	E

D. Identify research needs and apply new technologies.

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Knowledge of research processes (issue identification, prospectus, funding, oversight, etc.).	J
Ability to apply technology in fire management activities.	J
Ability to identify and clarify issues and develop research recommendations if needed.	J

E. Communicate program processes, goals, and implementation procedures to a variety of audiences.

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Knowledge of media needs and procedures as related to fire program management.	J
Ability to effectively interact with the public and media.	J
Ability to articulate programs in understandable terms to geographic area and national audiences.	J

II. Program Planning

Description

This element identifies the knowledge, skills and abilities required for land and fire management planning processes, for purposes of providing assistance and review.

- Unit-level land management plans
- Unit-level fire management plans
- Annual Operating Plans - these plans could include prevention, public and media contacts, preparedness, emergency equipment rental agreements, mobilization, Memoranda of Understanding and Cooperative Agreements, etc.
- Project plans - these plans could include prescribed fire and appropriate management response fire plans, other fuels modification plans, project level aviation plans, etc.

Outline

A. Coordinate and implement agency and interagency interdisciplinary planning processes.

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Skill in providing leadership and direction at the geographic area level in the interdisciplinary planning process.	J
Ability to incorporate agency priorities into the interagency planning process.	J

B. Ensure plans comply with environmental laws, regulations and policies.

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Ability to apply knowledge of environmental, technical, and social consequences to proposed decisions and actions.	J

C. Ensure plans comply with agency enabling laws, regulations and policies.

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Knowledge of agency-specific policies sufficient to participate in the development of land use plans and operational plans.	J

D. Review individual plans and components and coordinate integration into area agency and interagency plans.

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Knowledge of planning processes.	J
Skill in defining the full range of acceptable management strategies based on bureau policies.	E
Skill in overseeing the preparation of area and unit plans following agency manuals and handbooks.	J

III. Operations

Description

This element identifies the knowledge, skills and abilities required to manage operational program components to achieve land management objectives established for the area. Operational components include preparedness, wildland fire, prevention, fuels and prescribed fire, aviation, and rehabilitation.

Outline

- A. Provide oversight and monitor unit preparedness programs to include:
 - 1. Detection
 - 2. Preparedness
 - 3. Agreements

- 4. Fire danger/behavior predictions
- 5. Severity requests
- 6. Mobilization

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Knowledge of current fire weather, fire danger and fire behavior prediction systems, and their interpretation.	J
Knowledge of local, regional and national dispatch and coordination systems and procedures, including preparedness levels.	E
Knowledge of cache management and accountability procedures.	J
Skill in developing and updating pre-season agreements necessary to ensure adequate resources are available during periods of potential use.	J
Skill in initiating severity action on an interagency basis for the area.	J
Skill in coordinating and implementing efficient and effective area detection programs.	J
Ability to ensure implementation of pre-season preparedness activities as identified in unit annual operating plans.	J
Ability to coordinate staffing and preparedness plans based on prediction outputs on an interagency basis.	J
Ability to ensure appropriate readiness reviews are performed and corrective actions are initiated.	J
Ability to recognize conditions which warrant severity requests.	J
Ability to provide oversight to area fire coordination operations.	J

- B. Provide oversight to wildland fire response programs to include, but not limited to:
 - 1. Strategy and tactics
 - 2. Incident management
 - 3. Emergency rehabilitation
 - 4. Logistics/support
 - 5. Priority setting and coordination

6. Reporting

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Knowledge of wildland/urban interface fire suppression strategies and tactics.	J
Knowledge of the full range of wildland fire appropriate management responses.	J
Knowledge of fire suppression/prescribed fire tools and equipment.	J
Knowledge of procedures used in providing direction to incident commanders, including, but not limited to, development of incident objectives, Delegation of Authority, interaction, evaluation, and close-out/critique.	E
Knowledge of agency emergency rehabilitation policies, procedures and techniques.	J
Knowledge of fire behavior, fire danger and fire weather.	J
Knowledge of agency and interagency mobilization and logistical support policies and procedures.	J
Skill in applying and evaluating the Incident Command System component of the National Interagency Incident Management System.	J
Skill in developing Wildland Fire Situation Analyses (WFSAs).	J
Skill in implementing the full range of appropriate management responses.	J
Skill in setting area priorities among multiple incidents and allocating resources.	J
Skill in developing area training processes, and in coordinating training on an area-wide agency and interagency basis.	J
Skill in evaluating performance of area fire program management units, with an emphasis on accountability.	E
Skill in implementing interagency and agency qualification and certification standards and procedures, via the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) process.	J
Ability to ensure that all reports and records are properly completed and maintained.	J
Ability to ensure implementation of emergency rehabilitation measures, as appropriate.	J
Ability to support the selected strategy of one or more incidents through transitions to higher or lower levels of management.	J

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Ability to recruit, manage, and evaluate Type 1 and 2 Incident Management Teams.	J

C. Oversee and coordinate implementation of prevention programs.

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Knowledge of appropriate prevention program processes and procedures.	J
Skill in overseeing the implementation of mitigation measures to reduce risks identified in an approved fire prevention plan.	J
Skill in coordinating interagency prevention programs.	J

D. Oversee fuels and prescribed fire programs to include, but not limited to:

1. Fuels management
2. Prescribed fire activities
3. Priority setting/coordination
4. Logistics/support
5. Reporting

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Knowledge of fuels management and prescribed fire policies, practices and procedures.	J
Knowledge of fire weather, fire behavior and fire danger.	J
Knowledge of fire suppression/prescribed fire tools and equipment.	J
Skill in coordinating required logistical support to one or more concurrent projects on multiple units.	J
Ability to ensure that all reports and records are properly completed and maintained.	J

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Ability to oversee the implementation of approved fuels management and prescribed fire plans.	J
Ability to set priorities between multiple projects and allocate resources.	J

E. Provide area oversight to smoke management planning and analysis.

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Knowledge and understanding of various smoke management regulations including federal, state, tribal, and local and agency specific.	J
Knowledge related to weather and fire behavior and resultant smoke conditions.	J
Knowledge of smoke modeling processes.	W

F. Provide oversight to area and unit fire effects monitoring and analysis.

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Knowledge of fire effects as related to fuel manipulation and prescribed fire.	J

- G. Oversee fire aviation programs or operations as appropriate including, but not limited to:
1. Tactical application of aircraft
 2. Aviation safety management
 3. Administration

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Knowledge of capabilities, limitations and approved safety standards and operating procedures of commonly used fixed and rotary-wing aircraft.	J
Knowledge of aviation administration requirements and procedures, such as contract solicitation, awarding, administration and fiscal accounting.	J
Knowledge of aircraft and pilot certification standards.	J
Skill in ensuring compliance with established Federal Aviation Regulations (FARs) and departmental and agency policies, procedures, and guidelines.	J
Skill in ensuring management of aircraft utilized in area fire operations is conducted in a safe and efficient manner, following established standards.	J

IV. Safety and Welfare

Description

This competency identifies the knowledge, skills and abilities required to oversee the environmental and workplace hazards of the wildland fire environment, and to provide leadership and direction to subordinates and units in the recognition and mitigation of these hazards using all applicable laws, policies and guidelines. Personal accountability and zero tolerance for unsafe acts are paramount.

Outline

- A. Provide oversight related to safety laws, policies, and guidelines to include:
 1. Occupational Safety and Health Act
 2. Applicable state safety regulations
 3. Department and agency policies and guidelines
 4. NWCG guidelines

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Knowledge of the laws, policies and guidelines pertaining to safety such as the Code of Federal Regulations, national and agency policies and guidelines, Standard Firefighting Orders, Watch Out Situations, and other fire-related safety guidelines, including Occupational Safety and Health Act and NWCG guidelines.	J
Skill in developing area safety policies and guidelines.	J

- B. Conduct safety-related education programs focusing on:
1. Training
 2. Certification

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Skill in ensuring that safety management goals are achieved through education and certification processes.	J

- C. Prepare hazard, risk, and trend analyses for:
1. Wildland fire environment hazards including, but not limited to:
 - a. Fuels
 - b. Weather
 - c. Topography
 2. Associated hazards including, but not limited to:
 - a. Aviation
 - b. Mechanized equipment
 - c. Hazardous materials

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Skill in ensuring appropriate preparation of hazard, risk, and trend analyses.	J

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Skill in developing hazardous risk assessments and trend analyses.	J

D. Follow up on identified hazards and risks with mitigation actions.

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Skills in recognition and mitigation of a variety of hazards encountered within the wildland fire environment and other work environments; e.g., aviation, mechanized equipment, and hazardous materials.	J

E. Ensure serious accident investigation policies and procedures are followed.

<u>Competencies</u>	Expertise Level
Knowledge of technical aspects of accident investigations and reviews.	J
Skill in coordinating serious accident investigations.	W