

## MINIMUM QUALIFICATION STANDARDS

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### SENIOR FIREFIGHTER (advanced level firefighter with specialized skills and knowledge)

#### OPM Standard Requirements - GS-455/462 Technician Series

One year of specialized experience equivalent to a GS-04 or successful completion of a full 4-year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree with a major degree as described in OPM's Qualification Standards Operating Manual, specifically, OPM's Individual occupational requirements for either the 455 or 462 series. OPM's Qualification Standards Operating Manual is posted at <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/>

**Common grade level: GS-5** *(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. Specialized experience is obtained by meeting the NWCG qualifications below.

#### NWCG Incident Management Qualifications - Currency Required

<b>Primary Core Requirement</b>
FFT1

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

- S-290 "Intermediate Fire Behavior"

**Selective Factor Justifications**

- SFF is a 1<sup>st</sup> line supervisor position, and FFT1 is an entry level supervisory fireline qualification. The FFT1 qualification provides the individual with the knowledge and skill to tactically supervise other fire fighters. Without the FFT1 qualification, the individual would not be able to perform the major duty statement of their position.
- S-290 is a prerequisite training course for FFT1 in PMS-310-1. S-290 provides the individual with knowledge of intermediate fire behavior which directly ties back to safety of fireline personnel.
- The combination of FFT1 and S-290 provides the incumbent with knowledge of fire suppression techniques, methods, and environmental conditions to be able to make assignments to crew members, accurately analyze complex fire circumstances, determine when additional forces may be needed, or determine when circumstances warrant withdrawal of personnel to safe locations.

**Employee Development Training**

Employee should receive the following developmental training, (or agency equivalent) to fully achieve competencies, as commensurate with duties assigned by agency:

<b>Crew</b>	<b>Engine</b>	<b>Helicopter</b>	
•	•	•	I-200 “Basic ICS”
•	•		S-211 “Portable Pumps and Water Use”
•	•	•	S-212* “Wildfire Powersaws”
	•		S-216 “Driving for the Fire Service”
•	•	•	S-260 “Incident Business Management Principles”
•	•	•	S-270 “Basic Air Operations”
•	•	•	Basic First Aid*
•	•	•	CPR*
	•		Commercial Driver’s License Certification
		•	Helicopter Longline Training
•	•	•	Supervisory Training

## COMPETENCY DESCRIPTORS FOR SENIOR FIREFIGHTER

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This position serves as an advanced level firefighter with specialized skills and knowledge on a suppression module.

### 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. Operations**

Description

This competency element identifies the knowledge, skills and abilities required to implement an efficient and effective fire suppression program.

Outline

- A. Perform suppression duties to include:
  1. Senior firefighter on a handcrew
  2. Senior firefighter on a fire engine
  3. Senior firefighter on a helitack crew

<u>Competencies</u>	<b>Handcrew</b>	<b>Engine</b>	<b>Helitack</b>
Knowledge of fire behavior including causes of fire, influence of temperature, humidity, wind, topography, slope and fuel moisture conditions in order to know where to attack the fire, build fire line and where to properly position a fire crew squad to suppress a wildfire.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of fire suppression techniques, methods and conditions to be able to make assignments to crew members, accurately analyze complex fire circumstances, determine when additional forces may be needed, or determine when circumstances warrant withdrawal of crew to safe locations.	<b>W</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>W</b>
Knowledge of the methods and procedures associated with wildland fire suppression to resolve a full range of irregular or problem situations when suppressing wildland fires.	<b>W</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>W</b>
Knowledge of technical firefighting such as, but not limited to, fire engine and pump operations, handcrew operations and/or helicopter operations to enable the incumbent to function in assigned capacities and to lead others in those duties if necessary.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of air operations, rappelling, helicopter capabilities and limitations, helicopter contracts, load balance and capacity, load calculating, and manifesting of personnel and equipment.	<b>W</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>J</b>

<u>Competencies</u>	<b>Handcrew</b>	<b>Engine</b>	<b>Helitack</b>
Knowledge of tactical methods and techniques for use of water and other additives in controlling and mopping-up fires in order to efficiently and effectively accomplish operations where water is in short supply.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of work procedures and practices in working with helicopters and aircraft.	<b>W</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of fire terminology to communicate with other crew members, including use of radio.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Skill in operating pump mechanisms and determine proper hose lays for most effectiveness in accomplishing fire suppression.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Skill in use of hand tools such as pulaski, shovel, and crosscut saw; and power tools including chain saw and portable pumps to build fireline and control wildfire and to perform other non-fire related duties while not directly engaged in firefighting or preparation for such assignments.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Ability to operate communication hardware including multi-channel two-way radios with numerous programmable frequencies and computers for accessing fire weather and fire modeling programs, and Global Positioning System units.	<b>W</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>J</b>
Ability to obtain necessary certifications in areas such as falling, Commercial Driver’s License, long line, rappelling, water handling, use of specialized equipment used in response to urban interface situations and helicopter accessory equipment used in fire suppression and prescribed burning.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>

**II. Safety and Welfare**

Description

This competency element identifies the knowledge, skills and abilities required to manage the environmental and workplace hazards of the wildland fire environment, and to provide leadership and direction to subordinates in the recognition and mitigation of these hazards using all applicable laws, policies and guidelines. Personal and subordinate 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>	<b>Handcrew</b>	<b>Engine</b>	<b>Helitack</b>
Knowledge of the laws, policies and guidelines pertaining to safety such as national and agency policies and guidelines, Standard Firefighting Orders, Watch Out Situations, and other related fire safety guidelines.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of accepted safety practices to prevent injury or loss of life in handcrew, engine or helicopter operations or while performing as an assigned crew member on a small or large fire.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of basic first aid procedures.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Ability to impart a professional work ethic for safety through the effective use of educational and certification processes.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Ability to recognize and mitigate a variety of miscellaneous hazards encountered within the wildland fire environment and other work environments; e.g., aviation, mechanized equipment, and hazardous materials.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Ability to recognize and correct unsafe practices and conditions.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>