



Protection Contract Services Unit

2014 IFCA Newsletter

December 2014

From the Unit Coordinator

Protection from Fire Program

Taking some time to reflect on the 2014 fire season, it is no surprise that it has been deemed the 'Endless Season of Fire'. Large wildfires were still burning across the Pacific Northwest in mid-September and residents wondered if the fire season would ever end. For the second year in a row, protection of the region's forests and rangelands from fire proved particularly challenging. At its peak, the Pacific Northwest ranked as the nation's top wildfire priority level for a total of 43 days.

Looking ahead, climatological models project that a modest 'El Nino' weather pattern will return to the region, providing above-normal winter temperatures and potential below normal precipitation.

As experienced last year, there's always the possibility of early fires. It's important to regularly monitor currency requirements and crew status in ROSS as we step into a new year.

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IFCA EXTENSION

All IFCA contractors have returned their renewal packets to the PCSU to extend their agreement. The effective period of the extension is December 01, 2014 through November 30, 2015. Hourly rates were increased based on the provisions of Section 2.4 of the IFCA. A copy of the completed, signed Award Summary sheets have been mailed, and the electronic versions will be posted on the website.

COMPLIANCE SPEC RECRUITMENT

With the retirement of Steven Johnson, ODF is in the process of recruiting for the compliance specialist position. The goal is to have the position filled early in 2015. The incumbent will have the opportunity to meet with each of the contractors during the spring 2015 DDL checks and various workshops we are conducting.

ANNUAL REQUIREMENTS

IFCA Exhibit B 3.1: Annual Fireline Safety Training requirements. A course roster and training certificate, signed and dated on or after January 01, which confirms the attendance and completion of the RT-130 course is required to be placed in each crew member's training file.

Exhibit B 3.3: Annual Fitness and Work Capacity requirements. Pack tests must be done on or after January 01 of the current calendar year to be accepted.

Please review IFCA Exhibit B for details on these annual requirements.

WORKSHOPS

The PCSU plans to conduct another round of Contractor/CRWB workshops in late spring 2015. If you haven't already done so, and would like to provide input on presentation topics, please contact the PCSU.



DOL WAGE DETERMINATION

ODF and USFS are in the process of coordinating discussions with BOLI and DOL staff regarding state and federal wage laws. Our goal is to obtain more comprehensive information on these laws and how they apply to the IFCA contractors.

2015 LSA TESTING

Clackamas, Rogue and Treasure Valley Community Colleges will again offer LSA testing in 2015. Rogue CC has already established 4/11 and 5/30 as the two dates they will offer LSA testing. Please contact the [providers](#) directly for more information on LSA testing.

QUESTIONS/CONCERNS FROM 2014

How can we deal with an issue of lack of respect displayed toward contract resources on an incident?

- Bring it to the attention of the supervisor, the Human Resource Specialist (HRSP) or the Incident Commander (IC).
- If the IC has not offered to have CRWB meetings, make a request to the IC to hold them to be able to voice concerns.
- Talk with the ICPI/CRNW.
- * ODF has already begun the discussion on this topic with PNWCG
- * The PCSU presents information at various state & federal government meetings/trainings to provide a better understanding of the IFCA & the requirements/standards that firefighters are required to meet. Communication and knowledge can help to be a big deterrent in these kinds of situations.
- * IC's have expressed appreciation of contract resources during shift briefings.

Why is there a lack of dispatches outside of Region 6?

- The IFCA is an agreement to provide wildland firefighters within Region 6 – Oregon & Washington. Contractors “may” take dispatches outside of OR/WA when offered.
- The IFCA is promoted whenever possible. The interagency Crew Agreement Committee developed a “Rider” for interested contractors, so that crews under the IFCA can be utilized for emergencies outside of wildfire, if the need should arise.

There are different wage requirements in other states. Should the IFCA allow different hourly rates in the contract for these kind of dispatches?

- The IFCA is a Region 6 agreement. If a contractor wants to accept an out of region dispatch, they need to be aware of that state's requirements and if the dispatch would be feasible for them to accept.

Dispatch protocols need to be clarified and comply with the requirements of the IFCA.

- ODF, WDNR and federal partners are currently developing guidance documents to clarify agency dispatch process to help maintain uniformity in dispatch procedures.

Why aren't record inspections conducted by the federal water handling MOU's recognized under the IFCA?

- The IFCA requires all supervisor files to be inspected and approved by a government agency. The IFCA has higher requirements for supervisors than the federal water handling agreement. If personnel under the IFCA will also be used under the water handling, it is best to have government/ODF do the file inspections. If approved, the forest service will accept these inspections without having to go through the federal MOU provider.

Will ODF inspect an engine boss file?

- ODF currently does not have the capacity to do the additional inspections for ENGB used under the Water Handling agreement. Future coordination of this need will be discussed with the federal contract officer.

A federal MOU provider has inspected the file for an FFT1/ENGB and an IQC was signed and produced by the MOU provider. How would anybody know from the IQC that they are also approved as an FFT1 under the IFCA?

- If an FFT1 is approved under the federal MOU provider, it would not be sufficient under the IFCA. The IQC would not contain the required government approval signature, so it would be distinguishable in that respect. A new IQC would have to be produced for the IFCA once inspected and approved by government.

A fire inspector was asking for ALL training to be listed on the IQC.

- The IFCA does not require all training to be listed on the card. Additional skills can be listed (EMT, CPR, etc.).

The number/location of places providing the Language Skills Assessment is still not sufficient.

- A college was added to eastern Oregon earlier this year to help test people in those areas.
- Other colleges have indicated that it is not cost effective enough for them to provide people to conduct an assessment when there wouldn't be enough people attending.
- Ideas or suggestions on how the process can be improved are welcomed.

PLEASE NOTE THAT OUR UNIT EMAIL HAS CHANGED. Any correspondence from this point forward should be addressed to:

PCSU@oregon.gov

Wishing You and Yours...

*Happy Holidays
2014!*

*...and a
Great Start
to 2015*



From the PCSU Staff

