

# **CHAPTER 7: INCIDENT QUALIFICATIONS AND CERTIFICATION SYSTEM (IQCS)**

## **Policy**

BLM policy states that the Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS) is the official system of record for wildland fire qualifications, including all-hazard incidents. IQCS also serves as the official repository of incident management positions performance standards and their respective qualifications and certification requirements.

A hard copy file folder will be kept for each employee. The contents will include, but are not limited to: training records for all agency required courses, evaluations from assignments, Position Task Book verification, yearly updated IQCS forms, and Responder Master Record (RPTC028) from IQCS.

## **Introduction**

IQCS tracks information related to an individual's qualification and certification currency and history including information such as positions, position performance, training, physical fitness status, and external warrants. The application provides a means to document annual certification of employees for wildland fire positions.

IQCS is a tool to assist managers in certification decisions; however, IQCS does not replace the manager's responsibility to validate that employees meet all requirements for position performance based on standards. IQCS has a training management function which allows authorized users such as the IQCS Account Manager and Training Officer to set up course sessions, enroll students, print certificates, and record successful training completion.

Workforce analysis may be conducted utilizing IQCS to report the disposition, status, and deficiencies of positions throughout the incident response community.

## **Responsibilities**

The IQCS Account Manager is responsible for the input and maintenance of employee data in IQCS. All permanent employees involved in fire management activities will have their qualifications entered by authorized users. The BLM highly recommends that local units also enter data in the qualifications system for all EFF, temporary or seasonal employees. Individual records will be updated when there is a change in qualification, Position Task Book or course completion, etc. (See the [Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide, PMS 310-1.](#))

The agency administrator (or delegate) is responsible for annual certification of all agency and Administrative Determined (AD) personnel serving in wildland and prescribed fire positions. Agency certification is issued annually in the form of an Incident Qualification Card (Red Card), which certifies that the individual is qualified to perform in a specified position. The Red Card must be reviewed for accuracy and signed by the agency administrator or delegated official. The agency administrator, fire manager, and individual are responsible for monitoring medical status, fitness, training, performance, and for taking appropriate action to ensure the employee meets all position performance requirements. The master file report provided by IQCS meets the BLM requirement for maintaining fire qualification records.

BLM employees shall not certify the qualifications of private sector contractors or educational institutions trainees or instructors except where formal agreements are in place. Non-agency firefighters will be certified by state or local fire departments. The BLM will not act as the certifying agency or assist in administrating/sponsoring the work capacity test (WCT) for non-agency firefighters.

The Incident Qualifications and Certification System is designed to be accessed by authorized users only. Authorized users who have attended mandatory training may include Account Managers, Training Officers and FMOs. The local IQCS Account Manager designates the Zone/Unit/District FMO and the State FMO designates the BLM State Account Manager. To authorize use of IQCS, the BLM State Account Manager submits user account requests to the IQCS Application Steward at BLM OF&A for approval/authorization. A comprehensive list of all BLM State Account Managers is located on the IQCS Web site at <http://iqcs.nwcg.gov/>.

IQCS operations and maintenance support is provided by the BLM OF&A Information Resource Management. System administration is provided by the IQCS Business Steward.

## **Software**

The underlying software application of IQCS is PeopleSoft. PeopleSoft is complex and users must learn the basics of navigation and operation in a guided environment. PeopleSoft includes functions (training administration, workforce analysis, etc.) that have not been part of previous automated qualifications systems. Users, especially those who are inexperienced or untrained, can adversely affect the performance of the system for other users by improperly performing steps; therefore, IQCS users must learn how to use all functions.

To assist users in tracking and documenting training, experience, and other position requirements, the qualification process has been automated in IQCS. However, users must have at the minimum a basic understanding of the position requirements and how they affect qualifications.

## **Training**

All authorized users will attend mandatory IQCS user training prior to accessing the system. System users can receive training in a two ways—classroom and one-on-one training. IQCS project staffers delivered training in every geographic area, while working on developing local and regional instructors in all agencies who could take over as the system went into the Operation and Maintenance phase. Geographic Area Training Centers administer IQCS training in formal classroom settings.

Formal classroom instruction consists of two days of lecture and hands-on experience in a training database using computers with online access to servers at the National Information Technology Center (NITC) in Kansas City. A third day is reserved to allow users to be issued their 'production' user ID and password and go 'live' in their actual data. Procedures to schedule use of the two training databases for local presentation are in effect and are summarized on the IQCS Web site. Geographic Area Training Representatives (GATRs) are responsible for scheduling training in their areas.

The second training method is one-on-one training which can be given locally to new users. The instructor must be an experienced IQCS user who has attended a formal classroom session of IQCS training. The IQCS Application Steward must approve all requests for one-on-one training.

Additionally, IQCS has developed an online training component or tutorial for individuals to refresh or receive initial system orientation. Formal 'vetting' of users for access to the IQCS production database is still required; the procedure is described on the IQCS Web site.

The IQCS Project Team developed the initial formal training package. The IQCS staff updates training materials to match modifications and improvements to IQCS.

For more information on IQCS, go to <http://iqcs.nwcg.gov/>

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