THE ASSOCIATE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

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To: Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Director, Bureau of Land Management
Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Director, National Park Service

From: James E. Cason James E Cason
Associate Deputy Secretary

Subject: Interagency Fire Program Management Qualifications—Program Changes

The U.S. Department of the Interior and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, with combined efforts, established standardized fire management qualification guidelines in 2004 to improve firefighter safety and to increase professionalism in the fire management program. The result of this collaboration was the Interagency Fire Program Management Qualification Standards and Guide. A DOI memorandum was signed on June 18, 2004, detailing the program guidelines and deadlines for compliance with the IFPM standards. A follow up memorandum was issued on February 29, 2008, as a reminder, describing manager and employee responsibilities and consequences of the necessary actions prior to the deadline.

The previous memoranda announced and reiterated the October 1, 2009, deadline for bureaus, managers and employees to ensure that the standards are met and to understand the consequences of not meeting those standards. In the past 4 years, employees and their managers, and human resource offices have been working to meet the deadline. In addition, several interagency teams have worked to clarify the implementation of the standards. While the bureaus have all made great progress in our efforts, Departmental leadership has agreed to extend the deadline to October 1, 2010. The implementation extension applies to the attainment of position specific IFPM Standards. This deadline also applies for employees who need to meet the positive education requirement for GS-0401 positions. Employees who are in GS-0401 positions and do not fully meet the education requirements and employees whose positions are slated to transition to GS-0401 must have individual development plans that address education.

The IFPM Standard is managed by the National Wildland Fire Coordinating Group. In addition to the deadline extension identified above, other changes have also been made by the NWCG. These include the elimination of the IFPM Resolutions Board, the GS-0401 Education/Training Assessment Board, and the removal of the Prevention and Mitigation NWCG. Any decisions regarding the IFPM standard will be communicated to the wildland fire community through NWCG correspondence.

As identified in the memorandum signed February 29, 2008, identified employees, in concert with their managers, will continue to be responsible for completing the specific qualifications (Office of Personnel Management qualifications and IFPM standard) for key fire management positions by the revised deadline of October 1, 2010.

If you have any questions pertaining to IFPM, please contact your bureau Human Resource office for additional clarification.