



OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL

California Incident Command Certification System



Date: July 21, 2015

To: CalOES Chiefs, Peer Review Committee members, CICCIS Task Force members

Subject: NWCG Course Certificates

Recently there have been a number of CICCIS applications submitted to Peer Review Committees (PRC's) with NWCG certificates issued by instructors not authorized to issue NWCG certificates. Some of these Instructors have issued NWCG certificates under the auspices of the NWSA (National Wildland Suppression Association) in both OES Region III and Region IV. The agreement with NWSA to issue NWCG certificates is only within the Northwest Geographic Area (Oregon and Washington). There is no agreement with NWSA in California and they do not have the authority to issue NWCG Certificates within California. If these certificates are included in CICCIS Application packages submitted to your local PRC they are not valid. Unless the course is sponsored by an NWCG member agency, or the lead instructor is an authorized representative of NWCG, issuance of an NWCG certificate is not authorized (page 15: 2014 CICCIS Qualification Guide).

There are courses offered where a NWCG member agency will contract with an individual or company to present training and issue a certificate with an NWCG or agency logo on a private company certificate. This can be confusing. When utilizing contractors whether individuals or companies for NWCG training please ensure that both the company and instructors presenting the course are qualified to instruct the class and are authorized by an NWCG member agency to issue the NWCG certificate or can use the agency logo on a company certificate.

I do not know how widespread the issuances of non-approved certificates are, however, in the situations that have brought to my attention individuals people have paid \$150 and up to attend the course and obtain their certificates only to find out they are good only with a contract fire companies or within the Pacific Northwest Geographic Area.

To assist you in assessing the validity of a certificate and training course the CICCIS Qualification Guide recommends:

As a minimum, the course completion certificate should include the following information:

- Correct name of the ICS course.
- Instructor's name signed and legibly printed.
- Instructor's sponsoring department/agency.

- ICS qualifications as it relates to the course instructed.
- Hours of Instruction.

It is recommended that departments/agencies provide classes that are offered through:

- NWCG member agencies, or their designated partners.
- State Fire Training.
- FEMA – National Fire Academy and Emergency Management Institute.
- CALFIRE.
- California Firefighter Joint Apprenticeship Committee (CFFJAC).
- FIRESCOPE.
- Community Colleges.

Courses can be sponsored by a department/agency must follow the minimums set by the parent organization that has developed the course. If the course is an NWCG course, the minimum requirements are listed in the *Field Managers Course Guide (FMCG)*. If a department/agency elects to teach an NWCG course and they are not an NWCG member agency, they will need to provide the following statement on the department/agency course completion certificate, "The course instructor and curriculum meet the minimum standards set forth by NWCG in the FMCG".

If you have questions about the validity of a course or certificate contact me and I will assist you in determining whether the course meets CICC standards.

Scott Vail
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