

National Incident Management Organization: An Organization of Learning

Introduction

The National Incident Management Organization (NIMO) provides a skilled, mobile, highly motivated, national resource for Fire and Aviation Management programs and activities. NIMO is committed to providing the highest level of customer service to diverse audiences. As an organization, we strive to be a learning organization and be a “highly reliable organization” (HRO). A major emphasis of the NIMO program is to build capabilities and capacity within organizations, provide leadership and build leaders for the future with an emphasis on encouraging trusting relationships. We provide a number of education opportunities for national forests and state, local and federal partners.

Types of Training

On-site Training – Sessions are usually held on-site which is the most cost-effective solution for organizations that need group training. Employees minimize travel expenses and time away from the office. Supplies, printing and instructor salaries and travel are covered by NIMO. The only costs to the unit are participant travel and any facility-related costs when government facilities are not available or are inadequate for the size of the session.

NIMO Curriculum – NIMO has a number of sessions available in our standard curriculum. These are different than the standard NWCG courses and cover a variety of subjects including risk management, developing Type 3 organizations, stakeholder collaboration, and practice simulations and exercises.

Customized Sessions – Custom sessions addresses a need that is outside the scope of our standard curriculum. We will work with you to create a curriculum specifically tailored to your needs.

Workshop Facilitation and More – Members of the NIMO organization are experienced in meeting and workshop facilitation and are available to assist you with those services. NIMO personnel are experienced at developing and leading staff rides, incident management exercises and simulations. We can also provide subject matter experts for functional reviews and facilitated learning analysis.

Education Opportunities

Descriptions of Standard NIMO Curriculum



Risk Management - Forest Level Workshop

Course Description

The focus of the Risk Management Workshop is to make a shift in thinking, decision making and communication of risk. This is the first step in moving from a mitigation-based organization to one that manages risk. The objective is not on providing the “answer” on what decision to make, instead focus is placed on empowering the Forest to make better decisions after considering risk and the effect it might have on the outcome. This session does not provide tools such as a decision matrix, a check list or a strategic risk assessment. The emphasis is on what is risk, risk assessment, risk communication and the difference between an organization focused on hazard mitigation and one practicing risk management. The primary product produced at the session will be a Forest Risk Management Action Plan developed by the participants to identify how Forest leadership and employees, working together, will take concepts and ideas from the workshop and continue to develop risk management on the Forest.

Format

The session is developed for a two-day format to provide more time for discussion and improved case study participation and to allow time to develop a Forest action plan. The workshop design is large and small group discussions and exercises. We will look at risk communication and decisions through the use of case studies and personal experiences. There is little or no “lecture.” Interaction and open communication are keys to success.

Who should take this course?

Through the numerous sessions we have found how important it is to have Line, Staff (not just Fire but all Staff officers), and firefighters (not just FMOs, captains or crew leaders) participate together in the session. This is often one of the few opportunities for the Forest Supervisor and District Rangers to discuss risk with the people on the ground. The value of recognizing and discussing risk from each person’s viewpoint is critical to improved risk management communication. Participation by staff other than fire is just as important due to the many risks associated with any activity the Forest participates in. The discussions and exercises go beyond safety related risk to include social and political risks relevant to all Forest programs. This session is often the beginning of the shift to an organization practicing risk management.

Course Objectives

1. Build or strengthen the concept of a “container” consisting of Forest employees and leadership where open discussion is encouraged and everyone’s input is valued
2. Introduce concept of empowerment of being risk managers
3. Introduce communication practices that impact risk assessment and risk management
4. Introduce concepts of risk management, decision modeling and probabilities

Course Topics

1. Defining Risk - Value, Event, Hazard/Threat, Probability, Consequence/Severity. Defining risk takes us to the Enterprise.
2. Risk Enterprise (or Environment) - Perception, Analysis, Communication, Problem Framing; all leading to:
3. Managing Risk - Value, identify hazards/threats, determine probability, define consequence, communicate and introduce the "Risk Decision"
4. Decision Making - accept, reject, transfer and introduce the topic of sharing risk and how risk perceptions and ultimately decisions differ based on one's position in an organization
5. Risk Levels -risk is viewed differently at the different levels in our agency - programmatic, strategic, deliberate/operational, time critical/real time. Where we are on this spectrum affects topics 1-4.

Type 3 Organization Development

Course Description

This session was developed to assist Forests in the early stages of forming a Type 3 organization. The focus is on roles and responsibilities, team building and developing team processes for Type 3 organizations of any size from two people to a full Command and General Staff. This is not an NWCG training course on functional training; however, we can do some functional area review if requested.

Format

The session is typically two days. Participants are organized into Command and General Staff groups of usually seven to eight per team. The session is based on active team member participation rather than lengthy presentations or lectures. Through a number of team exercises and activities, participants will practice teamwork, information sharing and development of communication and planning skills. On the second day, the teams go through the entire planning process from incident in-briefing through the production of an Incident Action Plan focused at the Type 3 level. Exercise scenarios include wildland fire as well as all risk incidents such as hurricane and tornado. All sessions can be customized to fit your particular needs.

Who should take this course?

This course is designed for anyone wishing to participate as a member of a Type 3 Organization in one of the Command and General Staff positions. Participants do not need to be fully qualified for the position to participate in this course.

Course Objectives

The objectives of this course are to assist with the development of the Type 3 organization through active participation and practice as a team. Through a series of exercises, participants will gain experience in the development of incident objectives and strategies, work through the planning process, develop an Incident Action Plan, gain a better understanding of functional roles and practice as a team.

Course Topics

1. What a Type 3 Organization looks like
2. How to function as a team
3. Developing Leader's Intent and Objectives
4. Working through the planning process
5. Keeping meetings short, focused and productive
6. How to use a 215 and 215a to develop tactics and hazard mitigation
7. How to develop an Incident Action Plan

Strategic Risk Assessment

Course Description

The focus of this workshop is on practicing the technical and communication skills necessary to successfully complete Strategic Risk Assessments at the Forest and District levels. The emphasis is on having teams at the District and Forest level practice working together to complete Strategic Risk Assessments, using locally developed scenarios on their home units. This session provides tools, such as the risk analysis table, exposure budget and cost spreadsheet, to facilitate the completion of defensible Strategic Risk Assessment. The primary product produced at the session will be a completed Strategic Risk Assessment.

Workshop Format

Ideally, this session is best as an additional one-day session after a unit has completed the two day Risk Management course. We focus on small group interactions in a setting that provides hands on experience in completing a Strategic Risk Assessment. There is minimal “lecture”; just enough to cover the basics. Each team will complete Strategic Risk Assessments as part of the course.

By using this session as a follow up to the two day session, it helps show how the levels of risk management are linked as components of a successful risk management program for incident management.

Who should take this course?

For the Forest and District levels, a combination of Line and Staff, Fire Staff and other Staff areas, provides the best target audience for this session. This enables the local units to allow fire personnel to focus more energy on managing emerging incidents on the unit, while having a trained cadre of staff to work with to complete the required Strategic Risk Assessment.

Course Objectives

1. Provide a common process for completing a Strategic Risk Assessment
2. Provide answers to questions about the Strategic Risk Assessment process
3. Practice completing a Strategic Risk Assessment
4. Identify prior to fire season tools available to help in preparing Strategic Risk Assessments

Course Topics

1. Overview of the four levels of Risk Management
2. Completion of a Risk Assessment – values at risk, probabilities and consequences of harm, severity of effect, and mitigations and action triggers
3. Completion of a Risk Analysis by preparing at least two Prospects (alternatives) considering tradeoffs, objectives and exposure
4. Develop Risk Communication to engage local leaders, stakeholders and partners to gain understanding and support of the proposed decision
5. Risk Sharing with appropriate Line Officers and oversight officials to gain understanding and support of the proposed decision
6. Making the Risk Decision including findings and commitments
7. Risk Monitoring timing and processes

Deliberate and Time Critical Risk Assessment

Course Description

This workshop provides an opportunity to practice the technical and communication skills necessary to successfully complete Deliberate and Time Critical Risk Assessments for incidents and other project work. Ideally, this session is best as an additional one or two-day session, after a unit has completed the Strategic Risk Assessment course, showing how these three levels of risk management are linked as components of a successful risk management program at the unit level. The primary product produced at the session will be Deliberate and Time Critical Risk Assessments.

Workshop Format

The session is developed on a one-day and two-day format to provide time for large and small group discussions, exercises and presentations. There is minimal “lecture”; just enough to cover the basics. Each team will complete Deliberate and Time Critical Risk Assessments as part of the course for both wildfire and all-hazard scenarios.

Who should take this course?

For Incident Management Team sessions, at a minimum the Command and General Staff should attend; having Division Supervisors and Unit Leaders attend as well has led to a better understanding and acceptance among the teams in an incident management environment. For the Forest and District level sessions, a combination of Line and Staff provides the ideal target audience for this session. This enables the local units to apply these concepts to the unit safety program, covering a wide range of program and project work at the local level.

Course Objectives

1. Provide a common process for completing Deliberate and Time Critical Risk Assessments
2. Provide answers to questions about the Deliberate and Time Critical Risk Assessment process
3. Practice completing Deliberate and Time Critical Risk Assessments

Course Topics

1. Overview of the four levels of Risk Management
2. Overview of the Seven-Step Deliberate Risk Assessment Model, the Risk Level Matrix and the ICS 215a
3. Application of the model to identify hazards, probability and severity parameters, and risk levels for each hazard
4. Application of the model to develop mitigations and the development of residual risk analysis, and a go/no-go decision process
5. Overview of Time Critical Risk Assessment tools
6. Application of Time Critical Risk tools for completing Time Critical Risk Assessments in both wildfire and all hazard scenarios



Continuous Improvement in Large Fire Management

Course Description

This course is actually a series of five modules aimed at developing a common approach to large fire management. The modules can be presented in their entirety or individually, depending on the needs of the local unit. The outcome is to develop risk-informed strategies for managing large fires and how to communicate those strategies to partners and stakeholders.

Workshop Format

Workshops are meant to be flexible both in length and in content to accommodate needs identified by the Forest Supervisor and his/her staff. They can be tailored to provide group sessions, one on one between staff and their NIMO counterpart or a combination of both. Content can include any combination of modules listed below.

Who should take this course?

Forest leadership and fire personnel

Course Objectives

Develop a more common approach to large fire management and provide an opportunity for dialog regarding the challenges fire managers and line officers are facing; and potential methods and alternatives that could be implemented to better meet those challenges.

Course Topics

Module 1: Building and Communicating Leaders Intent

Module 2: Common Approach to Fire Management

- Current and Desired Mental Models
- Strategies for Large Fire Management
- Risk Informed Incident Management Decision

Module 3: Assessing and Managing Risks

- Acceptable vs. Unacceptable Risk
- Empowering AAs and IMTs to Manage Risk
- Decision Management and Risk Management Protocol

Module 4: Capacity Building and Scenario Planning

- Case Studies
- Mentoring
- IMT Management
- Opportunity Recognition

Module 5: Stakeholder Engagement

- Network Mapping Awareness and Skill Building
- Community and Partner Relations