



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Washington, DC 20240

June 17, 2022

Memorandum

To: All Regional Directors
Attention: All Superintendents

From: Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs

Subject: Wildland Fire Management Readiness Review Policy and Implementation of New Readiness Review Checklists

Purpose: This memorandum provides updated policy to Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Regional and Agency Offices on the implementation of Wildland Fire Management Readiness Reviews, to include the implementation of new Readiness Review Checklists. The policies identified in this memorandum will be updated in the 2023 revision of the Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations (Red Book). Beginning in the 2023 edition of the Red Book, any policy and guidance updates related to readiness reviews will be documented in the Red Book.

Background: The BIA, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and United States Forest Service operate Federal wildland fire management programs that include preparedness, aviation, fuels management, and wildland fire suppression and management. All Agencies are signatory to the Red Book, a guide and policy handbook for the safe and effective implementation of wildland fire management programs and activities among all the federal agencies.

Readiness reviews are methodical examinations of wildland fire management programs and activities related to program management, safety, leadership, operations, preparedness, training, staffing, business practices, budget, cost containment, planning, and interagency or interagency cooperation and coordination. Readiness reviews are not intended to be punitive, rather are intended to ensure effectiveness of the programs, to identify positive aspects, and to identify deficiencies and recommend specific corrective actions.

Readiness reviews provide Zone, Local Unit, Regional, and National level organizations situational awareness to ensure the appropriate levels of support and oversight are provided to ensure continued success and improvements of a professional fire management organization. With honest and strong readiness reviews, we can identify support improvement at all levels.

Policy: This memorandum directs BIA Regional and Agency Offices to implement and participate in Wildland Fire Management Readiness Reviews as follows:

1. Regional readiness reviews will be conducted by Central Office, Branch of Wildland Fire Management subject matter experts every 2 years. Readiness reviews are not authorized to be self-assessments.

2. Zone and Unit level (Agency and Tribal) readiness reviews will be conducted annually by Regional Office wildland fire management subject matter experts. Readiness reviews are not authorized to be self-assessments. It is encouraged that Regional Offices formulate review teams consisting of subject matter experts from other BIA Regions, Agencies, and other interagency partners.
3. Readiness reviews may be conducted in person, virtual, or a combination of, as long as thorough reviews are conducted.
4. Annual Tribal wildland fire management program readiness reviews are required for Tribal programs operating wildland fire preparedness and suppression, and aviation programs on behalf of the BIA. Tribal readiness reviews will be conducted in accordance with applicable regulations based on their agreement with the BIA.
5. Annual Zone and Unit level readiness reviews are required for all Agency jurisdictions, utilizing the appropriate readiness review checklists that pertain to their jurisdiction.
6. The approved Readiness Review Checklists for Regional, Zone, and Unit level readiness reviews are available at www.nifc.gov/standards/bia-preparedness-review. Optional materials exist here that may be used to further enhance readiness reviews.
7. The minimum required readiness review checklists that will be used for all jurisdictions are:
 - a. Agency Administrator
 - b. Fire Management Administration
 - c. Fire Management Officer
 - d. Fire Operations Supervisor
 - e. Incident Business
 - f. Fire Training and Qualifications
 - g. Fire Prevention & Mitigation
 - h. Facilities/Cache
 - i. Local Dispatch
 - j. Aviation Management
 - k. Vehicles
 - l. Employee Orientation Checklist
8. The following readiness review checklists are optional, however shall be used if the jurisdiction operates those activities:
 - a. Aviation Base
 - b. Single Engine Airtanker (SEAT) Base
 - c. Helicopter Module
 - d. Individual Firefighter Evaluation
 - e. Engine
 - f. Interagency Hotshot Crew
 - g. Handcrew non-IHC
 - h. Fuel Transport
9. Readiness reviews shall truly identify all aspects of the wildland fire management programs to provide accurate situational awareness of program management.
10. If deficiencies or needs for improvement are identified, they will be accurately described in order to develop thorough corrective action plans.

11. Corrective action plans must be developed and implemented within thirty days of the completed readiness review. Regional, Agency, Tribal programs will be provided up to six months to correct identified deficiencies or needs for improvement.
12. The organization being reviewed will be provided with the completed checklist, a memorandum describing the determined state of the program, and if any follow up actions and corrective action plans are required. The memorandum and completed checklists will be provided within thirty days of the completed readiness review.
13. If a deficiency or need for improvement is not correctable locally, the identified issue shall be formally relayed to the Regional or Central Office to provide further assistance and support to ensure forward progress to success.
14. If no actions are taken to correct identified deficiencies or needs for improvement, the next managerial level organization will need to take the appropriate steps to ensure safe and effective operations of wildland fire management programs occurs.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Josh Simmons, Director, Wildland Fire Operations at (208) 387-5372 or Aaron Baldwin, Chief, Branch of Wildland Fire Management at (208) 387-5697.