

Frequently Asked Questions on the Updated Position Task Books and PMS 310-1 May 2008

When will the new PTBs be required for use?

The new PTBs will be released May 31, 2008. Any PTB initiated on or after the release date will require the use of the new PTB.

When will the updated PMS 310-1 be available?

The 2008 version of the PMS 310-1 will be posted along with the PTBs by May 31, 2008.

What if I started a prior version of a PTB and it's not completed yet?

Complete the PTB you have started if any tasks have been completed in the prior version. If tasks have been completed the PMS 310-1 allows you 3 years from the date of the earliest completion of that task(s).

Are competencies and behaviors a new concept?

No; the original PTBs were built on competencies (termed Job Performance Requirements) and behaviors. However, to simplify the PTBs the Job Performance Requirements were not listed; only the tasks to meet these requirements were listed.

Can you define competencies, behaviors and tasks?

- **Competency** - A broad description that groups core behaviors necessary to perform a specific function.
- **Behavior** – A general description of an observable activity or action demonstrated by an individual in a particular context.
- **Task** – A specific description of a unit of work activity that is a logical and necessary action in the performance of a behavior; how the behavior is demonstrated or performed in a particular context.

Has the definition of Task changed in this new context?

No, see above.

Why is this change needed?

The competencies were developed to create a common reference for qualification and performance for all ICS positions. They were developed by NWCG, partners within DHS (e.g. FEMA, Coast Guard) and other key federal agencies. They have become the national standard for all all-hazard response organizations. The competency based system has become a national training standard which NWCG will use to restructure and improve our training program.

Is there any difference in how PTBs will be initiated/administered?

- PTBs can be initiated prior to completion of required training.
- Evaluators must be either qualified (and current) in the position being evaluated or supervise the position. Final Evaluators must be qualified (and current) in the position they are evaluating.
- Reference PMS 310-1 for additional information on PTB management; there are changes!

What's new about the PTBs / What has changed?

- The PTBs have been revised to create a better connection between the tasks and the overall competency (skill or behavior) that is desired; tasks are matched to the competencies and behaviors, and are not in sequential order as in previous versions.
- Multiple positions have been combined into single PTBs similar to the single resource boss PTB.
- Competencies and behaviors have been added.
- Some of the PTBs have added tasks to ensure the trainee demonstrates the needed skill for advancement into a fully qualified status.
- Tasks that were not meaningful to the desired behaviors have been deleted.
- Tasks that were unnecessarily redundant have been deleted.

I'm a training officer/specialist. What will this change mean to me?

You will need to familiarize yourself with changes to both the PMS 310-1 and the PTBs.

Was the PMS 310-1 updated to reflect the changes to the PTBs?

Yes; additional changes have been made also.

What has changed about the PMS 310-1?

Major changes are referenced in the front of the PMS 310-1. Some of them include:

- PMS 310-1 has been updated to reflect changes to the PTBs.
- Some positions have been deleted or added.
- Requirements have changed for some positions.
- Published NWCG directives since the 2006 version have been incorporated into this version.
- A definition of Technical Specialist has been added.

Does the implementation of the new PTBs in 2008 change anything about the way the IQCS system works as far as inputting or reflecting my qualifications?

No; IQCS will be updated to reflect the new changes.

I'm a fully qualified Division Supervisor; what do I need to know about signing off trainees with the new PTB?

As it has been, critical assessment of performance is required for each training assignment. The quality of learning is directly related to the quality of feedback, coaching, and communication in PTB administration. This revision should encourage evaluators to look at the individual in terms of the competencies and behaviors and not focus solely on whether they can perform each individual task.

Where do I get the new PTBs and PMS 310-1?

PTBs and the PMS 310-1 will be available May 31, 2008 at the NWCG Publications Management System web site, <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/pms.htm>.

Will the training courses change along with the new PTBs?

The training courses are built from the PTBs; realigning the curriculum with the PTBs is the next step. A revision schedule is under development and future courses will reflect requirements of the new PTB.