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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (PKEMRA) tasked the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to set standards for credentialing all personnel who are likely to respond to a natural or man-made disaster, including the FEMA incident workforce. FEMA established and implemented the FEMA Qualification System (FQS) to fulfill this requirement and to standardize incident workforce capabilities through experience, training, and demonstrated performance. Many FQS positions provide support for both the stabilization of community lifelines, which is necessary for the continuous operation of government and critical business functions that are essential to human health, safety, and economic security as well as support for the long-term recovery efforts throughout the lifecycle of the incident. By establishing performance standards that are consistent across the Agency, FQS ensures that FEMA employees can successfully perform their incident-specific positions, including those supporting lifeline stabilization and long-term recovery.

FQS tracks qualification requirements for its positions and the proficiency level of employees in those positions.

Purpose

The *FEMA Qualification System Guide* clarifies the processes and policies established by the FQS program. It provides detailed information about each step of the FQS process, including experience, training, and demonstrated performance requirements for FEMA employees to earn an FQS qualification as well as information following a qualification award. The *FEMA Qualification System Guide* clarifies and codifies FQS-based roles and responsibilities of FEMA employees. The guide also provides information regarding the scope of FQS and the support systems that help ensure the success of employees in their FQS positions, consistent with the FEMA Core Values of compassion, fairness, integrity, and respect.

Scope and Applicability

The *FEMA Qualification System Guide* pertains to FEMA employees who issue or hold incident management (IM) positions. The processes for Incident Support (IS) positions are undergoing revision to use the same tools and methods currently used for IM. The *FEMA Qualification System Guide* may also apply to individuals who supplement FEMA’s workforce but do not require FQS qualification, including: FEMA Corps,¹ FEMA local hires, Surge

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¹ FEMA Corps is a robust force multiplier for FEMA. FEMA Corps personnel may be issued position task books (PTB) and receive FQS titles but are not counted in cadre force structure numbers.
Capacity Force (SCF), technical specialists, state and/or local responders, or responders from other federal agencies.

**Authorities and Foundational Documents**

The following authorities and foundational documents guide FQS:


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2 This refers to the Incident Command System (ICS) definition of technical specialists, who fall under the category of non-FEMA-employees, and not to the few IM positions that were given titles including the term “technical specialist.” The ICS definition for technical specialist can be found in *Appendix B*. 
Figure 1 shows how the *FEMA Qualification System Guide* aligns with other FEMA doctrine.

![FEMA Doctrine Map](image)

**Supersession**


**Document Management and Maintenance**

The FEMA Office of Response and Recovery, Doctrine and Policy Office is responsible for the management and maintenance of this document. Comments and feedback from FEMA personnel and stakeholders regarding this document should be directed to the Doctrine and Policy Office at FEMA headquarters (HQ). This document will be reviewed every three years in accordance with FEMA standard procedures.
CHAPTER 2: INCIDENT WORKFORCE STRUCTURE

FEMA’s incident workforce coordinates the efficient and timely delivery of federal disaster relief to support and supplement the efforts and capabilities of state, local, tribal, and territorial governments; eligible nonprofit organizations; and individuals affected by a declared major disaster or emergency. FEMA relies upon the Field Operations Directorate (FOD) and its associated components to develop and manage the incident workforce and to ensure qualification by standardizing the training and performance of incident-specific activities across mission areas.

Emergency Management Position Categories

In accordance with the pledge that “Every Employee is an Emergency Manager,” each FEMA employee is assigned to one or more of the four following emergency management (EM) position categories: Incident Management (IM), Incident Support (IS), Ancillary Support (AS), or Mission Essential (ME). Table 1 describes the four EM categories. In most cases, employees will then be assigned a more specific title within the position category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emergency Management Position Categories</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Incident Management (IM)</td>
<td>Positions at the incident level that answer through a chain of command ending with the Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) and contribute to delivering the federal role in emergency response and recovery, including the direct control and employment of resources, management of incident facilities, and delivery of federal assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incident Support (IS)</td>
<td>Positions supporting incident operations at the regional or national level in the Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC) or the National Response Coordination Center (NRCC).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancillary Support (AS)</td>
<td>Positions that, in their steady-state and/or incident roles, continue to deliver the incident-specific mission of their program office during disaster operations, e.g., cadre management personnel or National Processing Service Center (NPSC) staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission Essential (ME)</td>
<td>Positions at FEMA HQ, the regional offices, and other designated offices that must be filled to maintain basic FEMA operations (e.g., payroll, information technology [IT], and maintenance). ME functions must always be performed but may require less than the full complement of staff at one time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All FEMA IM and IS components coordinate to identify and assess the impacts utilizing the community lifelines, designed to highlight the priority areas and interdependencies, focus attention on actions being taken, communicate coordination efforts toward stabilization and integrate information through response and recovery efforts. FEMA IM is the federal incident-level operation in emergency response and recovery.

**Community Lifeline Stabilization**

FEMA applies the lifeline approach to its response operations to facilitate rapid stabilization of the following life-saving and life-sustaining lifelines:

- Safety and Security
- Food, Water, Sheltering
- Health and Medical
- Energy (Power and Fuel)
- Communications
- Transportation
- Hazardous Material

**FEMA Specialties**

FEMA employees can also receive the assignment of a specialty (e.g., Contracting Officer’s Representative [COR]). A specialty is a category used to identify a specific measured (documented or credentialed) skill, task, experience, or certification that is based on recognized standards and is necessary to enhance performance of an associated IM or IS position. It must be distinct, empirically derived, and not a general credentialing requirement for the position. More information about rules and policies associated with FEMA Specialties is available in the *FEMA Cadre Management Guide*.

**Primary and Subordinate Titles**

All employees with a position in one of the four EM position categories (IM, IS, ME, or AS) have one primary title. Employees classified as IM or IS hold a primary title and may hold additional FQS subordinate titles. Employees classified as AS and ME typically hold their AS and ME position as their primary title. If AS and ME employees also hold current IM or IS titles, the IM or IS titles are subordinate to their primary titles. Employees may be deployed in any IM or IS position regardless of whether it is their primary or subordinate title. Employees can check their primary and subordinate titles in the “Responder Info” tile in the Deployment Tracking System (DTS) Responder Portal.

**The Role of Employee Types**

Employee types differ in how EM position categories are assigned to each. Full-time equivalent (FTE) employees are hired to perform steady-state roles. These employees may be given an IM primary title or they may be assigned to one of the other EM position categories: IS, AS, or ME.

Supervisors of record help determine the appropriateness of EM position categories for the following FTE employee types:
• Permanent full-time (PFT),
• Temporary full-time (TFT), and
• Cadre of On-call Response and Recovery Employees (CORE).

FEMA hires the following employee types for assignment in an IM primary title and they may not be given titles in the other EM position categories:

• Incident Management CORE (IMCORE),
• Incident Management Assistance Team (IMAT), and
• Reservists.

The following types of personnel support disaster operations but do not fully participate in FQS qualification requirements:

• **Local hires:** FEMA hires local residents to help their fellow citizens in the recovery process. A local hire’s term of employment is 120 days and may be extended based on the needs of the disaster.

• **FEMA Corps:** FEMA Corps members are not FEMA employees. FEMA Corps is a FEMA-funded component within the AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) whose members have committed a minimum of 1,700 hours of national service to FEMA IM operations and emergency preparedness activities. Upon request, FEMA Corps members are available to deploy in support of FEMA in carrying out Stafford Act responsibilities. FEMA Corps consists of approximately 1,000 members who are issued standard FEMA equipment and are deployed in accordance with the AmeriCorps NCCC-FEMA Corps program policies.

• **Surge Capacity Force (SCF):** The SCF comprises volunteers from each non-FEMA Department of Homeland Security (DHS) component and other federal agencies who receive just-in-time training to support disaster operations, including, but not limited to, the following FEMA program areas: Logistics (LOG), Disaster Survivor Assistance (DSA), Individual Assistance (IA), and Public Assistance (PA). The FEMA Administrator requests Secretary of DHS to activate the use of SCF when the Agency will otherwise exhaust its available personnel resources.

**FEMA Cadres**

FEMA strives to maintain a ready workforce that is adequately staffed, available, trained, qualified, equipped, and monitored. Responsibilities in FEMA IM include the direct control and employment of resources, management of incident facilities, operations, and delivery of federal assistance through all phases of emergency response. The IM workforce, including personnel of all eligible employee types, is organized into cadres based on functional
responsibilities. FEMA cadres are the Agency's mechanism to effectively deliver its programs in support of the national preparedness goal.

FEMA organizes cadres by program area and within corresponding offices within the Agency. Currently there are 23 FEMA cadres organized to perform distinct operational or programmatic functions during operations (Appendix J). Personnel assigned to cadre-specific IM positions perform responsibilities and functions within their assigned cadre. For most cadres, the positions follow a hierarchical ranking with varying leadership responsibilities. For larger cadres, further subject matter specialization exists.

**Cadre Force Structure**

Force structure is a FEMA model that establishes personnel staffing requirements based on analysis of historical deployment data, readiness requirements, and likely future conditions. The resulting model enables FEMA to respond to all-hazards incidents and plan for training, equipment, and personnel costs.

**Cadre Organizational Structure**

Cadre management teams manage the day-to-day functionality of each cadre, including administration, coordination, and professional development, to ensure individual and collective operational readiness. These teams provide the cadre with the necessary information to perform its jobs to the highest standard. Each cadre management team includes a Certifying Authority (CA), Certifying Official (CO), and Cadre Coordinator (CC). The assignment of additional cadre management staff varies by cadre (Figure 2). The CC may delegate roles and responsibilities to other cadre team members based on cadre management structure and needs. A cadre management team may contain additional positions, such as reservist program managers (RPMs), FTE coordinators, IM CORE program managers, and training managers.


**Certifying Authority FQS Roles**

The CA is the highest-ranking FEMA official for the cadre, ultimately responsible for the effective management and performance of the cadre. The CA may delegate cadre management authorities to the CO or CC but ultimately bears responsibility for the effective management and performance of the cadre. The CA participates in the approval process of force package and force modules in coordination with the Workforce Management Division (WMD), FEMA HQ components, and regions. Additionally, the CA ensures the cadre has available, trained, and equipped members to meet force structure requirements and to effectively perform incident duties.

The CA is responsible for the following:

- Ensures qualification is awarded for all cadre members in accordance with the *FEMA Qualification System Guide*;
- Ensures the cadre has available, trained, and equipped staff to meet force structure requirements and effectively perform incident duties;
- Participates in the review process of force package and force modules in coordination with the WMD, FEMA HQ components, and the regions; and
- Approves removal of an FQS qualification from cadre members when necessary.

**Certifying Official FQS Roles**

The CO is authorized by the CA to manage FQS requirements for the cadre, including the authority to assign employees an IM position title and issue position task books (PTBs). The CO also ensures readiness requirements are conveyed to and met by cadre personnel and ensures Coaches and Evaluators (C&E) are available within the cadre and deployed to support trainees/candidates (T/Cs) in the field.

**Cadre Coordinator FQS Roles**

The CC oversees all aspects of day-to-day cadre management to ensure cadre readiness and to develop policies and procedures for the cadre. For most cadres the CC supervises a cadre management team that varies based on the size and nature of the cadre. The CC may delegate duties to members of the cadre management team, as appropriate. The CC is responsible for the following:

- Oversees staff levels and ensures cadre members in each position are equipped, trained, and meet FQS qualification requirements;
- Recommends the title progression and qualification status of cadre members to the CO and CA;
- Maintains force structure and PTB accuracy of the cadre’s position titles in compliance with FQS;

---

3 The CO cannot delegate this authority.
• Coordinates with the FOD regional liaison regarding cadre implementation for regional FTEs;
• Manages and validates incident workforce position specialties and certifications; and
• Supports the training of employees to ensure deployment readiness in coordination with the Workforce Development Division (WDD).

Progression Flow Charts

FEMA uses progression flow charts to indicate all the cadre positions and the path to the cadre’s IM leadership positions. For cadres that have more than one position, the IM progression path indicates how those positions progress from entry level (e.g., specialist) to the highest-level position within the cadre. Progression depends on cadre needs within the defined force structure and only some position titles lead to leadership positions.

**IM Position Tiers**

FQS organizes all IM positions (regardless of cadre) into four tiers: Tier 4, Tier 3, Tier 2, and Tier 1, denoting increasing levels of leadership. The tiers are based on the level of management and responsibility required for each position. At each tier level, IM personnel are required to complete specific courses that focus on incident management, as well as supervision, management, and leadership.

![IM Position Tiers Diagram](image_url)

Figure 3: IM Position Tiers

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4 Some cadres contain only one position and, therefore, have no potential for progression within the cadre.
As shown in Figure 3, these tiers group positions by similar levels of responsibility. For example, all specialist positions are categorized as Tier 4. This allows FEMA to apply training requirements consistently across tiers. Specialist positions are provided the same FEMA-wide introductory training. As employees progress to advanced-level positions, they are provided consistent leadership training. Tiers are separated by horizontal lines on each cadre’s progression flowchart.

**Position Typing**

FEMA typically categorizes Federal Coordinating Officers and command and general staff positions as Type 1, 2, or 3, which corresponds to the incident levels for which they hold an FQS qualification. Individuals occupying typed positions must meet all qualification requirements and demonstrate the ability to manage at the corresponding incident level. FQS-qualified employees may work in an incident at or below their type level. For example, employees holding an FQS qualification in Type 3 positions may serve only on Level III incidents, while Type 1 staff members may serve on Level I, Level II, or Level III incidents.5

**Cadre Progression Flowchart**

Figure 4 shows an example progression flowchart, demonstrating that an employee must have earned an FQS qualification in the position of Geospatial Information System (GIS) Specialist in order to be eligible for the position of GIS Manager.

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5 Under the National Incident Management System (NIMS), typed resources are distinguished with Arabic numerals. FEMA uses Roman numerals to denote disaster levels.
Figure 4 also shows that an FQS-qualified Planning Specialist has the opportunity to progress to all of the four planning unit leaders listed above the position. Before becoming a Planning Section Chief (PSC) Type 3, an employee must earn a qualification in both the Planning Support Unit Leader and one of the other unit leader positions (except Geospatial Information Unit Leader) in the Planning cadre. Once awarded qualification as a PSC3, an employee could continue to progress and become a Planning Section Chief Type 2 (PSC2) or pursue transferring to the Field Leadership cadre in the position of Chief of Staff Type 3.

Once an employee reaches the stopping point for progression, cadre management may discuss additional opportunities for advancement.

**Incident Workforce Executive Steering Committee**

The Incident Workforce Executive Steering Committee (IWESC) provides oversight of FEMA’s incident workforce, including approval of the development, maintenance, and revision of all
associated policy and doctrine. The Associate Administrator for Response and Recovery chairs the IWESC. (The charter can be referenced for more information). To fully prepare responders to conduct response, recovery, and mitigation operations, the IWESC does the following:

- Provides guidance to achieve and maintain optimum operational readiness including leading efforts to achieve a robust posture of incident workforce personnel ready to successfully deliver the Agency’s mission;
- Provides overall strategic vision, leadership, and direction for development and operation of the cadres;
- Ensures that force packages and force modules reflect lessons learned from incident response operations, FEMA force structure reviews, and technology or policy changes that impact fielding a capability; and
- Reviews FEMA force structure and assesses regional staffing needs in coordination with the Regional Administrators.

Field Operations Directorate

FOD ensures that FEMA’s incident workforce remains postured to achieve the realization of an expeditionary workforce that is trained, organized, and equipped to conduct complex disaster operations effectively. FOD maintains the operational readiness of FEMA’s incident workforce and coordinates with other FEMA components to achieve timely, effective, and integrated field operations that support the whole community across all mission areas. FOD pursues these outcomes through the following responsibilities:

- Develops, maintains, and manages robust incident workforce education;
- Develops training and qualification systems;
- Supports ongoing disaster operations by preparing, managing and deploying field leaders, IMATs, incident workforce personnel, FEMA Corps teams, and the DHS SCF; and
- Streamlines and optimizes employment of the incident workforce during field operations through the oversight, development, and maintenance of FEMA’s field operating concepts, management models, tools, and readiness assessments.

Workforce Development Division Roles

The Workforce Development Division (WDD) develops, coordinates, and executes all training, education, and experiential learning for the IM workforce to ensure FEMA personnel are fully prepared to support disaster survivors and first responders. WDD contains the FQS Branch in Washington, DC; the FEMA Incident Workforce Academy (FIWA) Branch in Anniston, AL; and the Workforce Coordination Branch (WCB) in Pasadena, CA. Table 2 describes the three WDD components.
Table 2: WDD Organizational Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workforce Development Division Component</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FEMA Incident Workforce Academy Branch</td>
<td>• Promotes the development of an expeditionary workforce by coordinating and executing the delivery of individual, team, and collective incident workforce training.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Workforce Coordination Branch           | • Notifies supervisors of record and cadre management on correspondence related to FEMA Qualification System (FQS) matters.  
• Provides personnel notification and correspondence on FQS actions for all FEMA employees and is responsible for managing deployment orders for training FEMA Corps members and incident management (IM) assistance team activities.  
• Provides subject matter expertise in answering inquiries and addressing problems for the incident workforce on all matters related to FQS. |
| FEMA Qualification System Branch        | • Administers FQS for the incident workforce.  
• Manages the development of all incident workforce training to ensure all FEMA incident workforce personnel have the required experience, training, and demonstrated performance to serve in FQS positions supporting effective execution of unified expeditionary field operations during all-hazard Stafford Act events. |

FEMA Qualification System (FQS)

For the purpose of the FEMA Qualification System Guide, the FQS program comprises the FQS Branch and specific relevant activities and contributions from the FIWA Branch and the WCB, all within WDD. This group collaborates and coordinates with and receives assistance from multiple components within the Workforce Management Division to support the IM workforce by doing the following:

- Develop and administer FQS;
- Work with cadres to update position qualification requirements;
- Schedule, fund, and provide FQS-required training;
- Provide employees and cadre management access to records and data for PTB completion;
- Answer questions related to individual progression;
- Support employees, liaisons, cadres, and the Qualification Review Board (QRB) by reviewing and compiling data used to inform qualification decisions; and
- Assist employees with general inquiries related to FQS.

Workforce Management Division FQS Roles

WMD supports FEMA cadres by coordinating and managing programs, processes, and procedures required to develop, organize, and sustain an efficient and survivor-centric incident workforce. Three of WMD’s sections (Cadre Support, Systems Integration, and
Deployment) directly support the operationalization of FQS. Table 3 describes these three organizational components of WMD.

Table 3: WMD Organizational Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workforce Management Division Component</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cadre Support Section</td>
<td>• Oversees FEMA’s cadres in the performance of designated cadre management functions to ensure each cadre implements and maintains an effective approach to cadre operations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systems Integration Section</td>
<td>• Manages, develops, and trains employees on Deployment Tracking System (DTS). This includes the qualification management portal for FEMA Qualification System (FQS) management and the curriculum delivery module for tracking training, course delivery, and course completions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deployment Section</td>
<td>• Manages and operates the DTS personnel deployment system. Deployment requests and staffing plans utilize FQS position titles to deploy cadre members to support disaster operations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FOD Regional Liaisons**

The FOD Regional Liaisons act as FOD's regional delegates, responsible for oversight of region-wide education and implementation of policies across the full spectrum of FOD programs. FOD regional liaisons oversee the operation of WMD and WDD programs within the region. In some regions, the FOD regional liaison leads a team of staff members to accomplish the programmatic and liaison-specific goals. Their responsibilities relating to FQS include the following:

- Liaise with regional staff, WMD, WDD, and national cadre management, in coordination with the Cadre Support Section, on all matters pertaining to incident workforce management at the regional level in order to maintain overall readiness;
- Assist FTEs at the region through the FQS process and facilitate communication with national cadre management;
- Review regional C&E gaps and make recommendations to cadre management;
- Review, approve, and submit employee IM position request workflows;
- Coordinate with regional training staff and the FIWA Branch on FQS-related training programs; and
- Correspond with team members, the WCB, FQS Branch staff, CCs, regional division directors and branch chiefs, and regional employees, as needed, regarding outstanding items, questions, status checks, and updates pertaining to FQS.
CHAPTER 3: QUALIFICATION OVERVIEW AND REQUIREMENTS

Foundations of FQS

Training and demonstrated performance are foundational elements for attaining an FQS qualification in an IM position, though additional criteria apply (e.g., prerequisite FQS experience) depending on position level and cadre requirements. Employees may be deployed and expected to perform in any position for which they currently hold a title. This chapter provides an overview of the qualification process by describing each of these elements and introducing common terminology of FQS.

- **FQS required training**: Training courses that must be completed in order to successfully perform in a specific cadre or position. For some positions, cadres also mandate completion of specific non-FEMA training courses. FQS required training excludes FEMA mandatory training, which is a requirement of employment, such as basic training on human resources (HR), information technology (IT) security, or credit card use. Some positions may require licensing and certification in addition to more traditional training courses.6

- **Demonstrated performance**: An employee’s ability to successfully and independently perform specific tasks that are a part of the duties of the FQS position. The employee learns during a coaching phase and then is evaluated while performing the actions required by the position. Each cadre decides what constitutes successful demonstration of performance.

- **Prerequisite FQS experience**: For advanced-level positions, an employee must have been awarded an FQS qualification in specific position(s) before being assigned the target FQS position. The cadre progression flowchart identifies the progression path within a cadre, including any associated prerequisite FQS position.

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6 The FQS Branch does not pay for the attainment of external certifications.
FQS Process Overview

Figure 5 shows the steps of the FQS process, beginning with the factors considered when issuing a title and continuing through qualification and possible consideration for additional FQS positions. The *FEMA Qualification System Guide* provides details on each of these steps.

**Figure 5: FQS Process Steps**
Initial Assignment of an FQS Position

For all employee types, the assignment of an initial FQS position depends on several factors, including force structure needs, the employee’s prior experience, and the selection that the cadre and employee make for the title.

As shown in Figure 6, cadre management considers the following before assigning an FQS position:

- The cadre’s approved force structure, which FEMA sets to direct staffing requirements for each cadre’s IM positions;
- The employee’s documented prior experience, including education and training; and
- Joint agreement between the cadre and the employee on the selected IM title and associated PTB.

Role of Employee Types in Determining Initial FQS Position

The process of selecting and assigning an initial FQS position will vary according to the individual’s employee type.

**Reservist, IMCORE, IMAT Employees**

Cadre management might not immediately assign an IM primary title to reservist, IMCORE, or IMAT employees upon hiring. IMAT personnel and IMCOREs generally hold advanced-level positions and usually receive an initial FQS qualification to fulfill the requirement for pre-requisite FQS experience.

**Full-Time Equivalents**

FTE employees should discuss their goals, strengths, and interests with their supervisor of record and cadre management to pursue an initial EM position. Supervisors of record have a role in assigning an IS, AS, or ME primary title in lieu of an IM primary title for FTE employees.
hired for steady-state positions. For regional employees, the FOD regional liaisons may assist in requesting and receiving an IM position.

**FQS Proficiency**

When assigning employees their IM positions, cadre management determines proficiency using one of the following three proficiency levels:

- **Trainee**: Indicates the employee is working toward the completion of qualification requirements for the position and does not hold any other FQS qualification. The proficiency of trainee is only available for entry-level positions.\(^7\)

- **Qualified**: Indicates the employee has fulfilled the FQS qualification requirements for the position. This proficiency level can only be assigned or removed by the CA. Throughout the *FEMA Qualification System Guide*, the term “qualified” refers to this proficiency level.

- **Candidate**: Indicates the employee has earned an FQS qualification for a position and has been selected by the CO to pursue an additional FQS qualification in a new position.

**Entry-level Positions**

For entry-level positions, cadres initially assign the FQS proficiency of trainee and provide an established set of requirements for the employee to complete to earn a qualification. Mostly at the specialist (Tier 4) level, these positions do not carry prerequisite FQS experience requirements.

**Advanced-level Positions**

Before cadres can issue PTBs for advanced-level positions, employees must first hold an FQS qualification as their primary title. For the new candidate position, cadres will assign the FQS proficiency of candidate and issue the PTB. Cadres decide whether to assign an advanced-level position based on several factors, including cadre assessment of an employee’s abilities, prerequisite FQS experience, length of time with FQS qualification, number of deployments with FQS qualification in the employee’s current position, and the need to fill a gap in cadre force structure. The requirement of prerequisite FQS experience indicates the position(s) an employee must already hold a qualification in to work toward qualification in the new position. Prerequisite experience is shown on the cadre’s progression flowchart. Cadres decide title assignment and may have employees seek qualification in another position first, depending on cadre needs. This qualification must be

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\(^7\) Entry-level positions are determined by each cadre. These are the positions with no prerequisite FQS experience requirements. Most entry-level positions are specialist positions.
current, with the employee having performed successfully in the position(s) within the preceding four years to be eligible to work toward the next position.

**Work Experience Equivalency for Initial IM Positions**

The cadre considers an employee's past experience for initial position assignments and evaluates this against the standards and requirements for the target IM position. The employee’s experience enables COs to equate experience gained in FEMA functional areas or from other agencies or organizations to the capability expectations for a specific IM position. For example, personnel qualified by another agency or organization in an Incident Command System (ICS) position may receive immediate equivalency at a similar level within FQS without having to obtain the FEMA-equivalent experience. COs, with input from subject matter experts (SME), when required, review an employee’s experience to see whether it meets FQS requirements.

Occasionally, cadres award an FQS qualification when an employee is hired. When a cadre determines a new employee should be assigned an initial qualification based on previous work experience, that action still requires the CA’s approval.

Figure 7 shows the role of cadre decisions for an employee who enters FQS as a trainee for an entry-level position and works toward qualification.

![Figure 7: FQS Title Proficiencies](image)

After reviewing the trainee’s completion of the FQS requirements, the cadre makes a decision on qualification. Upon qualification award, cadre management conducts an analysis of the cadre’s force structure needs and an assessment of the employee to determine if the employee should be allowed to become a candidate for an additional IM
position. Any employee who already holds an FQS qualification and then receives a newly issued PTB holds that new title as subordinate with the proficiency of candidate.

**Position Task Books**

Once a decision has been made for an employee’s initial trainee or candidate FQS position title, the CO issues the associated PTB. FEMA uses electronic PTBs as a tool to establish, track, and update FQS qualification metrics for the Agency. PTBs list and track employees’ demonstrated performance and training requirements for FQS positions (Figure 8), and DTS tracks progress toward PTB completion. It is the employee’s responsibility to proactively complete the requirements in their PTB. These requirements must be completed in order to be considered for qualification and are discussed in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5.

![Figure 8: FQS PTB Requirements](image)

When an employee requests a PTB (or has one requested on their behalf), FQS staff create an automated workflow in DTS. The CO has final approval of the workflow. The new PTB is generated on the employee’s Responder Portal dashboard (www.femaresponder.net).8

The PTB for each FQS position lists the following information, as applicable:

- Demonstrated performance requirements (behaviors and tasks),
- FQS required training,
- Professional certifications,9
- Current and historical C&Es, and
- Comments, attachments, or messages associated with the PTB provided by the employee, C&E, or cadre.

Figure 9 shows an example of a PTB for a planning specialist assigned to an employee (named “Responder, FEMA”), as viewed in DTS.

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8 The DTS responder portal is available outside the FEMA firewall. All FQS action and tracking is done within DTS.

9 The FQS Branch does not pay for the attainment of outside/professional certifications.
## Position Task Book

### Task Book Info

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>Responder, FEMA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TRAINEE POSITION</td>
<td>INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PLANNING PLAN Planning Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STARTED DATE</td>
<td>6/22/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TARGET DATE</td>
<td>6/22/2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPENED BY</td>
<td>EDGEWELL, KEITH A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%TRAINING</td>
<td>50% (2 of 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%CERTIFICATIONS</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%TASKS</td>
<td>55% (33 of 60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%COMPLETED</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Figure 9: Sample PTB**

FEMA Qualification System Guide

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While an employee may work on their PTB at any point during their deployment, the employee’s primary responsibility is to support the mission and disaster survivors.

**Accessing a PTB**

An employee receives an open PTB once it is officially issued by the CO. Once issued, the employee is assigned the proficiency of trainee or candidate. Once qualification is awarded, employees no longer have access to that PTB in the Responder Portal but may request it from cadre management or a FOD Regional Liaison.

DTS is the system FEMA uses to give employees access to and track progress towards completion of their PTB. Employees can access their PTB by logging into the Responder Portal in DTS (www.femaresponder.net) and clicking on the tile that says “Open PTB.” The tile shows the name of the position on the PTB and the total percentage complete. The total is the percentage complete for all PTB requirements, including each training requirement, each PTB task (which may require more than one endorsement to be complete), and each certification requirement, if applicable. Figure 10 shows the Open PTB tile for an employee issued the FQS position of Planning Specialist.

![Open PTB Tile](image)

**Figure 10: Open PTB Tile**

Employees who do not see a tile for “Open PTB” do not currently have an open PTB for an IM position, but can request one. Appendix J details the procedures employees should follow to request an initial IM position. Employees can initiate the automated process for requesting a PTB through the DTS Responder Portal.

**Waiving PTB Requirements**

In rare circumstances, a cadre may decide to waive a requirement on the PTB. Waivers require justification and are decided exclusively at the discretion of cadre management. FQS ensures uniform expectations of qualification and consistent qualification requirements for
the incident workforce. Waiving tasks or training may undermine the basis for those consistent expectations.

PTB Completion Time

A trainee or candidate should generally be able to complete an assigned PTB within 4 years of the “Started Date” noted on the PTB page in the responder portal. The 4-year requirement is shown as “Target Date.” If the trainee or candidate does not complete the PTB within 4 years, further requirements may be added to ensure the employee is up to date on current processes and procedures by the time of qualification. Cadre management reviews incomplete PTBs on a case-by-case basis to determine new requirements. This could result in starting a new PTB.

PTB Status

An employee’s PTB status changes in DTS depending on progress towards PTB completion. Table 4 describes each possible status for an employee’s PTB.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Issued</td>
<td>• Employee has been issued an open Position Task Book (PTB) but has not yet paired with a Coach and Evaluator (C&amp;E).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started</td>
<td>• Employee has an open PTB and has paired with a C&amp;E.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ready for Review</td>
<td>• Employee has completed their training and task requirements but not yet submitted the PTB for review.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under Review</td>
<td>• The PTB has been submitted for review through Deployment Tracking System (DTS), and the cadre or Qualification Review Board (QRB) is considering the PTB for qualification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awarded/Qualification Awarded</td>
<td>• Employee has received the qualification for a PTB.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>• Employee is no longer be actively working on qualification in a PTB but has not completed the PTB.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Qualification in AS, ME, and IS Positions

FQS does not include a qualification process for AS and ME positions. These positions are generally based on a full-time employee’s steady-state roles and responsibilities, although AS and ME positions are included in an employee’s DTS records. FQS requirements do not exist for these positions.

To earn qualification in IS positions, employees complete FQS requirements, including required training and demonstrated performance. FEMA is currently moving qualification processes for IS positions into DTS, including the creation of PTBs and updating associated tasks and training.
CHAPTER 4: FQS REQUIRED TRAINING

Required Training Types

All PTBs list the FQS required training associated with the position to earn qualification. These requirements exclude FEMA Mandatory Training, any annual refresher training, or training to maintain the qualification. In most cases, employees conduct required training concurrently with demonstrated performance so that training builds on previous experience and course work, avoiding unnecessary duplication. Figure 11 shows where the training portion resides among PTB requirements.

Figure 11: FQS Required Training
In addition to listing the required training course, the PTB also shows the status of that training. Figure 12 shows an example of training requirements and completion status in an employee’s PTB.

![Figure 12: Example of FQS Required Training from a PTB](image)

The training heading in the PTB lists only the courses required and does not include all courses an employee has taken. To view the full FQS training record in DTS, employees should use the “Responder Info” tile on the responder portal and click on the “Training” heading. Employees should review the training requirements of the position they are pursuing (as well as all prerequisites) with cadre management to ensure consistent expectations for the training provided by FQS.

**Standard Incident Workforce Training**

Non-cadre-specific FQS required training includes the tier-level training that applies to all positions in a tier across all cadres. FEMA also requires other courses for specific positions. Examples include the ICS300 and ICS400 courses required of all Tier 2 and Tier 1 positions, respectively, or

**FIWA Tier-Level Training**

- **FIWA 601**: For upper-level managers and the Command and General Staff
- **FIWA 602**: For middle managers
- **FIWA 603**: For first-line supervisors
- **FIWA 604**: For specialists
the IM series of courses required for members of the command and general staff positions.10

**Position-Specific Training**

Cadres mandate formalized training for positions within the cadre. Each cadre has accredited training specific to each position or tier. The cadre makes changes based on evaluation of training needs and the mission. FEMA offers these courses in different locations with different identifiers.

**Non-FEMA Training**

Some cadres require training from outside FEMA. These courses still exist in the PTB; however, the contact information, registration processes, and course completion records are handled differently from FEMA courses. Employees should contact cadre management personnel with questions about a specific non-FEMA course.

**Accessing Training**

The FIWA Branch of WDD schedules and funds FQS course offerings.

**Instructor-Led Training**

In addition to the employee-directed training that occurs with independent study courses, most FQS positions require instructor-led trainings. Instructor-led trainings differ slightly in the method and location of delivery.

**Resident Training**

FEMA offers most instructor-led training as resident training. For these offerings, employees travel to one of the FEMA educational facilities and stay on campus during the course. The two main locations for this type of training include the Center for Domestic Preparedness (CDP) in Anniston, AL, and the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) in Emmitsburg, MD. Prerequisite requirements for EMI courses can be found in the EMI course catalog.

Cadre and employee needs dictate which training courses are added to the EMI schedule. Once issued a PTB, an employee receives course announcements relevant to their specific position as the training courses are scheduled. These announcements arrive via an automated email from DTS. Employees must update DTS with a current email address to ensure they receive these announcements.

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10 Per NIMS, the command staff includes all officer positions reporting to the incident commander and the general staff is made up of the section chiefs. Within FEMA, the term “command and general staffs” generally includes “command” (e.g., the FCO and/or Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator), as well as the command staff and general staff.
Each of these training facilities implements its own policies that trainees should review before registering for classes. For example, EMI has a policy which states people who fail to arrive for pre-scheduled training may be restricted from registering for courses on the campus for a period of two years. With space reserved for courses many months or even years in advance, late course withdrawals may result in seats being left empty, reducing the ability of FEMA and the cadre to provide training to employees.

**Registering for In-Person FEMA Training**

Students register for instructor-led training through the DTS responder portal. The Curriculum Delivery Module (CDM) of DTS allows for course scheduling, course notification, student-based registration, and faster training record updates. Resources exist to learn how to access and register for this training, join the wait list for a course, cancel course registration, and troubleshoot obstacles. Additionally, students can watch videos and attend Webinars, such as “Scheduling and Managing Training Courses for Responders,” which is located in the “Other Information” tile of the responder portal, and “Curriculum Delivery Module—Responder,” which is available under the “Orientation” tile of the responder portal. The latter gives an overview of how to use the CDM in DTS.

**FEMA Student ID**

To attend instructor-led FQS training, employees need a FEMA student identification (SID) number. The FEMA SID is a unique identifier used to maintain a record of FEMA employees’ completed courses. Employees can complete the one-time registration process at [https://cdp.dhs.gov/FEMASID/](https://cdp.dhs.gov/FEMASID/).

**Troubleshooting DTS Registration Process**

To register for training through DTS, FEMA employees must meet specific requirements, including the following:

- The courses must be a requirement on the employee’s open PTB, or the employee must be invited to the course.
- The employee must have a FEMA SID associated with their DTS account.
- The employee must complete all course prerequisites before registering.
- The employee cannot already be listed as unavailable or have pre-approved non-availability scheduled for the dates of the course.

Students can resolve course registration issues by contacting the point of contact who invited them to register for the course.

Employees should consult with their cadre for guidance on accessing distance training.
**Non-Resident Training**

FQS-required courses that are offered at FIWA and EMI may also be offered elsewhere, or online. FEMA employees wishing to attend non-resident courses will generally not receive associated travel expenses to attend. FEMA expects that non-resident course offerings will be attended by students who live or are deployed in close proximity to the class location, and will not otherwise require travel expenses. Table 5 describes these courses in further detail.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Joint Field Office (JFO)</strong></td>
<td>Training is scheduled and managed by the Disaster Field Training Operations (DFTO) and is intended for employees deployed to that event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Offices</strong></td>
<td>Training deliveries are scheduled and managed by a regional training officer. These deliveries are intended for employees whose duty station is at or near the regional office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FEMA Headquarters (HQ)</strong></td>
<td>Training may be scheduled at FEMA HQ based on cadre needs and student availability. This training is intended for employees whose duty station is at or near FEMA headquarters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Distance Training</strong></td>
<td>Training that is offered online, including some instructor-led courses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information on attending a specific non-resident course offering, including distance training, employees should contact cadre management.

**Reservist Compensation for Non-Resident Training**

Non-deployed, non-annuitant Reservists receive compensation for the listed course hours and only for the FQS courses required as part of their PTB. Reservists should complete FQS-required training while in a deployed status, whenever possible, including self-directed distance training. Reservists in a non-deployed status will continue to be paid at their base rate of pay for required IM position-specific training, which only includes those trainings listed on the PTB. In addition, Reservists will continue to be paid for only the listed completion time in continuing education units, as determined by EMI or DHS Learning Management System. No additional time, if needed, will be compensated. In addition, training may not exceed more than eight hours per day or 40 hours per week. Reservists should discuss any questions or concerns regarding compensation for non-resident training with cadre management.

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11 Annuitants are only compensated for their time by specific exceptions given during the initial stages of disasters. Non-deployed annuitants who spend time on independent study classes will generally have their compensation offset by their annuity. Before proceeding on independent study classes, non-deployed annuitants should reach out to cadre management to discuss the limitations on their compensation.
Non-FEMA Training

Registration for non-FEMA training required for a PTB should be coordinated with the cadre. FEMA does not manage the scheduling for these courses, and registration cannot be done through DTS.

Updates to Training Records

The curriculum delivery module of DTS allows instructors and course managers to award credit for classes scheduled through DTS. DTS regularly receives automatic updates of training records from EMI for other courses, including independent study courses. If training records have not been automatically updated after 90 days, employees may request an update by reaching out to the WCB.

Exceptions to 90-Day Waiting Period for Training Record Update

Reservists must contact WCB immediately with proof of completion for Independent study courses in order to receive course credit and pay for training time while not deployed. Exceptions to the 90-day waiting period for all employees include:

- Required licenses or certifications for which there is no process for automatic updates;
- Non-FEMA FQS required training for which there is no process for automatic updates;
- Prerequisites for required courses that must be updated to allow an employee to register for those required courses; and
- Training credit for employees who have completed all other requirements in their PTB (tasks and training) so that credit for this course is the last thing required before being considered for qualification.

Employees must provide proof of completion to the FEMA-FQS-Program@fema.dhs.gov inbox (or the FOD regional liaison, as appropriate) in the form of one of the following:

- Certificate(s) of completion;
- Transcript showing distance training course and test completion; or
- Official EMI transcript.

To receive credit for a self-directed course, employees must receive a minimum score of 75 percent on the final exam.

FEMA may accept other records on a case-by-case basis for non-FEMA FQS position-related training.
PTB Certification and Licensure Requirements

Some FQS positions require employees to attain one or more outside certification(s) or license(s) before earning the qualification. Examples include COR’s certifications, professional acquisitions certifications, and commercial driver’s licenses. These employees should coordinate with their cadre on certification requirements as costs for certification or licensure are not paid by WDD.

Figure 13 shows the PTB page where employees can view required certifications. Because certifications are external to FQS and largely external to FEMA, there is no automated process for changing their status. Employees should work with the WCB to change the status of required certifications.

![Figure 13: PTB Certification Requirements](image)

Verification of completed certification(s) should be submitted to the FQS program (FEMA-FQS-Program@fema.dhs.gov) and cadre management (if the cadre requires it). FOD regional liaisons may update certification records for regional employees in coordination with cadre management.

Employees should maintain up-to-date certifications and up-to-date records in their responder profiles and satisfy this requirement by emailing new certificates or licenses to both their cadre management and the FQS program.
CHAPTER 5: DEMONSTRATED PERFORMANCE

Each PTB includes the FQS requirement of demonstrated performance. Figure 14 shows where the demonstrated performance portion resides among PTB requirements, which includes coaching and evaluation.

Behaviors and Tasks

Observable work activities, or behaviors, are grouped in a PTB under the heading “Behaviors and Tasks.” After opening this heading, behaviors appear first. Figure 15 shows an example PTB listing four behaviors (beside the plus and minus signs). Clicking on the plus sign to the left of a behavior changes it to a minus sign and displays the tasks associated with that behavior. The tasks (beside the magnifying glass icons) appear under the behaviors marked by minus signs.
**Tasks**

Tasks describe specific demonstrable actions that are required for the successful performance of a given FQS position. Tasks must be learned, mastered, and successfully demonstrated in an evaluation.

**Core Tasks**

Core tasks are sets of tasks that are standardized across multiple PTBs. FEMA employees only need to complete core tasks once. After a core task has been endorsed, it does not
need to be endorsed again in subsequent PTBs. A core task can be endorsed by a C&E regardless of position or cadre. When searching for a C&E, core-only C&Es appear separately in DTS to reduce potential confusion. The FQS Branch manages four sets of required core tasks organized as follows:

- **All FEMA Core**: the basic set of FEMA tasks relevant to all IM positions
- **Supervisory Core Tasks**: three basic sets of tasks relevant to increasing supervisory levels (listed in Table 6)

### Table 6: Supervisory Core Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supervisor Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First-Line Supervisors</td>
<td>• Responsible for leading others and projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Level of influence: individuals, team.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Level of authority: make work assignments, manage team performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Managers</td>
<td>• Responsible for leading program component.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Level of influence: first-line supervisors, unit, division, group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Level of authority: recommend resource and staffing requests, manage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mission performance, develop (not approve) unit/division/group spend plan,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>review overtime, approve travel, guide supervisors and peers, and provide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Leadership</td>
<td>• Responsible for leading the program or organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Level of influence: middle managers, branch, and section.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Level of authority: make financial and organizational decisions; set mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>objectives and requirements; approve branch/section spend plan; authorize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>resource requests, organizational structure, and staffing; and guide middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>managers and federal coordinating officers (FCO).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Task Complexity Codes

Each task has an associated complexity code to identify the acceptable environment in which the task may be successfully demonstrated for an evaluator. The code represents the lowest complexity at which the task can be endorsed. Tasks may be endorsed at the indicated complexity level or higher. However, the employee may learn and practice these skills in an environment other than those indicated by the complexity codes. That is, some tasks can be coached and practiced during an exercise but must later be demonstrated while deployed to a disaster. Table 7 shows the hierarchy of how these codes are arranged.
Table 7: PTB Task Complexity Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complexity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D-1</td>
<td>Level I Disaster (Declared disaster (Stafford Act incident that includes major disaster and emergency declarations). This can include a physical or virtual deployment.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-2</td>
<td>Level II Disaster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-3</td>
<td>Level III Disaster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Incident and Events (This includes pre-declaration surge activities, non-Stafford Act incidents (e.g., federal-to-federal support; FEMA is not the lead federal agency), and National Special Security Events (NSSEs.).)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Experiential Learning Environment (Formal exercises, mission rehearsal training events, and FQS training deployments.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS</td>
<td>Steady State (A non-incident, day-to-day circumstance where tasks are identical to those performed in support of an applicable disaster.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each task in the PTB will have one of the codes listed in the “Complexity” column.

Competencies

Within FQS, competencies are broad categories of traits and abilities (e.g., leadership, analysis/reasoning, and customer focus) that contribute to proficiency in an FQS position. Competencies are not assigned or designed by the cadres, and employees are not evaluated on competencies.

Indicators

Some tasks include a list of indicators that are relevant to the performance of the task. The list provides examples to assist the trainee in understanding the task and the evaluator in assessing the trainee. The indicators are not all-inclusive, nor are they all mandatory for successful performance of the task.

Indicators can be viewed only in the PTB. For example, clicking on the magnifying glass to the left of the task “Post information to identified sites” (Figure 15) will open the task page (Figure 16) and shows this task can be accomplished a few different ways.

---

12 FQS competencies are very different in form and function from the core competencies that are reviewed as a part of an employee’s annual performance evaluation.
Tasks Endorsements

All tasks show the number of required endorsements provided by a C&E. Having tasks endorsed requires the availability of a C&E, supervisor support, and appropriate timing during incident operations. Most tasks require one endorsement, but some require multiple
endorsements before a cadre considers them complete. If the task requires more than one endorsement, this means the task must be endorsed by different C&Es. Once the task has been endorsed by one C&E, it cannot be endorsed again by the same C&E on the same deployment. Tasks requiring multiple endorsements remain “Incomplete” until all required endorsements have been made. An employee’s PTB “Percent Complete” will not change after a single endorsement for a task that requires multiple endorsements.

Coach and Evaluator Program

FEMA uses C&Es as the primary mechanism for trainees and candidates to learn the specific skills needed for each FQS position and to evaluate the individual demonstrated performance of PTB tasks for qualification. Figure 17 demonstrates where coaching and evaluation occur in the FQS process. Employees with an open PTB move between being coached and evaluated several times based on the specific PTB tasks they are completing.

A C&E evaluates a T/C’s individual performance of position-specific tasks while performing duties at an incident, formal exercise, training event, or steady-state work environment. C&Es perform two distinct but supporting roles within the FQS qualification process. Although they serve in both roles, they do not perform them at the same time. The coach explains, demonstrates, trains, assesses, and documents an individual’s task performance. The evaluator observes, assesses, documents, and endorses (when appropriate) an employee’s independent performance of specific PTB tasks.

Completing Tasks in an Open PTB

T/Cs work with a C&E as allowable, but there are times during deployments when this may be impossible. While uncommon, it is possible that an employee will be able to learn and demonstrate mastery for all position specific tasks on a single deployment. For instance, a Specialist who has had the opportunity to experience and successfully and independently perform all tasks in the open PTB could become qualified in a single event. PTBs ensure that the T/C achieves success under a variety of circumstances and assessment from C&Es.
Even if a C&E is not present or able to fully engage in-person with the T/C, the T/C gains valuable experience to demonstrate on subsequent deployments, which aids in preparation for future task evaluations.

Once a T/C is deployed, the steps for working toward completion of tasks in an open PTB include the following:

1. Identify a valid C&E with whom to be paired.
2. Work with the C&E to receive coaching and to learn and build knowledge and skills.
3. Perform specific PTB tasks multiple times to build experience.
4. Perform tasks for the C&E independently for an evaluation.

C&E guidance explains that a task endorsement should only be made when the C&E believes that a T/C can perform the task successfully on subsequent deployments without additional oversight or assistance.

If problems occur between a C&E and a T/C, either party can attempt resolution by first contacting the temporary duty supervisor and then cadre management, if needed. In addition to these, the FEMA Alternative Dispute Resolution Division is available to consult should there be any concerns (e.g., communication issues) between C&Es and T/Cs that may negatively impact their professional working relationship.

**Pairing with a Coach and Evaluator When Deployed**

Pairing with a C&E can occur in three ways:

1. Cadres may pair T/Cs with a C&E directly. (This is the only method used during steady-state operations.)
2. T/Cs may use DTS to search for and request a C&E.
3. C&Es may use DTS to search for and select an eligible T/C.

T/Cs may view a list of individuals who hold C&E specialties in DTS. On the “Coach/Evaluators” heading of a PTB, click on the blue button “Manage Coach/Evaluators.” This opens a page that shows the following (Figure 18):

- Current C&E,
- Available C&Es who have been authorized to work with T/Cs who hold this PTB,
- Additional C&Es who may be able to help with the core tasks that occur in all PTBs, and
- Previous C&Es for the current PTB.
Requesting a Coach and Evaluator

From the “Manage Coach/Evaluator” page, the T/C can send a request to an available C&E if the T/C does not currently have one assigned. The T/C can only have one C&E at a time, so a T/C may not send more than one request and may not send a request if the T/C already has a C&E. After the T/C sends the request, the potential C&E receives a notification and decides whether or not to accept the T/C. The standard process for pairing in DTS only occurs when both the T/C and C&E are deployed and checked into the event. If possible, the T/C should initiate a discussion with the potential C&E prior to the DTS request to determine the C&E's availability.

WDD monitors C&E acceptances. Some of the reasons a C&E might reject a pairing request include, but are not limited to, not having enough time to devote to a T/C because of incident-related work or lack of appropriate physical proximity.

Notifications in DTS

The T/C receives an email from DTS when pairing with a C&E has occurred and whenever the C&E endorses a task, adds a comment, or attaches a document to the T/C's PTB. The
T/C also receives an email if the FQS program or cadre management takes one of these actions.
CHAPTER 6: QUALIFICATION PROCESS

The qualification process involves multiple steps of review before the CA determines whether or not to award qualification. Qualification is the end result of the FQS process (Figure 19).

In addition to the PTB requirements, cadre management rates employees against the cadre’s criteria for that position. Successful completion of a PTB does not guarantee that the proficiency of qualified will be awarded.

PTB Submission

Employees submit their own PTB once it is 100 percent complete, including tasks, training, and certifications (where applicable). When ready for submission, the PTB tile on the employee’s responder portal turns green and indicates that it is “Ready to Submit,” as shown in Figure 20.
The cadre may require additional materials, depending on the position and tier, that can be attached to the PTB before or after submission. Some of these materials may include licenses and certifications required for the position or letters of recommendation from employees with equal or more advanced qualifications. Employees should contact their cadre management for further information.

Once an employee completes the PTB and additional documents have been included, the employee submits the PTB using the following steps:

1. Click on the green “Open PTB” tile on the responder portal.
2. Click on the green “Submit” button on the top of the PTB page (Figure 21).
3. Confirm in the pop-up window that the PTB is ready to be submitted.

![Position Task Book](image)

**Figure 21: Submit PTB**

Submission of an employee’s PTB initiates an automated workflow in DTS that progresses through multiple review steps. Employees can attach documents and make additional comments throughout the PTB review process (via the Comment and Attach buttons shown in Figure 21) during the PTB review process.
Once submitted, the employee’s PTB shows a new heading entitled, “Workflow Steps,” in the responder portal (Figure 22). The employee can monitor the progress in the review and approval steps for their submitted PTB.

![Workflow Steps](image)

**Figure 22: PTB Approval Workflow**

### Qualification Review

The PTB, all relevant comments, attached documents, and the deployment history form the qualification package. At each step, assigned reviewers check the qualification package for completeness and then take one of four actions:

1. **SEND BACK** the workflow to the previous step with a request for additional information.
2. Put the workflow on **HOLD** until additional action is taken.
3. **REJECT** the workflow, which will return the PTB to “Started” status. Cadre management will then discuss with the employee why the workflow was rejected and the cadre’s expectations for the employee.
4. **APPROVE** the workflow at this level, which will move it to the next step.
Figure 23: PTB Approval Process

Figure 23 shows the basic process used to validate successful completion of FQS qualification requirements. The double-ended arrows between each step indicate that the DTS workflow may return to the previous step for additional action. Asterisks indicate that additional information may be requested during reviews of the qualification package.

The FQS Branch conducts an initial review of the qualification package to validate completion, waiving of requirements, and length of deployments compared to endorsement period, and to ensure the most effective progression path. Once this initial review is complete, the FQS Branch forwards the qualification package to the cadre for review.

Cadre Review Process

Cadre management assesses the employee’s qualification package along with any other cadre-specific criteria established for earning an FQS qualification in the position. If the CC requires additional information or needs to provide guidance to the employee on satisfying the cadre’s criteria, the CC will contact the employee. Otherwise, the qualification package is next forwarded to the CO for review. The CO then makes a recommendation to the CA for a final determination on qualification. When the CA approves the employee’s qualification package, the qualification review process is complete.

Qualification Review Board Process

A body of experienced IM personnel form the Qualification Review Board (QRB), which works primarily to help standardize the qualification process for Tier 1 and Tier 2 IM positions by providing increased transparency and consistency regarding qualification decisions (Appendix H provides details on QRB makeup). Similar to the cadre review process, cadre
management assesses the qualification package and determines if additional information is
required from the employee before forwarding to the CO for review. The QRB process adds a
step in which the CO reviews the employee’s qualification package and determines whether
or not it is ready to be presented to the board. The QRB then conducts its review of the
qualification package and makes a recommendation to the CA. When the CA approves the
employee’s qualification package, the QRB review process is complete. Figure 24 shows this
process.

Figure 24: PTB Approval Process (QRB Required)

The QRB convenes regularly to conduct its review of completed FQS qualification packages
and to ensure that the cadre follows its defined progression path for each position. For Tier
1 positions, the QRB meets quarterly and in-person. Candidates for Tier 1 positions must
participate during the QRB meeting by presenting themselves to the board and answering
questions about their deployments, training history, and PTB completion. The QRB reviews
candidates for Tier 2 positions through monthly virtual meetings. Tier 2 candidates with any
waived PTB requirements will be considered during the in-person quarterly meetings. In
these cases, cadre management presents the candidate’s package to the QRB for
consideration, providing justification for the waivers and information regarding PTB
completion and the candidate’s relevant deployment history. When the QRB evaluates
regional staff, the supervisor of record or a senior member of that region (holding an FQS
qualification in the same position title the candidate is considered for) may participate in an
advisory capacity during the review.
Qualification Approval

Once the CA approves qualification, the FQS Branch finalizes the process and ensures the employee’s proficiency is updated to “Qualified” for the target position. The employee’s “Responder Info” tile in the DTS responder portal will reflect this change once completed. Additionally, the PTB tile no longer appears in the responder portal, and FQS-qualified employees no longer have access to their old PTBs.

Earning a qualification in a higher position in progression may warrant a new hiring action in some instances. Cadre management must coordinate this action with the Office of the Chief Component Human Capital Officer.

Reconsideration

If the review process determines that an employee does not meet qualification standards (e.g., field performance, training requirements, and field experience), the employee receives a notification and explanation of the decision from cadre management. The employee can request reconsideration of the decision by submitting a written request to the FQS Branch (FEMA-FQS-Program@fema.dhs.gov) within 60 days of the notification date. This reconsideration is not an appeal. The request must include additional supporting documentation, corrections to documentation that clarify or supplement documents originally submitted, and/or new documentation that supports the employee’s written request, as discussed with the CC. This discussion serves as an opportunity to present the CA with new or additional information that can inform the decision.

The CO, CA, or QRB reviews the request for reconsideration. CO or QRB recommendations are provided to the CA, who makes the decision regarding qualification. Employees receive a response to their reconsideration request within 60 days, and the CA’s decision is final.

Special Cases for Qualification

In some cases, employees may substitute work experience or courses outside of those specifically designated on the PTB as equivalent at the discretion of cadre leadership.

Course Equivalency

The CO can also consider non-FEMA coursework for equivalency by comparing the learning objectives of non-FEMA courses from outside organizations to the objectives of required FEMA courses. In collaboration with the CC and with input from SMEs when required, the CO evaluates the training completed by trainees or candidates and determines the equivalency to training required for IM positions.

The course equivalency review process aims to minimize training redundancy, expedite the qualification process, and avoid unnecessary costs because of duplication of curriculum...
delivery. However, course equivalency may not be used to award qualification to employees for Type 1 positions.

**Non-Standard Qualification**

In some rare cases, a cadre may determine that an employee should be awarded qualification before completion of the standard PTB process. In such situations, the cadre coordinates with the FQS Branch to award qualification the candidate. As with other qualification assignments, the CA must approve the assignment in writing through completion of a workflow or other written means.
CHAPTER 7: ADDITIONAL FQS QUALIFICATION INFORMATION

Other aspects of FQS qualification to be aware of include how to maintain proficiency, how de-qualification occurs, and considerations for additional FQS positions.

Maintaining Proficiency

Employees must maintain their qualification proficiency once achieved (Figure 25). Training and performance requirements define how recent an employee’s experience or task performance must be to retain the requisite knowledge and skills to perform in the target position. The FQS currency requirement is four years; a cadre can add further currency requirements as needed. The CA has the authority to manage qualifications based on cadre and mission needs. Additional requirements should be coordinated with the FQS Branch for visibility to ensure fair and equitable standards. Information on these requirements can be obtained from cadre management.

Maintaining Certification Requirements

Some FQS positions require current certifications or licenses to maintain qualification. Employees should maintain up-to-date certifications and satisfy this requirement by emailing new certificates or licenses to cadre management or WCB.

De-Qualification

De-qualification, the act of revoking FQS qualification of an employee, is a cadre decision and not necessarily an adverse action. De-qualified employees must be re-qualified by the CA before deploying in their FQS position with the proficiency of qualified.
If a qualified employee fails to meet qualification maintenance requirements, cadre management begins a process that may result in de-qualification starting with an initial conversation between the CC and relevant cadre management staff, which includes reasons for and implications of de-qualification. If the CC decides to proceed with de-qualification, the CC notifies the CO for concurrence. If approved, the CO prepares and forwards a notification letter for CA signature that includes the reason the employee has been de-qualified in the position and the items or actions required to regain qualification in the position.

Re-qualification

The CA has the authority to re-qualify employees, a process which begins when the CO forwards the re-qualification package to the CA. This review does not require QRB approval. Re-qualification requirements are determined on an individual basis. Considerations for re-qualification include the following:

- Length of time an employee was qualified in the position,
- Number of successful assignments,
- Level and complexity of the position, and
- Performance appraisals, if available.

The cadre must maintain communication with its employees regarding de-qualification and re-qualification actions. Re-qualification reviews and decisions follow the FQS process in a fair and equitable manner.

Additional FQS Positions

Employees should evaluate their own interests, values, work styles, and skills and coordinate with cadre management to develop an appropriate path of career advancement following FQS qualification. Employees may decide to remain at their current position or request the opportunity to earn qualification in additional FQS positions.
The request will be evaluated on the following considerations (Figure 26):

- Force structure;
- Employee performance in their current FQS position;
- Analysis of the cadre’s needs; and
- Assessment of the employee’s suitability for the new position.

**Figure 26: Possible Progression to Additional FQS Positions**

FEMA applies force structure metrics to ensure that staffing levels for FEMA’s IM workforce positions are appropriate to meet anticipated requirements. This includes the potential for FEMA to respond to multiple simultaneous incidents. Force structure specifies the number of personnel required for every IM position and affects the qualification process as follows:

- When the number of personnel with an FQS qualification in a cadre position is below the force structure target, cadre management officials work to identify and assist employees in qualifying and hiring IMCOREs and/or Reservists; and
- When the number of employees with an FQS qualification for a given position meets or exceeds the force structure target, the CO may continue to issue PTBs to employees and those employees may pursue the normal steps to become qualified, but employees are not awarded the qualification as their primary title until there are force structure vacancies.

**FQS Guidance for Subordinate Titles**

In addition to the single primary qualification, employees can maintain one or more IM subordinate titles. These are most often the employee’s highest previously qualified positions within that employee’s progression path but may also be other positions within or outside of the employee’s cadre. The following FQS business rules apply to subordinate titles:

- The cadre approves the subordinate title assignment;
• An employee may be assigned more than one IM position as a subordinate title;
• Tracking currency for subordinate titles is the responsibility of the cadre;
• Subordinate titles in a different cadre and those not within an employee’s current IM progression path are also subject to a 4-year currency requirement; and
• Subordinate titles do not count against a cadre’s force structure numbers.

**Cadre Transfers**

Employees may transfer cadres if both employee and cadre show interest and an appropriate opening exists. The transfer process may vary depending on employee type, but employees requesting transfer must coordinate with both the releasing and the receiving cadres to complete the process. The receiving cadre may request documentation (e.g., deployment history, training records, recommendation letters, and resume) to determine if the employee is an appropriate fit. Transferring to a new cadre may warrant a new hiring action in some instances and the releasing and gaining cadres must coordinate to settle the retention or removal of subordinate titles.

**Transfer Process for FTEs**

If the receiving cadre plans to accept the employee, it must obtain concurrence from the employee’s current cadre. The employee or the CC can contact the releasing cadre for concurrence. This must be in writing, but an email between the two CCs is sufficient. The releasing cadre should keep the written concurrence in the employee’s file. Additionally, the employee’s supervisor of record must concur with the transfer because of the potential difference in required training and deployment expectations.

A change of a steady-state position may also change cadre association. In this case, the employee must initiate a discussion with their releasing cadre regarding the retention of titles. Changes of a steady-state job do not automatically trigger cadre notification. If either the new or previous position is within a regional office, the regional liaison must participate in the conversations.
Once there is an agreement to release the employee, the receiving cadre determines which position and proficiency (e.g., trainee, candidate, or qualified) is applicable. The receiving cadre typically awards the proficiency of qualified if the new position is at a management level equal to or lower than the previous position. Qualification at a higher-level position may occur, subject to QRB review.

Transferring personnel may retain qualifications as subordinate titles with approval from the receiving and releasing cadres. This approval allows for the possibility of deployments in both cadres. Employees may not simultaneously hold a position as T/C in both the releasing and the receiving cadres.

Once transfer has been approved, the receiving cadre informs the employee and the FQS Branch makes the appropriate changes in DTS. An employee will not receive a standard deployment request in the new position until this process has been completed.

Transfer Qualification Example

For an employee qualified as a task force leader in the releasing cadre, the receiving cadre may choose to do the following:

- Laterally accept the qualified task force leader as a qualified task force leader in the new cadre,
- Accept the employee as qualified in a lower position (i.e., crew leader or specialist),
- Accept the employee as a candidate task force leader, or
- Submit the employee to the QRB for a higher position if experience and training in the receiving cadre’s program support consideration at that position.
# Appendix A: List of Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADR</td>
<td>Alternative Dispute Resolution</td>
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<tr>
<td>AS</td>
<td>Ancillary Support</td>
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<td>CA</td>
<td>Certifying Authority</td>
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<td>CBP</td>
<td>Customs and Border Protection</td>
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<td>CC</td>
<td>Cadre Coordinator</td>
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<td>CCWG</td>
<td>Cadre Coordinator Working Group</td>
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<td>CDM</td>
<td>Curriculum Development Module</td>
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<td>CDP</td>
<td>Center for Domestic Preparedness</td>
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<tr>
<td>C&amp;E</td>
<td>Coach and Evaluator</td>
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<td>CFR</td>
<td>Code of Federal Regulations</td>
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<td>CO</td>
<td>Certifying Official</td>
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<td>CORE</td>
<td>Cadre of On-call Response and Recovery Employees</td>
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<td>COR</td>
<td>Contracting Officer’s Representative</td>
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<td>DHS</td>
<td>Department of Homeland Security</td>
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<td>DSA</td>
<td>Disaster Survivor Assistance</td>
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<td>DTS</td>
<td>Deployment Tracking System</td>
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<td>EM</td>
<td>Emergency Management</td>
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<td>EMI</td>
<td>Emergency Management Institute</td>
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<td>Federal Coordinating Officer</td>
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<td>Federal Emergency Management Agency</td>
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<td>FEMA Incident Workforce Academy</td>
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<td>FOD</td>
<td>Field Operations Directorate</td>
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<td>FQS</td>
<td>FEMA Qualification System</td>
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<td>FTE</td>
<td>Full-Time Equivalent</td>
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<td>GIS</td>
<td>Geospatial Information System</td>
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<td>HQ</td>
<td>Headquarters</td>
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<td>Human Resources</td>
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<td>IA</td>
<td>Individual Assistance</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
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<td>ICS</td>
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<td>IMCORE</td>
<td>Incident Management Cadre of On-call Response and Recovery Employees</td>
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<td>IQP</td>
<td>Instructor Qualification Program</td>
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<td>Joint Field Office</td>
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<td>National Incident Management System</td>
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<td>Permanent Full-Time</td>
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<td>Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act</td>
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<td>Planning</td>
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<td>Planning Section Chief</td>
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<td>Position Task Book</td>
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<td>Qualification Review Board</td>
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<td>Surge Capacity Force</td>
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<td>Student Identification</td>
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<td>Subject Matter Expert</td>
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<tr>
<td>T/C</td>
<td>Trainee/Candidate</td>
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<tr>
<td>TFT</td>
<td>Temporary Full-Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>WCB</td>
<td>Workforce Coordination Branch</td>
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<tr>
<td>WDD</td>
<td>Workforce Development Division</td>
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<tr>
<td>WMD</td>
<td>Workforce Management Division</td>
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</table>
**APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY**

**Advanced-level position.** Positions determined by each cadre requiring prerequisite FQS experience (e.g., holding a qualification in another FQS position).

**Ancillary support.** Positions that, in their steady-state and/or incident roles, continue to deliver the incident-specific mission of their program office during disaster operations, e.g., cadre management personnel or National Processing Service Center staff.

**Behavior/activity.** An observable work activity that represents larger outcomes or major areas of work for a position and serves as a means to organize tasks into similar groups.

**Cadre.** Organizational grouping of FEMA incident management (IM) employees by operational function for position management, recruitment, and readiness activities.

**Cadre coordinator (CC).** The cadre management team member with delegated authority from the certifying authority (CA) to oversee all aspects of day-to-day cadre management, including staffing, equipping, training, qualifying, the performance of the cadre and its members, and developing policies and procedures specific to the cadre. For most cadres the CC supervises a cadre management team of varying makeup based on the size and nature of the cadre.

**Cadre Coordinators Working Group (CCWG).** Supports the development, implementation, and maintenance of incident workforce initiatives; discusses and addresses challenges associated with staffing, equipping, training, qualifying, and managing the performance of the incident workforce; and develops consistent processes for recruiting and appointing new members into cadre vacancies. The CCWG replaces the National Working Group.

**Cadre management staff.** Personnel responsible for the administration, coordination, and professional development of a FEMA cadre to ensure individual and collective operational readiness to perform disaster-related duties.

**Cadre of On-call Response and Recovery Employees (CORE).** This employee type includes all staff hired under the Stafford CORE program for a minimum 2-year appointment and includes three subcategories (Deployment Tracking System [DTS] designations): CORE-Incident Management Assistance Team (IMAT), IM Cadre of On-call Response and Recovery Employees (IMCORE), and direct charge CORE.

**Cadre training manager.** Assists the CC, focusing on cadre training. Not all cadres will have a cadre training manager.

**Candidate.** A FEMA Qualification System (FQS) proficiency level that indicates the employee has earned an FQS qualification and has been selected by the certifying official (CO) to pursue an additional FQS qualification.
**Certification.** A cadre-specific requirement in some position task books (PTB) that requires staff to obtain an endorsement, licensure, or accreditation from an accredited or authorized person or agency in accordance with established requirements or standards.

**Certifying authority (CA).** The highest-ranking FEMA official for the cadre, ultimately responsible for effective management and performance of the cadre. The CA may delegate FQS authority and cadre management authorities to the CO and/or CC. Only the CA can award or remove the proficiency of those qualified for FQS positions. The CA must be assistant administrator equivalent or higher.

**Certifying official (CO).** The individual responsible for management of FQS for a specific cadre, including the authority to issue FQS titles for the cadre with the proficiencies of trainee or candidate.

**Coach and evaluator (C&E).** An individual designated a subject matter expert (SME) by the cadre who is capable of evaluating one or more approved FQS positions and is assigned to coach or evaluate a trainee/candidate’s (T/C) performance. A C&E is assigned the “Coach-Evaluator” specialty in DTS.

**Competency.** An observable, measurable pattern of knowledge, skill, ability, behavior, and/or other characteristic that an individual needs to perform the behavior/activity and associated tasks.

**CORE Employee.** Temporary personnel hired to directly support the response and recovery efforts related to disasters. This employee type includes all staff hired under the Stafford Act Cadre of On-Call Response/Recovery Employee Program for a minimum two-year appointment and includes three sub-categories (DTS designations): CORE-IMAT, IMCORE, and direct charge CORE.

**Demonstrated performance.** As a performance-based qualification system, FQS includes this requirement as a mechanism to validate the ability of trainees and candidates to successfully accomplish position-specific tasks.

**Deployment Tracking System (DTS).** The system utilized by FEMA to track and manage FQS, deployment and event records, and workforce readiness.

**De-qualification.** The process of revoking the qualification of an employee’s FQS position.

**Emergency management position category:** The classification describing the type of incident-specific job responsibilities performed by FEMA employees (e.g., Incident Management (IM), Incident Support (IS), Ancillary Support (AS), and Mission Essential (ME)).

**Employee type.** A category of federal employees classified by the duration of the assigned job (e.g., CORE, IMAT, Local Hire, etc.).
**Endorsement.** A record of a C&E’s assessment that a T/C has mastered a PTB task and should be able to perform it successfully when working independently in the future.

**Entry-level position.** Positions determined by each cadre requiring no prerequisite FQS experience. Most are Tier 4 specialist positions.

**Evaluation.** A formal summative assessment by an FQS C&E of a T/C’s performance on one or more FQS tasks to determine if the T/C has sufficiently mastered the task(s) to receive an endorsement from the C&E.

**Exercise.** A development opportunity, which conforms to Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program exercise standards, designed to test and assess capabilities. Incident workforce exercises are developed in partnership with the Response Directorate Planning and Exercise Division.

**Experiential learning.** An educational opportunity for the incident workforce, developed in accordance with FEMA-established instructional design principles, to provide instruction in required knowledge areas and position tasks and to assess the demonstration of skills.

**FEMA Incident Workforce Academy (FIWA).** A branch of the Workforce Development Division (WDD) that coordinates and executes the delivery of all individual, team, and collective incident workforce training to ensure the incident workforce is well prepared to support disaster survivors and first responders in all-hazards events.

**FEMA local hires.** Temporary FEMA employees hired at incident locations to support FEMA field operations.

**FEMA Qualification System (FQS).** A fair and equitable performance-based system established to develop and manage the qualification of the incident workforce through experience, training, and demonstrated performance.

**Force strength.** The current number of members in all FEMA cadres who are ready for deployment.

**Force structure.** A FEMA model that establishes personnel staffing requirements based on analysis of historical deployment data, readiness requirements, and likely future conditions.

**FQS competency.** An observable, measurable pattern of knowledge, skill, ability, and/or other characteristic that an individual must understand and exhibit in order to perform the behavior and associated tasks within the PTB.

**FQS required training.** The courses listed in a PTB that have been determined by the cadre to be vital to an employee attaining qualification at that position.
**FTE coordinator.** Assists the Cadre Coordinator focusing on the FTE employees in the cadre. Not all cadres will have an FTE Coordinator.

**Full-time equivalent (FTE) employee.** These are the full-time FEMA employees who were hired for roles other than IM roles. The category includes permanent full-time (PFT), temporary full-time (TFT), and CORE. It does not include IM CORE or IMAT.

**IMAT CORE.** An employee type for non-direct charge CORE employees assigned full-time to an IMAT position and position description. Because of the nature of IMAT position requirements, IMAT employees receive four-year appointments.

**IMCORE.** An employee type for non-direct charge CORE employees whose primary job duty is to perform an FQS incident management position.

**IMCORE Program Manager.** Cadre management staff team member that is responsible for supporting and serving as the supervisor of record for IM CORE employees within their program area.

**Incident Command System (ICS).** A standardized approach to the command, control, and coordination of on-scene incident management, providing a common hierarchy within which personnel from multiple organizations can be effective. ICS is the combination of procedures, personnel, facilities, equipment, and communications operating within a common organizational structure, designed to aid in the management of on-scene resources during incidents. ICS is used for all kinds of incidents and is applicable to small, as well as large and complex, incidents, including planned events.

**Incident Management.** The broad spectrum of activities and organizations providing operations, coordination, and support applied at all levels of government, using governmental and nongovernmental resources to plan for, respond to, and recover from an incident, regardless of cause, size, or complexity.

**Incident Management Typed Positions.** Positions for which different qualification levels have been established that reflect the size and complexity of the incident, based on FEMA incident levels, in which the employee is required to perform. Typed positions include positions, which are typed at Type 1, 2, and 3 to coincide with Level I, II, and III incidents.

**Incident Support.** Coordination of all federal resources that support incident response, recovery, logistics, and mitigation. Responsibilities include the deployment of national-level assets, support of national objectives and programs affected during the disaster, and support of incident operations with resources, expertise, information, and guidance.

**Incident workforce.** Individuals assigned to perform disaster-related duties in FEMA incident operations.
Incident Workforce Executive Steering Committee (IWESC). Establishes the framework that prioritizes criteria for FEMA's incident workforce, resolves conflicts related to budgeting for the incident workforce, and maintains oversight of the CCWG, including approval of the development, maintenance, and revision of all associated policy and doctrine. The IWESC is chaired by the Associate Administrator (AA) for the Office of Response and Recovery.

Indicators. The bullets under each numbered task in the PTB. The bullets are examples, items, or actions related to the task.

Mission Essential (ME). Emergency management category assigned to personnel who perform a limited set of FEMA functions that must be continued throughout or resumed rapidly after a disruption of normal activities. ME employees will hold this designation as their primary emergency management role (primary title) but may hold other subordinate roles.

Number of endorsements required. Number of times a different C&E must endorse a PTB task in order for that task to be considered completed.

Other duty travel (ODT). A deployment request type for an employee to attend training, meetings, course development, or other special projects.

Position. An assigned job function. All positions within FEMA fall into one of the following four emergency management categories, depending on the operational level and location of the position: IM, IS, AS, and ME.

Position task book (PTB). A document that lists the task and training requirements for a specific FQS position that must be satisfied by a trainee or candidate in order to be considered for qualification.

Position title. The name that describes an employee's FQS-assigned job function (e.g., manufactured housing unit leader).

Pre-approved non-availability (PANA). A special form of unpaid time during which a reservist is unavailable. This designation is only available to reservists when they are not activated for deployment.

Prerequisite FQS experience. FQS qualification(s) in specific positions that an employee must hold before being assigned the target position. Advanced-level positions carry prerequisite FQS experience requirements, identified in cadre progression charts.

Primary Title. An emergency management job function assigned to all FEMA employees that is most likely to be used before, during, and after disasters. This may include an AS, IS, and/or IM position in the employee's primary cadre or another cadre.
Progression charts. A graphical depiction of the positions for each cadre that shows potential IM progression and prerequisite FQS experience.

Qualification package. Submitted PTB, all additional associated documents, and deployment history. The qualification package is reviewed by cadre management and the Qualification Review Board before a recommendation is made to the cadre CA.

Qualification Review Board (QRB). A body of subject matter experts appointed by senior-level FEMA leadership to review individual qualification recommendations prior to approval by the CA.

Qualified. An FQS proficiency level that indicates the employee has fulfilled the qualification requirements for the position. This proficiency level can only be assigned or removed by the CA.

Reconsideration. A process of reviewing a negative decision by a CA, based on a T/C’s request and additional supporting documentation that corrects, clarifies, or supplements the original submission.

Re-qualification. The process of reinstating the previously held qualification(s) of an employee.

Reservist. Employees appointed under Stafford Act authority who work intermittently as required during incident management operations. Reservists must hold at least one IM position title and may not be assigned roles in other emergency management categories.

Specialty. A designation used to identify a specific measured (documented or credentialed) skill, task, experience, or certification that is based on recognized standards and is necessary to enhance performance of an associated disaster management or support position. A specialty must be distinct, empirically derived, and not a general credentialing requirement for the position.

Steady state. Normal day-to-day work not associated with incident management or incident support operations.

Subject matter expert (SME). Someone who is recognized by peers to be very knowledgeable about a subject and/or an accomplished professional in subject-related tasks. An individual, who through formal education, job experience, or both, is recognized by an organization as having the highest level of knowledge of a subject area. This person often reviews course content and provides input on facts and technical matters. SMEs work full time in a specialty field and teach one or two modules in relation to that specialty.

Subordinate Title. An emergency management position title held by an employee in addition to the employee's primary title. This may include an AS, IS, and/or IM position in the employee's primary cadre or another cadre.
**Supervisor of record.** The supervisor with the responsibility to exercise independent judgment to direct that employee on all matters relating but not limited to assignment and evaluation of work, administration, training, property accountability, and to discipline or termination of the employee.

**Surge Capacity Force (SCF).** Employees designated by a federal department or agency to augment the FEMA incident workforce when responding to a major disaster or catastrophic incident that exceeds the capacity of the FEMA incident workforce to execute its missions.

**Task.** One of a list of specific, observable, and measurable actions included in a PTB that must be mastered and performed for a C&E before an employee can submit the PTB to be considered for qualification.

**Technical specialist.** Individuals with specialized skills that can be used anywhere within the ICS organization. Technical specialists normally perform the same duties during an incident that they perform in their everyday jobs and are typically certified in the field or professions (e.g., structural engineers, architects, plumbers, and electricians).

**Temporary duty supervisor.** The manager under whose supervision a deployed employee will work.

**Trainee.** An FQS proficiency level that indicates the employee is working toward the completion of qualification requirements for the position and does not hold another FQS qualification.

**Training.** Activities comprising academic-, experiential-, and performance-based learning opportunities, including courses, Mission Rehearsals, and coaching.
APPENDIX C: FEMA COACH AND EVALUATOR (C&E) PROGRAM

Background

The FEMA Coach and Evaluator (C&E) Program includes the C&E Directive, C&E Guide, and C&E Qualification Course. Together these components help codify and implement the C&E Program by enabling FEMA’s incident workforce to better achieve, measure, and maintain qualification in accordance with the FEMA Qualification System (FQS). This initiative evolved from requirements outlined in the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA) and builds off progress made from previous credentialing efforts. The C&E Program is the primary performance-based training process for development and improvement of FEMA’s incident management workforce. C&Es are qualified within specific job-related positions of those who are evaluated and function as performance-based trainers. FEMA’s FQS Qualification Analysis Section manages the C&E Program. More detailed programmatic information can be found in the FEMA Coach and Evaluator Guide.

C&E Directive

The C&E Directive provides the specific responsibilities and actions across FEMA for the successful implementation of the C&E Program in support of a fully qualified incident workforce. Field Operations Directorate (FOD)–Workforce Development Division (WDD) provides continuous oversight to all aspects outlined in the C&E Directive, which acts as the authority and foundation for the C&E program as a whole.

C&E Guide

The FEMA Coach and Evaluator Guide describes the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of the C&E Program and their importance in FQS. The C&E Guide conveys to the reader the business rules of the C&E Program, including the process for becoming a C&E. The FEMA Coach and Evaluator Guide also assists all levels of FEMA in the implementation and execution of the C&E Program.

C&E Qualification Course

Each cadre will nominate and manage employees who serve as C&Es for their cadre. Those employees nominated must successfully complete the C&E Qualification Course. By approving an employee to attend the C&E course, the cadre approves the employee to hold the C&E specialty.
APPENDIX D: FEMA INCIDENT WORKFORCE INSTRUCTOR QUALIFICATION PROGRAM

Background

The FEMA Incident Workforce Instructor Qualification Program (IQP) provides a consistent approach that ensures FEMA delivers incident workforce instruction by well-trained, proficient, and qualified instructors. The IQP provides specific guidance for the identification, development, and management of incident workforce instructors, including the Instructor Qualification Course (IQC). More detailed information on the IQP is located in the 2018 FEMA Instructor Qualification Program Guide.

Program Overview

The IQP consists of four phases:

1. Needs assessment
2. Selection
3. Instructor qualification
4. Qualification sustainment

Phase One – Needs Assessment

The IQP requires a needs assessment to identify an accurate number of instructors necessary to deliver incident workforce courses. FOD–WDD identifies required instructor needs based on the number of annual incident workforce courses taught throughout the year at established learning institutions and field training opportunities. In addition, FOD, FEMA regions, program areas, and field units may nominate individuals to support diverse incident workforce training requirements.

Phase Two – Selection

There are two parts to the selection phase: course application and application review/assessment. Identifying individuals with the appropriate skills and experience to provide instruction is a keystone to successful instructor development. Identifying incident workforce instructors is a cadre responsibility. Cadres provide the course application to FOD–WDD, attesting the individual meets the course criteria. FOD may also identify instructors for their incident workforce training courses, submitting the course application in the same manner.
Phase Three – Instructor Qualification
The IQC consists of formal performance-based training in key learning and assessment concepts focused on developing specific instructor skills and capabilities. This qualification process ensures incident workforce training is performance-based, student-centric, adherent to accepted adult learning principles, and assessed to guarantee performance improvement.

Phase Four – Qualification Sustainment
As FEMA continuously assesses workforce performance, instructors learn and understand the latest learning concepts to apply them in their instruction. FEMA performs routine field assessment of instruction, as well as required training updates and validation.
**APPENDIX E: SURGE CAPACITY FORCE**

FEMA’s Surge Capacity Force (SCF) is a volunteer program that uses other federal agency staff to expeditiously supplement the FEMA incident workforce with capable employees, as described in the Post-Katrina Emergency Reform Act. Within FEMA’s Field Operations Directorate, the Workforce Management Division (WMD) manages the SCF program. All SCF volunteers are trained and utilized in one or more program areas, including but not limited to Individual Assistance (IA), Disaster Survivor Assistance (DSA), External Affairs, Hazard Mitigation, Logistics (LOG), Acquisitions, and Information Technology. Participating agencies include the following:

- FEMA employees: collateral duty opportunity
- Transportation Security Administration
- United States Citizen and Immigration Services
- United States Coast Guard
- United States Secret Service
- Customs and Border Protection (CBP)
- Immigration and Customs Enforcement
- Department of Homeland Security (DHS) headquarters (HQ)
- Federal law enforcement training centers
- Other federal agencies

**Orientation and Required Training**

All SCF volunteers undergo orientation at a personnel mobilization center in locations that satisfy mission requirements. During orientation, FEMA instructors teach SCF volunteers how to perform basic duties related to IA, DSA, Public Assistance, and LOG. FEMA acquisitions personnel assign equipment to each SCF volunteer to ensure he/she is fully prepared for incident response and recovery operations. In addition to this program-specific training, SCF volunteers must take requisite independent study courses.
Deployment and Task Book Assignment

Depending on cadre needs and staffing needs at the incident level, SCF volunteers receive a deployment order in the Deployment Tracking System, accept the deployment, and schedule their flights and car rentals in accordance with FEMA guidelines. SCF volunteers typically perform at the Tier 4 specialist level until and unless the cadre deems management positions are appropriate based on each SCF volunteer’s experience. SCF volunteers report to a FEMA point of contact/disaster supervisor at the incident location (e.g., joint field office or initial operating facility), where they receive on-the-job training and daily task direction. Typically, a few FEMA SCF points of contact exist at each incident site location. More detailed information on the SCF program can be found in the 2018 Surge Capacity Force Concept of Operations.
APPENDIX F: LOCAL HIRE ISSUANCE OF PTBs

This appendix outlines the standard FEMA Qualification System process for issuing Incident Management (IM) positions and Position Tasks Books (PTBs) for Local Hire (LH) personnel employed at a Joint Field Office (JFO). LHs fill specific JFO positions and may be issued primary Incident Management (IM) titles to maximize training opportunities in accordance with the process outlined below.

FQS PROVISIONS FOR LOCAL HIRES

Position Management and Force Structure

Local Hires may be issued primary IM titles with the proficiency of trainee, in coordination with the cadre Certifying Official (CO), and the Federal Coordinating Officer or designee. The CO must approve any request to issue a PTB to a LH.

LH Hire IM titles will not affect cadre force structure.

Training

Local Hires are provided the opportunity to attend training offered only at their permanent duty station.

Demonstrated Performance

Cadre management staff is responsible for coordinating and ensuring adequate Coach and Evaluator support for task endorsements.

Qualification

The Certifying Authority maintains the authority to qualify Local Hires in their assigned cadre positions.
APPENDIX G: STANDARDS OF FQS EXECUTION FOR CATASTROPHIC EVENTS

This appendix outlines the circumstances under which the standard FEMA Qualification System process may be modified in response to catastrophic events. During these complex and high-tempo incidents, many employees are deployed in trainee/candidate and other duty travel status and may be called upon to perform in positions for which they do not hold a qualification in order to meet the needs of the mission. The certifying authority (CA) has ultimate responsibility for the effective management and performance of the cadre and with that the ability to qualify cadre members who have worked above and beyond regular performance expectations. While this is a constant authority of the CA, the extreme circumstances involved in a catastrophic event may elicit the need to exercise this authority on a larger scale by activating catastrophic standards of FQS execution.

Implementation

This authority to activate catastrophic standards of FQS execution is held by the Assistant Administrator, Field Operations Directorate (FOD), who has ultimate oversight over FQS for FEMA. Upon declaration of a catastrophic event, the Assistant Administrator determines if, when, and how to activate catastrophic standards of FQS execution procedures. Depending on the size, scale, and impact of the event, the Assistant Administrator can elect to modify qualification requirements by incident, cadre, tier, or position, as well as by designating whether the modified requirements are in place for FQS training only, tasks only, or for the full position task book (PTB). While the Assistant Administrator determines when and how to activate catastrophic standards of FQS execution, it is up to each individual cadre’s management to take advantage of catastrophic standards. There are a number of implications to the decision to modify training and/or task requirements, and these implications should be weighed appropriately before making a decision.

Implications

Training

When the decision is made to award qualification to a trainee/candidate (T/C) before completion of all required FQS trainings, all unfulfilled training requirements will be waived. By waiving these course requirements, the CA is attesting that the employee is fully knowledgeable in their position, including skills that may be covered in these unfulfilled course requirements, and does not need to take that course. Once a T/C earns an FQS qualification, WDD will not pay for an employee to go back and take waived courses at a later time. Waived courses will fulfill prerequisite requirements for future courses. The incident management (IM) series and FOD0823 (Coach and Evaluator Course) are the only
exceptions. Employees who received qualification without completion of IM courses will be scheduled for attendance (under standard FQS funding) during future delivery opportunities.

**Force Structure**

There are corresponding force structure considerations for Reservists. Awarding qualification to this employee type may impact force structure targets for each position. If there are vacancies in a position based on the force structure, FQS-qualified reservists may progress to fill the vacancies. However, if the vacancy does not currently exist, the qualification must be held as a subordinate title before filling the vacancy for the position.13

**Process**

To take advantage of catastrophic standards of FQS execution when activated, the CA submits a list of individuals for qualification to the FQS Branch within WDD. Cadres do the following:

1. Conduct an additional thorough review of their T/C staff that has or is currently deployed to disasters,
2. Review the performance of those personnel who deployed into positions overseen by the cadre who did or did not have a PTB issued prior to deployment, and
3. Consider the success of the overall work/mission performed to direct a change in status from T/C to “qualified.”

For each individual, the following information is required:

- Name
- Email address
- Position in which the individual should be qualified
- Employee type
- A detailed justification as to why this individual should be qualified, including but not limited to the following:
  - Disaster(s) worked
  - Current FQS position
  - Dates of performance in the FQS title of potential qualification
  - Performance review(s) from the supervisor in the field
  - All relevant previous experience or positions held that speak to the individual’s qualification at this title
- Completed SF-52 in Federal Human Resources (Reservists only)

This request must come from the CA. Input can be provided by the certifying official (CO) and/or cadre coordinator (CC), but final requests must come from the CA.

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APPENDIX H: QUALIFICATION REVIEW BOARD
MEMBERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Qualification Review Board (QRB) has representatives from across FEMA to ensure that QRB’s recommendations have the broadest possible foundation. The QRB is composed of permanent full-time (PFT) and temporary full-time (TFT) employees and cadre of on-call response and recovery employees (CORE) qualified in IM positions.

QRB MEMBERSHIP

Membership (non-voting advisory members and voting members) rotates to ensure greater participation of cadre leadership and provide a non-biased environment. Board members are replaced every two years with two experienced members remaining at all times to maintain process integrity. The legacy board members will rotate after new panel members have served for one complete year. Members of the QRB may not be cadre Certifying Authorities (CA), Certifying Officials, or Cadre Coordinators.

POSITIONS REQUIRING QRB REVIEW

The QRB will review the experience, deployment history, training history, and position task books of employees seeking qualification in Tier 1 and Tier 2 positions. After review, the QRB will make a recommendation to the cadre’s CA. The QRB also does not review qualification decisions made by the cadres as a part of a hiring action.

Tier 1 IM Positions requiring in-person QRB review:

- Federal Coordinating Officer
- Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator
- Officer
- Section chief
- Branch director

Tier 2 IM Positions requiring virtual QRB:

- Assistant EA officer
- Lead advisor
- Division supervisor
- Group supervisor
- Unit leader
- Coordinator
APPENDIX I: STEPS FOR REQUESTING AN INITIAL IM POSITION

Employees who do not have an Incident Management (IM) position can request one through the responder portal of the Deployment Tracking System. To select an IM position, an employee will first log into the responder portal, www.femaresponder.net (Figure 27).

![Responder Portal Login](image)

Figure 27: Responder Portal Login
The employee will then click on the “Request Incident Management Position” tile shown in Figure 28. If the employee does not see this tile, that employee probably already has an IM position. There is not an automated method for requesting an additional position, so an employee will have to work with their cadre (or the cadre management for the desired position) to initiate the process.

Figure 28: Requesting an Incident Management Position
Next, the employee selects a cadre and a position. The employee will be presented with a list of “Entry Level” positions arranged alphabetically by cadre, as shown in Figure 29.\textsuperscript{14} The employee’s background education, training, and experience will not be appropriate for all of these positions. The employee should work with their supervisor of record and the cadre management staff of their desired cadre to ensure the position they are requesting is an appropriate one.\textsuperscript{15} If the employee does not have these conversations with the cadre management staff ahead of time, that employee’s request may be rejected or sent back to request more information.

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{request_position.png}
\caption{Selection of Initial Position Request}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{14} Page B-2 provides a description of “Entry Level.”
\textsuperscript{15} The contact information for the cadre coordinator of each cadre can be found in “CA/CO/CC & Regional Liaison Listing.” This document can be downloaded using the button at the bottom of the page after clicking the “Other Information” tile.
The employee will be able to filter the list of positions down to show only those entry-level positions from a single cadre, as shown in Figure 30.

![Figure 30: Cadre-Specific List of Entry-Level Positions](image-url)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th># Qualified</th>
<th># Open</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PLAN Geospatial Information System Specialist</td>
<td>GISP 107</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLAN Planning Specialist</td>
<td>PLSP 521</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Finally, the employee enters a “Reason” and clicks submit in the pop-up window (Figure 31) to initiate a workflow. The “Reason” box should be used to explain the employee’s interest or previous relevant experience, as applicable.

![Request Position](image-url)

**Figure 31: Initial Position Request Justification**

Once the employee selects an IM position, an issue position workflow is initiated. The workflow requires supervisor approval. The approval of the supervisor of record ensures that the employee’s day-to-day supervisor is aware of the employee’s intent, understands the employee’s potential deployment to incidents, and knows the employee’s requirements to attend IM position-specific training.

The workflow item is reviewed by the FEMA Qualification System Branch and forwarded to the Cadre Coordinator (CC). The CC reviews the request and forwards it to the Certifying Official (CO), who reviews the request and elects to issue a Position Task Book or to decline the request. If the employee can demonstrate that qualification for the position based on previous experience, the CO may elect to request that the Certifying Authority issues qualification for the position. This is a very rare occurrence and not always a positive one. Even where employees have substantial relevant experience outside of FEMA, immediately awarding qualification restricts the employee’s access to FEMA-specific training.
**APPENDIX J: LIST OF Fema Cadres**

Table 8 indicates the 23 FEMA cadres. The Headquarters Component or Office is listed in horizontal rows with the Cadre Name and IM Assignment below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cadre Name</th>
<th>IM Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mission Support: Office of the Chief Procurement Officer</strong></td>
<td>Finance and Administration Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquisitions (ACQ)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mission Support: Office of the Chief Component Human Capital Officer</strong></td>
<td>Finance and Administration Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources (HR)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mission Support: Office of the Chief Information Officer</strong></td>
<td>Logistics Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology (IT)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mission Support: Office of the Chief Administrative Officer</strong></td>
<td>Command Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety (SAF)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mission Support: Officer of the Chief Security Officer</strong></td>
<td>Command Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security (SEC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Office of Disability Integration and Coordination</strong></td>
<td>Command Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability Integration (DI)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Office of Chief Counsel</strong></td>
<td>Command Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Chief Counsel (OCC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Office of Chief Financial Officer</strong></td>
<td>Finance and Administration Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Management (FM)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Office of Equal Rights</strong></td>
<td>Command Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal Rights (ER)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Office of External Affairs</strong></td>
<td>Command Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Affairs (EA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Office of Response and Recovery: Field Operations Directorate</strong></td>
<td>Command Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Leadership (FL)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Office of Response and Recovery: Logistics Management Directorate</strong></td>
<td>Logistics Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logistics (LOG)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Office of Response and Recovery: Office of Federal Coordination</strong></td>
<td>FDRC Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Disaster Recovery Support (NDRS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Office of Response and Recovery: Recovery Directorate</strong></td>
<td>Operations Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Assistance (PA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster Survivor Assistance (DSA)</td>
<td>Operations Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Assistance (IA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Office of Response and Recovery: Response Directorate</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cadre Name</td>
<td>IM Assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster Emergency Communications (DEC)</td>
<td>Operations Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations (OPS)</td>
<td>Operations Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning (PL)</td>
<td>Planning Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resilience: National Preparedness Directorate</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster Field Training Operations (DFTO)</td>
<td>Finance and Administration Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resilience: Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP)</td>
<td>Command Staff and Operations Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitigation (MIT)</td>
<td>Operations Section</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX K: ADDITIONAL FQS INFORMATION

The subsequent links are provided to access additional FQS-related material:

- FQS Website – https://www.fema.gov/fema-qualification-system
- FEMA Qualification System Guide
- Short descriptions of terms and processes

If employees are having problems or questions about training, they should contact the following:

- Regional Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) – Regional training manager/FOD liaison
- Reservists – Cadre coordinator/cadre management team
- IMCOREs – Cadre coordinator, cadre management team, or supervisor of record
- Headquarters PFT, TFT, and CORE – Cadre coordinator, cadre management team, or supervisor of record

For the most current CA, CO, and CC listing and FOD regional liaisons, employees can go to their responder portal, “Other Information” tab, scroll to the bottom of the page and view the “Contact” window (Figure 32 below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For additional information, call 1-844-387-3362.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA / CO / CC Listing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOD Regional Liaisons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 32: CA, CO, CC Listing**

**Workforce Coordination Branch Contact Information**

The Workforce Coordination Branch (WCB) can be reached via email at FEMA-FQS-Program@fema.dhs.gov or by telephone at (855) 377-3362. Hours of operation are 0900 to 1800 ET, Monday through Friday.

FEMA DTS YouTube Channel – https://www.youtube.com/user/femaresponder.
APPENDIX L: FQS REVISION CYCLE

Over time, the components of FQS will require update; as such, there will be an annual review and revision period for FQS documents. Cadres should work throughout the year to update and improve their PTBs. This can include considerations regarding the number and kind of positions, as well as a position’s prerequisite FQS experience. The FQS Branch will support cadres at all points in this process with recommendations and the anticipated impact of possible changes.

As a matter of general course, changes to PTB tasks and required training will only be updated yearly. This restriction is made for the benefit of employees with open PTBs. Since the inception of electronic PTBs within DTS, changes can be made to open PTBs immediately. However, employees should be allowed to work toward qualification without repeated changes in the requirements.

The FQS Branch will initiate conversations with the cadres throughout the year and assist them with all input or PTB changes. A cadre that coordinates and then misses deadlines with the FQS Branch may experience delays in updates while the FQS Branch focuses on other cadres with scheduled revision work.

There will be times when a cadre requests to have changes made out of cycle. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis with the FQS Branch attempting to balance the needs of the cadre with fairness to the employees. Out-of-cycle changes may be approved based on errors in the PTBs, mission changes, or changes to available training. Table 9 lists the document review cycle.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Review Cycle (yr.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FEMA Qualification System Guide</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progression Flowcharts</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position Task Books</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Changes to PTBs, cadre progression, or prerequisites must be submitted by the CC. Changes to these documents should be approved by the cadre CA/CO prior to submission to the FQS Branch administration team. The Incident Workforce Executive Steering Committee (IWESC) will maintain oversight and approval authority on all revisions to FQS position titles.