



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Washington, DC 20240

APR 18 2019

Memorandum:

To: All Regional Directors  
Attention: All Agency Superintendents  
Regional Fire Management Officers  
Agency Fire Management Officers  
Branch Chief, Branch of Wildland Fire Management

From: Acting Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs

Subject: Fire Vehicle Driver Orientation Course Requirement

Purpose: This Instruction Memorandum (IM) establishes additional driver training course requirements for Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) wildland fire management and support personnel who operate vehicles. These requirements fulfill safety recommendations provided by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group's Risk Management Committee. This IM further clarifies the 2010 Motor Vehicle Operation Policy Responsibilities, Implementation, and Procedures Memorandum from Larry Echo Hawk, Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs. It will remain in effect until updated.

Background: To supplement critical driver training for employees who drive government vehicles, the Bureau of Land Management developed a fire vehicle driver orientation course (BL 300) that emulates professional driving training found in other organizations. The course builds on the web-based National Safety Council Defensive Driving training by providing 12 -14 hours of classroom training and includes a hands-on field training component. Students learn driver and vehicle limitations, how to drive in non-standard conditions, emergency lights and siren use, 4-wheel drive operation and other safety aspects driving in the wildland fire environment entails.

After nearly a year of voluntary use, the Bureau finds the BL 300 course to be an effective tool that helps wildland firefighters and support personnel increase driver safety and lower vehicle maintenance costs. It also establishes a valuable driving standard for wildland fire personnel.

Policy/Action: On January 1, 2021, the BL 300 course will become mandatory for all wildland fire management and support personnel who operate vehicles. This timeframe allows wildland fire managers and staff to become familiar with the BL 300 Fire Vehicle Driver Orientation course and to develop instructors and delivery methods. Course material is accessible at: <http://www.nifc.gov/training/trainingFireVehicle.html>.

Effective immediately, the Bureau requires supervisors to ensure all wildland fire personnel who operate government owned and/or leased vehicles have the proper licensure and are adhering to their respective state laws and licensing requirements, prior to operating any government owned and/or leased vehicles. This includes ensuring employees have the appropriate commercial driver's license, tank endorsements, air brake endorsements and other applicable certifications. Additional resources regarding BIA driving requirements can be found under Motor Vehicle Information on the Branch of Wildland Fire Management, Fire Safety Web page: <https://www.bia.gov/bia/ots/dfwfm/bwfm/safety>.

If supervisors have questions, please contact Garth Fisher, BIA Wildland Fire Training Officer, at [Garth.Fisher@bia.gov](mailto:Garth.Fisher@bia.gov) or call (208) 387-5315. You may also contact Josh Simmons, Director, Wildland Fire Operations by emailing [Joshua.Simmons@bia.gov](mailto:Joshua.Simmons@bia.gov) or calling (208) 387-5372.