

## Lesson 11 – Creating Relative Risk and Organization Assessments

*Estimated time to complete: 30 minutes*

The Wildland Fire Risk and Complexity Assessment (RCA) helps fire managers evaluate firefighter safety issues, assess risk, and identify the appropriate incident management organization for a fire. The RCA is comprised of three parts:

- Part A: Firefighter Safety Assessment
- Part B: Relative Risk Assessment
- Part C: Organization Assessment.

Parts B and C can be completed in WFDSS and results incorporated into a decision. Part B, the Relative Risk Assessment, must be completed in WFDSS before Part C can be developed and before a decision can be published. Part C, the Organization Assessment, is not required by WFDSS, although recommended.

In this lesson, you will create a Relative Risk Assessment and an Organization Assessment for your training incident. A Relative Risk Assessment must be completed before the Organization Assessment, as the Relative Risk results are incorporated into the development of the Organization Assessment.

### About Relative Risk

The Wildland Fire Relative Risk Assessment is required before publishing a decision for an incident. Its purpose is to assist you in planning for, assessing, and managing your incidents. The Assessment provides the Agency Administrator a quick but comprehensive assessment of the relative risk of the fire. This is a qualitative process that can be completed in less time than a quantitative long-term risk assessment.

Incident owners and editors can perform the assessment. Dispatchers can calculate relative risk for incidents in their geographic area if no incident owner has been assigned. Once an incident owner is assigned, only the incident owner and incident editors can calculate relative risk.

Note: You can't recalculate relative risk if a decision is being reviewed, or after the incident is declared out.

Relative risk is comprised of three aspects:

- Values. Users must complete a Values Assessment.
- Hazards. Users must complete a Hazard Assessment.
- Probability. Users must complete a Probability Assessment.

Each aspect requires consideration and attention when you develop a Relative Risk assessment. Using the information you gathered in Lessons 8, 9, and 10, as well as your own knowledge about the fire area gained from field visits and conversations with local fire managers, you will develop an assessment for each of these aspects in WFDSS that will help you calculate the overall Relative Risk for your incident.

### Relative Risk Considerations

- The breakdown of each aspect is not all inclusive and considerations can vary by place and time.

- Users are expected to exercise their judgment in determining ratings for each aspect; information is intended to provide both guidance in completion and flexibility in determining exactly what the descriptions mean.
- Local information should be considered to better reflect site-specific situations.
- Local, site-specific information concerning air quality and smoke management must be amended into the Wildland Fire Relative Risk Assessment to reflect variances in situations and local values and regulatory concerns.
- Air-quality criteria should be reflected in the values assessment portion, smoke production can be incorporated into the hazard descriptive list, and descriptive information related to the probability of adverse smoke events, if available, can be addressed as part of the probability assessment.

## Calculating Relative Risk

Calculating Relative Risk in WFDSS can be done from the Relative Risk Menu Option, which is located on the left side of the screen in the Incident perspective. You can also calculate Relative Risk from any of the “Assess Relative Risk” links strategically placed in the application, as each of these navigates you back to the Relative Risk menu option. To calculate Relative Risk using the tools in WFDSS, you need to:

- Develop inputs for the Values, Hazards, and Probability rating charts and document your rationale for each selection in the associated Notes fields.
- Estimate the potential fire duration from today.

Outcomes from the values, hazards, and probability assessments inform the Relative Risk rating chart at the top of the page. If you do not agree with the Relative Risk results, you can go back and modify your rating chart inputs. When you are satisfied with your inputs, documented the reason for your selections in the Notes fields, and have selected potential fire duration, WFDSS generates Relative Risk Advice based on the Relative Risk results and the potential fire duration you selected.

**Note:** The overall Relative Risk rating, Potential Fire Duration, and the Notes within each category automatically carry over into the decision content, and ultimately, the published decision. The Hazards, Values, Probability and Relative Risk Assessment rating graphs do NOT carry over, but are available in the incident content for you to add if you choose.

A Relative Risk Assessment must be completed before the Organization Assessment (OA) can be developed. If an Incident Owner or Editor updates or modifies the Relative Risk Assessment after the OA is completed, changes to the recommended organization may occur. When the user saves the updated Relative Risk Assessment, WFDSS will auto-navigate back to the second page of the OA to ensure a user reviews potential changes to the recommended organization and has the opportunity to select a different organization.

The following exercises contain information found in the WFDSS online help. You can access the help topics themselves from the Relative Risk page in WFDSS by clicking the help icon beside each rating chart, or in the upper right hand corner of the page beside the feedback link.

## Values Assessment

Values are those ecologic, social, and economic resources that could be lost or damaged because of a fire. Ecologic values consist of the following:

- Vegetation

- Wildlife species and their habitat
- Air and water quality
- Soil productivity
- Other ecologic functions

Social effects can include the following:

- Life, cultural and historical resources
- Natural resources
- Artifacts
- Sacred sites

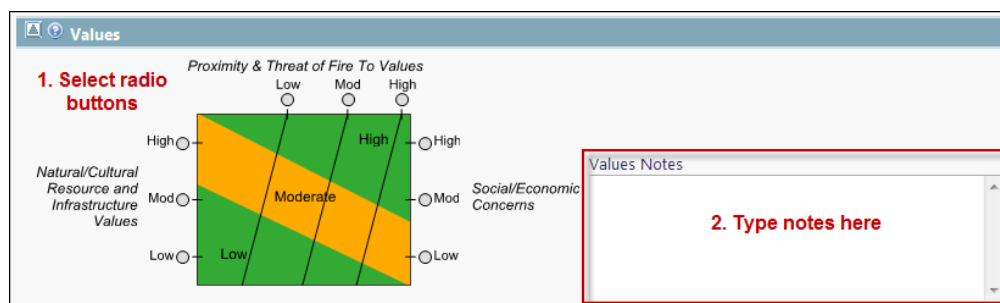
Economic values can include the following:

- Property and infrastructure
- Economically valuable natural and cultural resources
- Recreation
- Tourism opportunities

The values assessment allows opportunity for the local Agency Administrator to identify particular local concerns. These concerns may be identified in the Fire Management Plan or other planning documents.

**To Create a Values Assessment:**

1. From the Incident List, select the incident for which you would like to calculate Relative Risk.
2. Click **View Information**. The Incident Information page appears.
3. Select Relative Risk from the list of menu options on the left. The Relative Risk page opens and four rating charts are displayed; the primary Relative Risk chart is at the top of the page and the secondary Values, Hazards, and Probability rating charts are beneath it. You will develop inputs for the secondary rating charts and you'll begin with Values.



4. Locate the Values rating chart.

For Natural/Cultural Resource and Infrastructure Values: Based on the number and kinds of values to be protected, and the difficulty to protect them, rank this element Low, Moderate, or High. Considerations include but are not limited to: key resources potentially affected by the fire such as urban interface; structures; critical municipal watershed; commercial timber; developments; recreational facilities; power/pipelines; communication sites;

highways; potential for evacuation; unique natural resources; special-designation areas; T&E species habitat; cultural sites; and Wilderness.

The following guidelines can help you determine the appropriate Low, Moderate or High selection for the Natural/Cultural Resource and Infrastructure Values element:

Low	Moderate	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Values generally are benefited or are not impacted by fire. Ecosystem is resilient. Mitigation measures are effective.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns exist for impacts to resources or values but available mitigation measures are generally effective.</li> <li>• May require commitment of specialized resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple values with concerns exist, and effectiveness of needed mitigation measures is not well established.</li> <li>• Severe damage likely without significant commitment of specialized resources.</li> </ul>

5. For *Social/Economic Concerns*: Evaluate the potential impacts of the fire to social and/or economic concerns and rank this element **Low**, **Moderate** or **High**. Considerations include but are not limited to: impacts to social or economic concerns of an individual, business, community or other stakeholder; other fire management jurisdictions; tribal subsistence or gathering of natural resources; air quality regulatory requirements; public tolerance of smoke; and restrictions and/or closures in effect or being considered.

The following guidelines can help you determine the appropriate Low, Moderate or High selection for the *Social/Economic Concerns* element:

Low	Moderate	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local support for the use of wildland fire and its ecological role of fire is high.</li> <li>• The fire should have limited temporary or no impact on subsistence or Tribal activities involving treaty rights.</li> <li>• The fire is expected to remain within a single jurisdiction or agreements are in place to allow fire to move across several jurisdictions.</li> <li>• Media coverage is favorable.</li> <li>• Few structures or business ventures are potentially affected by the fire.</li> <li>• There are few impacts to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local support of use of wildland fire and its ecological role is clearly divided between supporters and opponents.</li> <li>• The fire will have some impacts on subsistence or Tribal activities involving treaty rights.</li> <li>• The fire is expected to involve more than one jurisdiction, cooperator, or special interest group and agreements need to be developed.</li> <li>• Media coverage tends to be a mix of favorable and unfavorable views.</li> <li>• Structures may be threatened by the fire or some business ventures may be affected by</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local support for use of wildland fire and its ecological role is low.</li> <li>• The fire will have long-term impacts on subsistence activities or Tribal activities involving treaty rights.</li> <li>• Smoke impacts may become a concern for higher level air quality regulatory agencies and people with health risks.</li> <li>• The fire is expected to involve several jurisdictions, cooperators, and special interest groups and agreements requiring substantial negotiation need to be developed.</li> <li>• Media coverage tends to be</li> </ul>

- For *Proximity and Threat of Fire to Values*: Evaluate the potential threat to values based on their proximity to the fire, and rank this element **Low, Moderate** or **High**.

The following guidelines can help you determine an appropriate selection for the *Proximity and Threat of Fire to Values*:

Low (Distant)	Moderate	High (Near)
Fire is located where it is highly unlikely that it would reach the values given fire activity and the fuels between it and the values.	Fire could potentially reach the values, but will take multiple burning periods and sustained fire activity in the adjacent fuels to reach the values.	Fire is close to values. Without mitigation actions, fire is expected to reach the values.

- Document your reasons for selecting each input in the Values Notes text box. An example of the type of information you would include is below:

**Values Notes Example:** Fire is located on both sides of Interstate 75, which is the major corridor for travel across the southern Florida peninsula. Florida Panther Refuge facilities are in the direct path of the fire spread. Political and social concerns include impacts on commerce if I-75 is closed due to smoke. Natural resource values could be impacted (hardwood hammocks and cypress), but impacts would not be out of the normal range of variation.

- Locate the red circle in the Values rating chart and notice if it falls into the Low, Moderate, or High category. The outcome for Values carries over to the Relative Risk rating chart at the top of the page.
- Click Continue, or expand the next rating chart to continue working on your relative risk assessment.

### Hazard Assessment

The hazard in wildland fire is comprised of the following:

- Conditions under which the fire occurs and exists
- Ability of the fire to spread and circulate
- Intensity and severity the fire may present
- Spatial extent of the fire

#### To create a Hazards Assessment:

- Locate the Hazards rating chart.
- For *Fuel Condition*: Consider fuel conditions ahead of the fire and rank this element **Low, Moderate** or **High**. Evaluate fuel conditions that exhibit high ROS and intensity for your area, such as those caused by invasive species or insect/disease outbreaks; continuity of fuels; and/or low fuel moisture.

The following guidelines can help you determine an appropriate selection for the *Fuel Conditions*:

Low	Moderate	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fuel loading is low.</li> <li>• Large-scale fuel treatments have reduced continuous fuels.</li> <li>• No evidence of insect/disease outbreaks.</li> <li>• Changes resulting from insect and disease outbreaks are minimal.</li> <li>• Few if any fire return intervals have been missed and fuel complexes are similar to historic levels.</li> <li>• Invasive species do not contribute to increased fire spread or intensity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fuel load is moderate and supports active fire spread.</li> <li>• Past fuels treatments may no longer be effective, or recent treatments have temporarily increased dead fuel loading.</li> <li>• Evidence of insect/disease outbreaks (red needles, dead standing timber, etc.).</li> <li>• Some fire return intervals have been missed; fuel complexes have been altered and present potential for fires with severity and intensity levels in excess of historic levels.</li> <li>• Invasive species contribute to fire spread.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fuels are continuous on the landscape and will readily support continued fire growth.</li> <li>• No fuels treatments have occurred.</li> <li>• Moderate to extensive insect/disease outbreaks and large stands of dead standing timber.</li> <li>• Significant vegetative changes from the historic situation have occurred.</li> <li>• The highly altered composition and structure of the vegetation predisposes the landscape to fire effects well outside the historic range of variability.</li> <li>• Invasive species greatly contribute to uncharacteristic fire spread and intensity.</li> </ul>

3. For *Fire Behavior*: Evaluate the current fire behavior and rank the element **Low**, **Moderate** or **High**. Considerations include: intensity; rates of spread; crowning; and profuse or long-range spotting.

The following guidelines can help you determine an appropriate selection for *Fire Behavior*:

Low	Moderate	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short duration flaming front with occasional torching.</li> <li>• Fuels are uniform and fire behavior can be easily predicted and tactics implemented.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short range spotting occurring.</li> <li>• Moderate rates of spread are expected with mainly surface fire and torching.</li> <li>• Fuels and terrain are varied, but don't pose significant problems in holding actions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long range spotting &gt; ¼ mile.</li> <li>• Extreme rates of spread, and <u>crown fire activity</u> are possible.</li> <li>• Fuels, elevation, and topography vary throughout the fire area, creating high resistance to control.</li> </ul>

4. For *Potential Fire Growth*: Evaluate the potential fire growth, and rank this element Low, Moderate, or High. Considerations include: potential exists for extreme fire behavior (fuel moisture, continuity, winds, etc.); weather forecast indicating no significant relief or worsening conditions; and/or resistance to control.

The following guidelines can help you determine an appropriate selection for *Potential Fire Growth*:

Low	Moderate	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little fire growth is expected.</li> <li>• Weather conditions (current and forecasted) are such that fire growth will be low.</li> <li>• Resistance to control, if implemented, for dominant fuel type is low.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire behavior leads to moderate fire growth.</li> <li>• Weather conditions are not forecasted to worsen.</li> <li>• Dominant fuel type is burning readily but is predictable and characteristic of the time of year and conditions.</li> <li>• Control efforts implemented are typically successful and resistance to control for dominant fuel type is moderate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire growth is well beyond what is typical for the dominant fuel type.</li> <li>• Extreme fire behavior (torching, crowning, long range spotting, etc.) is occurring or predicted.</li> <li>• Weather conditions are predicted to worsen (hotter, drier, windier).</li> <li>• Dominant fuel type is burning more readily than usual and exhibiting greater than typical fire growth.</li> <li>• Resistance to control is high. Control efforts to date have been unsuccessful due to high rates of spread and rapid fire growth.</li> </ul>

5. Document your reasons for selecting each input in the Hazards Notes text box. An example of the type of notes you would include is below:

**Hazards Notes Example:** Fire has exhibited rapid rates of spread and has spotted across a 4 lane interstate and a 2 lane state highway in the first two operational periods. Fire has potential to reach 30,000 acres plus. Area of ignition hasn't been burned for 20 plus years.

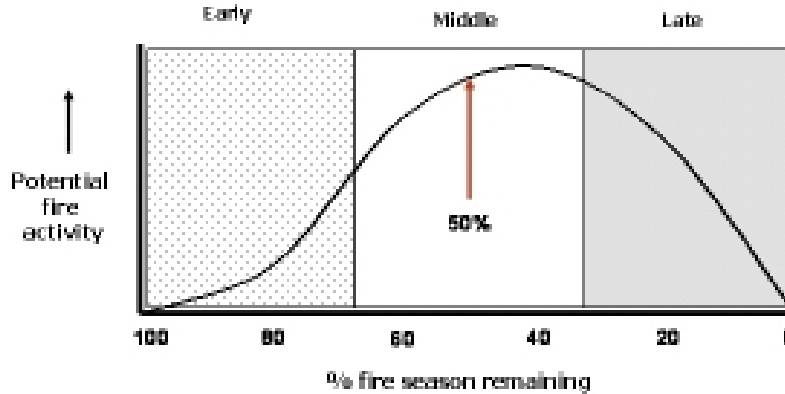
6. Locate the red circle in the Hazards rating chart and notice if it falls into the Low, Moderate, or High category. The outcome for Hazards carries over to the Relative Risk rating chart at the top of the page.
7. Click **Continue** or expand the next rating chart to complete your relative risk assessment.

**To Create a Probability Assessment:**

1. Locate the **Probability** rating chart.
2. For *Time of Season*: Evaluate the potential for a long-duration fire and rank this element **Low, Moderate** or **High**. Time remaining until a season-ending event should be considered.

Time of Season is the current time in relationship to the historical fire season. The graph reinforces the importance of time of season. During the early part of the fire season, the peak of burning activity is still to come, thus the fire could present substantial variation in behavior and

activity. In the middle of the season, the peak of burning activity may or may not have occurred, while in the late part of the season, the peak of fire activity generally has already occurred and managers can reasonably expect diminishing fire activity and behavior as time progresses. As the amount of fire season remaining decreases, or as the time of season progresses from early to late, management concerns and issues associated with potential fire activity decrease.



The following guidelines can help you determine an appropriate selection for *time of season*:

Low (Late)	Moderate (Middle)	High (Early)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current date is in the latter part of the historic fire season.</li> <li>• At least 2/3 of the historic period has passed.</li> <li>• The peak burning activity period has occurred.</li> <li>• The probability of a season-ending or fire-ending event is increasing quickly.</li> <li>• Weather forecasts and seasonal outlooks do not indicate an extended fire season.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current date is in the middle of the historic fire season.</li> <li>• At least 1/3 of that period has passed and no less than 1/3 remains.</li> <li>• The peak burning activity period either has occurred, is occurring now, or will occur very soon.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current date is in the early portion of the historic fire season.</li> <li>• At least 2/3 of the established fire season remains.</li> <li>• The peak of burning activity is still to come.</li> </ul>

3. For *Barriers to Fire Spread*: If many natural and/or human-made barriers are present and limiting fire spread, rank this element **Low**. If some barriers are present and limiting fire spread, rank this element **Moderate**. If no barriers are present, rank this element **High**.

Use the following table to help guide your selection for *Barriers to Fire Spread*:



Low (Many)	Moderate	High (Few)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many natural and/or human-made barriers are present and limiting fire spread.</li> <li>• Ridges, rocky slopes, wide drainages, roads and other fuel breaks will contain the fire along much of its perimeter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some barriers are present and limiting fire spread</li> <li>• Ridges, rocky slopes, wide drainages, roads, and other fuel breaks will slow or contain the fire along portions of the perimeter.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No barriers are present.</li> <li>• Few, if any, ridges, rocky slopes, wide drainages, roads and other fuel breaks are present.</li> </ul>

4. For Seasonal Severity: Evaluate fire danger indices and rank this element **Low/Moderate**, **High** or **Very High/Extreme**. Considerations include fire danger indices such as energy release component (ERC); drought status; live fuel moistures; dead fuels moistures; fire danger indices; adjective fire danger rating; and geographic area preparedness level

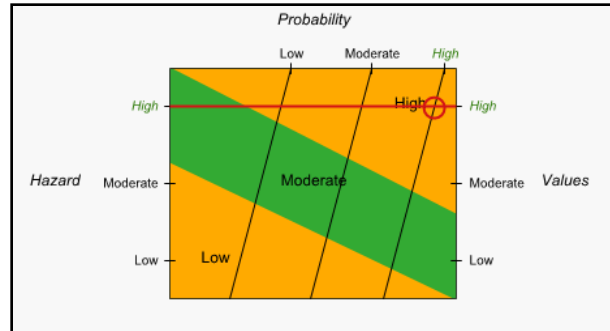
Use the following table to help guide your selection for *Seasonal Severity*:

Low/Moderate	High	Very High/Extreme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures of fire danger are below or at seasonal averages.</li> <li>• Drought status is within seasonal norms with no long-term drought present</li> <li>• Live and dead fuel moistures are at or higher than seasonal averages.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures of fire danger are above seasonal averages, but conditions are not present for large fire   growth (measures are below the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile).</li> <li>• The area may be experiencing a short-term seasonal drought, but is not considered to be in long-term drought.</li> <li>• Live and dead fuel moistures are lower than seasonal averages.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures of fire danger are or are expected to become well above critical percentiles (typically 90<sup>th</sup> –97<sup>th</sup> percentile) seasonal averages, or setting new records.</li> <li>• The area is considered in a drought situation for more than one year and as much as 3 or more years (long-term drought).</li> <li>• Live and dead fuel moistures are well below seasonal averages and have reached critical values.</li> </ul>

5. Document your reasons for selecting each input in the Probability Notes text box. An example of the type of information you would include is below:

**Probability Notes:** Barriers to fire spread are moderate and could be effective with successful burnout operations. Direct attack is limited due to inaccessible terrain. Few natural barriers exist due to drought conditions - all fuels are readily available to burn and we are in the middle of fire season. Fire Danger indices are reaching and have exceeded the 97th percentile in recent weeks.

6. Locate the red circle in the *Probability* rating chart and notice if it falls into the Low, Moderate, or High category. The outcome for Probability carries over to the Relative Risk rating chart at the top of the page. At this point, the inputs for the Relative Risk rating chart are complete and the chart at the top of the page will look comparable to this:



- For Potential Fire Duration, evaluate the estimated length of time that the fire may continue to burn if no action is taken and the amount of season remaining. Rank this element **Low**, **Moderate**, or **High**. Note that this input varies by geographic area.

**Note:** The potential fire duration should be based on the current date, not the date of discovery. For example, if you are 30 days into a large fire that is now 80% contained and is anticipated to be fully controlled within 10 days, you would use the 10 days as your estimated duration, and would select Medium.

- Click **Continue**.

### Completing the Relative Risk Assessment:

- In the Relative Risk Notes box, document why you agree with the final Relative Risk results. Remember, only the overall Relative Risk rating, Potential Fire Duration and the Notes within each category carry over into a published decision. The Rating Graphs do not, as they are just a tool used to arrive at the final Relative Risk Rating (you can choose to add them if you wish however). An example of the type of information you would include is below:

**Relative Risk Notes Example:** Overall risk is high primarily due to the proximity of the interstate and refuge structures. Potential fire size is large and potential strategies include extensive burn out operations in order to contain fire on existing roads and trails.

- Click **Save**.
- Read the Relative Risk advice. Use the advice to guide your decision making and inform your inputs throughout the remainder of the Lessons. Select **Back** to make additional edits.
- When you are happy with your inputs, click **Save**.


### Viewing the Relative Risk for an Incident

Relative Risk Assessment is accessible in several locations within WFDSS. Once you save a Relative Risk Assessment, all WFDSS users can view the assessment. The Relative Risk Assessment can be viewed three different ways. Users can:

- View the Current Relative Risk Assessment from the Relative Risk menu option.
- View the Relative Risk Assessments associated with published decisions.
- View the Relative Risk Assessments associated with periodic assessments.

If you are working through the suite of WFDSS 101 exercises, you haven't created or published a decision for your training incident yet. As a result, you can only view the Relative Risk results by accessing the Relative Risk menu option at this time.

### To view the current Relative Risk Assessment:

1. From the Incident list, select the Incident you want to view the relative risk assessment for, and then click **View Information**. The Edit Information page appears.
2. From the left hand menu, choose **Relative Risk**. The Relative Risk page appears and displays the current relative risk. You can view the currency date in the box in the upper right-hand corner.
3. Click  to expand and view the inputs for Hazards, Values, and Probability.

## Organization Assessment

The Organization Assessment (OA), Part C of the Wildland Fire Risk and Complexity Assessment (RCA), guides Agency Administrators in their management organization selection, both in escalating and moderating situations (i.e., this process can be used to go up or down in organizations) and is used for all incident Types. The OA can be completed by an incident owner, or a user granted incident editing or approving privileges. Relative Risk must be assessed before completing the OA, as its outputs feed directly into the OA. Each of these must be completed before a pending decision can be published. Like Relative Risk inputs, OA information, Chart and Inputs are saved to incident content and can be added to the decision if you choose.

The OA is comprised of four parts. Each part provides guidance and example charts for determining the OA, and is intended to assist you in working through the various input variables.

- Part 1 – determine Relative Risk Rating
- Part 2 – determine Implementation Difficulty
- Part 3 – determine Socio/Political Concerns
- Part 4 – combines the three variables to help determine what level of incident management is needed

When finalizing the Organization Assessment, Agency Administrators can view the recommended organization for the incident, and then choose to follow the recommendation or select an alternate organization. Agency Administrators can document their reasons for selecting one over the other in the Organization Notes text box near the bottom of the page.

The IMT type needed to manage an incident will change over the life of the incident due to changing levels of complexity but as long as the incident objectives and course of action are adequate then a new decision is not required. The Relative Risk and Organization Assessments can be updated as needed and are visible to the approver when completing the periodic assessment.

## Assessing the Organization

Incident Owners, Editors, Reviewers, and Approvers can use the Organization Assessment to help identify the organizational needs for an incident. (See the Organization Assessment reference for more information about each variable considered.)

The following types of information inform your OA inputs:

- a completed relative risk assessment
- jurisdictional and responsible agencies involved
- current status of the incident (location, size, weather, growth, assets at risk, etc.)
- current level of incident management
- current decision information
- current course of action
- local conditions, including socio-political concerns
- objectives and management requirements

Using the types of information above, you will complete an Organizational Assessment for your training incident. You will work through a series of short exercises to help you understand how an OA is developed, and assess the organization for your training incident.

When you are completing an OA in WFDSS, make note of the small question mark icons located near section headings and on the top right of each page in the application. These are links to appropriate help topics that can assist you as you develop inputs.

### Part 1: Relative Risk Assessment

In the first half of this lesson, you created a Relative Risk Assessment. It is a required component of any decision and its results directly inform the OA. In the following exercise, you will access the Organization Assessment page in WFDSS and review Relative Risk Assessment results.

#### To review Relative Risk Results:

1. From within the incident in WFDSS, select **Org Assessment** from the list of menu options on the left. The Organization Assessment page opens and four rating charts are available; the primary Organization Assessment chart is at the top of the page and the secondary Relative Risk, Implementation Difficulty and Socio-Political concerns rating charts are beneath it.
2. Locate the Relative Risk rating chart and verify that the Relative Risk Assessment has been completed.
  - If you completed the first half of this lesson, you should see a red line and circle in the Relative Risk rating chart indicating a Low, Moderate or High risk rating for your training incident.
  - If you do not see these red markings, the Relative Risk Assessment has not been completed. Click the **Assess Relative Risk** link to navigate back to the Relative Risk Assessment page to complete it.
3. If completed, review the Relative Risk Assessment results. Is the Relative Risk rating Low, Moderate or High? When you are finished, click the expansion arrow beside Relative Risk to collapse the section.

### Part 2: Implementation Difficulty

The Implementation Difficulty is a measure of how the specific circumstances associated with a particular fire combine to represent potentially intricate implementation concerns. While many specific situational elements are addressed by Relative Risk, Implementation Difficulty addresses:

- potential fire duration,
- incident strategies (Course of Action), and
- functional concerns.

This assessment area also allows the Agency Administrator to identify local information regarding attention to fire activity, local public and political opinions, and local knowledge.

**To assess Implementation Difficulty:**

1. Locate the **Implementation Difficulty** section.
2. You determined the *Potential Fire Duration* when you completed the Relative Risk Assessment, and your selection has carried over to this rating chart. Review your selection, which is highlighted in green.
3. For *Functional Concerns*, evaluate the need to increase organizational structure to adequately and safely manage the incident, and rank this element **Low** (adequate), **Moderate** (some additional support needed), or **High** (current capability inadequate). Considerations include: incident management functions (logistics, finance, operations, information, planning, safety, and/or specialized personnel/equipment) are inadequate and needed; access to EMS support; heavy commitment of local resources to logistical support; ability of local businesses to sustain logistical support; substantial air operation which is not properly staffed; worked multiple operational periods without achieving initial objectives; incident personnel overextended mentally and/or physically; Incident Action Plans, briefings, etc. missing or poorly prepared; performance of firefighting resources affected by cumulative fatigue; and ineffective communications.

The following guidelines can help you determine an appropriate selection for *Functional Concerns*:

N/A (Very Low)	Low	Moderate	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Few or no resources required on the fire.</li> <li>• Local resources are utilized or resources can be easily ordered.</li> <li>• Special support personnel not necessary.</li> <li>• No specific IAP required, routine briefing and communications suffice.</li> <li>• Safety issues are easily identified and mitigated.</li> <li>• Terrain and fuels do not affect action or make the incident challenging to support.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing management organization adequate or can be downsized.</li> <li>• Resources are available to support actions.</li> <li>• Special support personnel not necessary.</li> <li>• Necessary frequency for IAP's less than daily.</li> <li>• Safety issues are easily identifiable and mitigated.</li> <li>• Terrain and fuels are such that actions are easily supported.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing management organization is too small or does not match the complexity/incident strategies making it difficult to achieve the incident objectives.</li> <li>• Availability of resources may be limited.</li> <li>• Special support personnel are needed.</li> <li>• Safety hazards have been identified and can be mitigated.</li> <li>• Terrain and fuels are such that actions are a challenge to a simple organization.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current fire size warrants three or more divisions or potential exists for increased functional areas.</li> <li>• Special functional positions (C&amp;G) or units are needed.</li> <li>• Adequate resources may be limited or difficult to obtain.</li> <li>• Substantial aviation operations are taking place requiring significant staffing.</li> <li>• Complex operations are taking place which lead to extensive safety management.</li> <li>• Terrain and fuels make actions challenging to support.</li> </ul>

4. For *Incident Strategies (Course of Action)*, evaluate the level of firefighter and aviation exposure required to successfully meet the current strategy and implement the course of action. Rank this element as **Low**, **Moderate**, or **High**. If the element is not applicable, select N/A. Considerations include: availability of resources; likelihood that those resources will be effective; exposure of firefighters; reliance on aircraft to accomplish objectives; and trigger points clear and defined.

Use the following table to help guide your selection for Incident Strategies.

N/A (Very Low)	Low	Moderate	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential firefighter exposure is very low due to limited or few resources on the fireline.</li> <li>• Limited or no actions being taken on the fire.</li> <li>• <u>Periodic assessment</u> set at maximum number of days because fire environment is stable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Few personnel on the fireline with simple management activities.</li> <li>• Fireline activities may involve occasional actions to delay, direct, or check fire spread in some areas or development of management action points.</li> <li>• Firefighter exposure low due to a limited number of resources assigned, limited action or simple actions being taken on the ground.</li> <li>• Periodic assessment frequency is set at or near maximum interval because the fire environment is not readily changing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A mix of ground and air resources involved but the fire environment is only moderately dynamic and actions are non-complex.</li> <li>• Combinations of simultaneous actions (monitoring/areas of direct perimeter control) may be taking place.</li> <li>• Restrictions or closures considered or may be in place.</li> <li>• Firefighter exposure is at moderate levels because of the varied resources being deployed, a moderately dynamic strategy, and limited values are threatened.</li> <li>• Periodic assessment frequency is set at intermediate levels because changes to strategies and tactics are not occurring regularly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management actions involve a variety of resources, are complex and the strategies are dynamic.</li> <li>• Restrictions or closures in place or are taking place real time and expanding.</li> <li>• Firefighter exposure at maximum levels due to the complexity of the actions being taken, the multitude of unlike resources, and values at risk.</li> <li>• Daily periodic assessments are taking place because the fire environment is changing requiring updates to the decision or consideration by the local unit.</li> </ul>

5. Document your reasons for selecting each input in the Difficulty Notes text box.
6. Locate the red circle in the Implementation Difficulty rating chart and notice if it falls into the Low, Moderate, or High category. The outcome will carry over to the Organization Assessment rating chart at the top of the page AFTER you complete the last rating chart, *Socio-Political Concerns*.
7. Click the expansion arrow beside Implementation Difficulty to collapse the section.

### Part 3: Socio/Political Concerns

Socio/Political concerns are an indicator of how difficult and involved the decision is for the specific situation associated with a particular fire. The following key areas influence and affect an Agency Administrator’s decision space and range of options:

- the type of objectives to be implemented on the fire,
- external influences that may exert strong influences on the Agency Administrator and his/her decision, and
- ownership concerns.

This assessment area also allows the Agency Administrator to identify local information regarding attention to fire activity, local public and political opinions, and local knowledge.

**To assess Socio-Political Concerns:**

1. Locate the **Socio/Political Concerns** section.
2. For *Objective Concerns*, evaluate the complexity of the incident objectives and rank this element **Low, Moderate, or High**. If the element is not applicable, select N/A. Considerations include: clarity; ability of current organization to accomplish; disagreement among cooperators; tactical/operational restrictions; complex objectives involving multiple focuses; and objectives influenced by serious accidents or fatalities.

The following guidelines can help you determine an appropriate selection for *Objective Concerns*:

N/A (Very Low)	Low	Moderate	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single objective that is easily achievable, with little or no potential to shift.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Objectives are simple and easily implementable with no expected change.</li> <li>• Course of action is meeting incident objectives.</li> <li>• Incident objectives and requirements clear and easily derived from strategic objectives and management requirements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple objectives being implemented simultaneously and are moderately hard to achieve.</li> <li>• WFDSS decision(s) have been published and course of action is meeting objectives.</li> <li>• Incident objectives and requirements clear.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Objectives may compete among cooperators and are difficult to achieve.</li> <li>• Objectives are complex requiring multiple tactics on various parts of the fire.</li> <li>• Multiple objectives with high likelihood of shifting emphasis between resource benefits and protection.</li> <li>• WFDSS decisions and course of action may be in need of or may be in process of being revised.</li> </ul>

3. For *Ownership Concerns*, evaluate the effect ownership/jurisdiction will have on how the fire is managed and rank this element Low, Moderate, or High. If the element is not applicable, select N/A. Considerations include: disagreements over policy, responsibility and/or management response; fire burning or threatening more than one jurisdiction; potential for unified command; different or conflicting management objectives; potential for claims (damages); and disputes over suppression responsibility. Use the following table to help guide your selection for Ownership Concerns:



N/A (Very Low)	Low	Moderate	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire is burning on a single unit and is not expected to leave that jurisdiction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire burning on a single unit in one jurisdiction.</li> <li>• Cooperators not involved in operations.</li> <li>• Risk to neighboring values is low and/or can be easily addressed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simple joint-unit fire.</li> <li>• Concerns over responsibility may exist.</li> <li>• Moderate concerns with conflicting incident objectives and course of action supporting across the units involved.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-jurisdictional fire burning or has potential to burn onto multiple units of different jurisdiction and/or private lands.</li> <li>• Potential for unified command.</li> <li>• Potential disagreement over responsibility.</li> <li>• Differing fire policies across jurisdictional boundaries and cooperators.</li> <li>• High concerns over protection of values and jurisdictional responsibility for the values.</li> <li>• Diverse objectives/requirements, and course of action across the jurisdictions.</li> </ul>

4. *For External Influences*, evaluate the effect external influences will have on how the fire is managed and rank this element Low, Moderate, or High. If this element is not applicable, select N/A. Considerations include: limited local resources available for initial attack; increasing media involvement, social/print/television media interest; controversial fire policy; threat to safety of visitors from fire and related operations; restrictions and/or closures in effect or being considered; preexisting controversies/ relationships; smoke management problems; and sensitive political concerns/interests.

Use the following table to help guide your selection for *External Influences*:

N/A (Very Low)	Low	Moderate	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No impact on neighbors or visitors.</li> <li>• No controversy.</li> <li>• No media interest, no sensitive media relationships.</li> <li>• No smoke management concerns.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Few impacts on neighbors or visitors.</li> <li>• No controversy.</li> <li>• Little media interest or sensitive media relationships.</li> <li>• Few, if any smoke management concerns.</li> <li>• External attention focused at the local level only.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some impact on neighbors or visitors</li> <li>• Some relationships/closures/political controversy, but mitigated.</li> <li>• Press release issued, but minimal media activity during operations.</li> <li>• Potential for smoke management concerns, but smoke impact mitigated.</li> <li>• External attention focus may elevate to state, regional, or area level and Agency leaders at these levels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High impact on neighbors or visitors</li> <li>• High internal or external interest and concern.</li> <li>• Pre-existing controversy/local or regional relationships.</li> <li>• Media present during operations.</li> <li>• High likelihood of smoke impacts to multiple smoke sensitive areas with complex mitigation actions required</li> <li>• Visibility complaints likely.</li> <li>• Attention focus may elevate to national levels and Agency leaders.</li> <li>• Highly sensitive political interests.</li> </ul>

5. Document your reasons for selecting each input in the Socio/Political Concerns Notes text box.



6. Locate the red circle in the Socio/Political Concerns rating chart and notice if it falls into the **Low, Moderate, or High** category. The outcome carries over to the Organization Assessment rating chart at the top of the page, which is now complete.
7. Click the expansion arrow beside Socio/Political Concerns to collapse the section, if you choose.

### Part 4: Organization Assessment

The OA inputs are now complete and the results are ready for evaluation.

#### Evaluating Organizational Assessment results:

1. Review the OA results atop the page. What type of organization does the rating chart indicate?
2. Click **Continue**. (Clicking Continue saves your inputs.) The OA Results page displays.

**Organization Assessment Results**

Description	N/A	Low	Mod	High
Relative Risk			M	
Potential Fire Duration			M	
Incident Strategies (CoA)			M	
Functional Concerns			M	
Objective Concerns				H
External Influences			M	
Ownership Concerns			M	
Totals		6	1	

Recommended Organization for Incident

Organization Assessment: **Type 2**

**Unit Recommended Organization**

Organization	Description
<input type="radio"/> Type 5	Majority of items rated as "N/A"; a few items may be rated in other categories.
<input type="radio"/> Type 4	Majority of items rated as "Low", with some items rated as "N/A", and a few items rated as "Moderate" or "High".
<input type="radio"/> Type 3	Majority of items rated as "Moderate", with a few items rated in other categories.
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Type 2	Majority of items rated as "Moderate", with a few items rated as "High".
<input type="radio"/> Type 1	Majority of items rated as "High"; a few items may be rated in other categories.

Use this section to document the incident management organization for the fire. If the incident management organization is different than the Organization Assessment recommends, document why an alternative organization was selected.

\*Organization Notes

If you choose a different organization type, select the radio button to indicate your choice and then document the reason(s) for your selection here.

3. Note the recommended organization for your training incident, as indicated by the OA chart and the selection in the list. In the above example, a Type 2 organization was recommended.
  - a. If you support the recommended organization, document why in the Organization Notes text box.
  - b. If you do NOT support the recommended organization, choose an alternate organization from the list and then document why in the Organization Notes text box.

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**Note:** If you navigate away from this page at this time, your inputs will be saved. The OA indicates 'complete' when you click Save.

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4. Click **Save**. You will see a message in green atop the page that says your Organization Assessment has been completed.

**Search for these related topics in the Help:**

- [Wildland Fire Relative Risk Assessment](#) (for more formation about the policy.)
- [About Relative Risk](#)
- [Calculating Relative Risk](#)
- [Viewing the Relative Risk for an Incident](#)
- [Interpreting Relative Risk Advice](#)
- Organization Assessment
- Assessing the Organization
- Organization Assessment Reference
- Organization Assessment – Process and Directions for Use
  - Part 1: Relative Risk Assessment
  - Part 2: Implementation Difficulty
  - Part 3: Socio/Political Concerns
  - Part 4: Organization Assessment
- Finalizing the Organization Assessment
- Flame Act Report