

Language Skills Assessment Information for 2007

From Steven Johnson, ODF

Sent out via Email on January 27, 2007

Here is the current language for the 2007 Agreement regarding English Speaking. **Beginning January 1, 2007**, all English speaking testing must be done before crews can be awarded. Testing will not be done at an incident unless there are problems and verification of language skills becomes necessary. All qualification cards must identify language skills assessment for ALL Strike Team Leaders (STCR), Crew Boss (CRWB), Incident Commander Type 5 (ICT5) and Advanced Firefighter Squad Boss (FFT1) personnel. As you can see, once completed, the test is good for 3 years before re-testing must be done. (Unless there are problems at an incident). Testing must be done for all firefighters regardless of ethnic backgrounds.

Currently, all evaluations are being conducted by Clackamas Community College in Oregon City. Two additional colleges (Blue Mountain Community College and Rogue Community College) are being trained and should be able to provide Language evaluation testing at multiple locations very soon. Evaluation times are limited and payment must be made with registration in advance. It is not possible to show up at the last minute and expect to complete an evaluation. Registrations must be received 7 working days before each of the scheduled testing dates. Each person taking the test must bring a Government issued photo identification card with them (No Qualification cards).

Contact Information:

For testing in the Northeastern Oregon, Southeastern Washington area (multiple locations available) contact Blue Mountain Community College. (Not available yet)

For testing in the Southwest Oregon area (multiple locations available) contact Rogue Community College. (Not available yet)

For testing in the Willamette Valley area (multiple locations available) contact Clackamas Community College in Oregon City.

Contact: Beverly Pence at (503) 657-6958 X2756 or email at Beverlyp@clackamas.edu.

For testing in the Central Oregon area (multiple locations available) contact Clackamas Community College in Oregon City.

Contact: Beverly Pence at (503) 657-6958 X2756 or email at Beverlyp@clackamas.edu.

Current scheduled evaluation dates: (Saturday and Sunday)

January 27 - 28

February 11

March 17 - 18

April 21 - 22

May 19 - 20

June 16 - 17

There are three times available each day: 8:30 am, 10:30 am, and 2:00 pm.

The evaluation process will take about 2 hours (less for very fluent speaking persons). Cost is currently **\$75.00** at Oregon City. Costs may be higher if the colleges are required to travel to an alternate location.

D.5.6 ENGLISH SPEAKING REQUIREMENT

For the 2007 fire season, "*Language Skills Assessment*" testing of English language communication skills will be a mandatory requirement for providing private contract fireline hand crews. Assessment of private contract crew members for English language and communication skills shall be conducted through a third party to verify an individual's capacity for compliance with the Government's contract requirement that the crew boss and squad bosses be able to communicate in English with incident management personnel, and with their crew in the language of the crew. The assessment process will confirm an individual can communicate in English only (mono-lingual), or can communicate in English and the language of their crew (bi-lingual). "Language Skills Assessment" (LSA) testing will be conducted for the 2007 fire season by Clackamas Community College in Oregon City, Oregon; Rogue Community College in Grants Pass, Oregon; and Blue Mountain Community College in Pendleton, Oregon. The LSA is currently only available for mono-lingual English speaking, bi-lingual Spanish speaking, and bi-lingual Russian speaking. GOVERNMENT is currently working on establishing other assessment locations and languages, and reserves the right to offer these additional location and language assessments to CONTRACTORS as they become available. Proof of successful assessment shall consist of a certificate issued by the third party provider to the Contractor employee for addition to the individual's incident qualification card.

Qualified individuals may take their original certificate issued by Clackamas Community College, or other specified third party assessment entity, stating "Pass", and indicating "LSA-E" (may supervise English speaking crews only) or "LSA-S" (may supervise Spanish speaking crews only) or "LSA-R" (may supervise Russian speaking crews only) or "LSA-E/S" (may supervise both English and Spanish speaking crews) or "LSA-E/R" (may supervise both English and Russian speaking crews), to a Contractor association who issues wildland Incident Identification / Qualification cards (IIQC). A copy shall also be sent to the Protection Contract Services Unit prior to bid award, or following testing thereafter, by fax to 503-945-7494 or mail for comparison with a roster obtained from the testing authority. The issuer of IIQ cards shall incorporate one of the specified four letter designations in the IIQC Position Qualifications Block.

One of the following designations shall be located on the IIQC Position Qualifications Block:

LSA-E: English speaking only

LSA-S: Spanish speaking only

LSA-R: Russian speaking only

LSA-E/S (Bilingual English-Spanish)

LSA-E/R (Bilingual English-Russian)

Certification of English language communication skills will be **valid for three years** from the date of issuance by the third party provider.

D.5.6.1 Prompt and efficient communications between CONTRACTOR Crew personnel and GOVERNMENT Incident personnel is mandatory for safe and effective performance. At a minimum, CONTRACTOR'S Strike Team Leader, Crew Boss and all three Squad Bosses of every Crew shall be proficient in the English language. The Crew Boss must be proficient in all languages used by the Crew. The three Squad Bosses must be able to communicate proficiently in any language used by their squad members. The Crew Boss and all three Squad Bosses must also be able to read the Incident Action Plan, Safety Alerts, etc. and communicate the information contained therein to all Crew Members. All radio communication on GOVERNMENT-assigned frequencies shall be in English. GOVERNMENT will evaluate compliance with this specification using the procedures provided in D.5.6.

D.5.6.2 To ensure a uniform process is available to evaluate Strike Team Leader, Crew Boss and Squad Boss compliance with the requirements of Section D.5.6.1 during fire season, GOVERNMENT personnel may conduct English language communication skills assessment of individual CONTRACTOR personnel at an incident, and shall use Exhibit G of this agreement to conduct the assessment.

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