

Fire -Season Fitness Module: (24 weeks total during fire season)

Objective: Provides continuous training during fire season to sustain the fitness levels established during the pre-season module. Fitness levels should be optimal at this point in order to maximize job performance, provide fatigue countermeasures, and provide injury prevention and mitigation.

This module will focus on continued cardiovascular training to utilize aerobic and anaerobic capacity, maintain muscle strength and endurance, and emphasize continued flexibility training. Due to the nature of fire season, it is important for crews to consider improvisation methods when out on incidents in order to maintain their fitness levels. Other items of importance during this module include:

- Crew cohesion/team building fitness methods
- Fitness Assessments
- Cross Training
- Muscle Balance
- Adjust for fatigue (fatigue countermeasures)
- Improvisation for field environment
- Minimize overuse injuries
- Promotion of continued wellness (nutrition, hydrations, stress relief, sleep)

Mental Fitness/Preparation continues to be a key component during this phase. Being Firefit requires a commitment to adhering to fitness which enhances both health and safety of teams and individuals. Team building exercises/activities should also be incorporated as part of the program.

Each exercise component will be broken down using the F.I.T. Principal. F = frequency, I = intensity, T = time.

- **Cardiovascular:** during the course of the module, cardiovascular capacity will be maintained through the continued use of both moderate and vigorous intensity conditioning (cross training) to minimize injuries and avoid boredom. Cardiovascular training should be done 5-6 days a week (*frequency*) with a duration of 45-60 minutes of activity (*time*) at an intensity of 80%-90% (*intensity*) of the established Target Heart Rate (THR).

Cross-training is encouraged in order to mitigate overuse injuries and boredom and support muscle balance. Anaerobic activities should include work specific activities such as pack hiking and activities that promote team building and crew cohesion. A minimum of 1 day of rest is still recommended.

- **Muscle Strength:** Muscle strength and endurance should already be established at this point and exercises continued to maintain those levels. It will be important to minimize the muscle strength exercises as not to add added bulk and weight. Once an individual has obtained the muscle strength needed to accomplish work related tasks, training should focus on muscle endurance and include calisthenics. Muscle endurance will be important especially for digging handline and other activities requiring long duration.

When implementing muscle strength exercises, they should be done a minimum of 3 days a week (*frequency*) and in combination with muscle endurance exercises. Each exercise should be done with 8-12 repetitions using 70-90% of maximum weight (*intensity*) for 2-3 sets (*time*) with a 1-2 minute rest interval between sets. **Be sure to allow for 48 hours between strength workouts to allow for recuperation of muscles.**

- **Muscle Endurance:** Muscle endurance will continue to be important during fire season and more easily maintained, especially in a field environment. Muscle endurance exercises should still be done 3-4 days a week (*frequency*) and can be combined with muscle strength exercises, completing 12-20 reps using 50-70% of maximum weight (*intensity*) for 2-3 sets (*time*) with 1 minute intervals between sets. Circuit training and calisthenics can also be considered for this phase.

During the Fire-season phase, activities such as calisthenics (push ups, chin ups, tricep dips) are highly recommended along with the muscle strength and muscle endurance exercises as long as caution is taken as not to 'overuse' the muscle groups and still allow for adequate recovery time. **Be sure to allow for 48 hours between strength workouts to allow for recuperation of muscles.**

- **Flexibility:** Stretching will always be one of the most important components of any exercise program. Flexibility includes a good pre-exercise warm up and post exercise stretching regime and cool down. An appropriate warm up should consist of a slow activity such as jogging to warm up the muscles and large, limbering stretches to further prepare the muscles for activity. After the workout is complete, the body should slow and cool down allowing the heart rate to recover and end with slow, static stretches of each muscle group used during exercise. Each stretch should be held for 20-30 seconds using good breathing techniques and no bouncing.
- **Rest:** The body needs 1-2 days of rest during the Fire-Season Module with light or no activity to be done other than something fun and enjoyable. This will allow the muscles to recuperate and help mitigate overuse injuries.