



NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP

NWCG Memorandum 24-002a

February 21, 2024

TO: NWCG Executive Board Members

FROM: Darren Clabo, Chair, Fire Weather Subcommittee and Nick Nauslar, Chair, Fire Environment Committee

SUBJECT: Transition Plan for Implementation of Discontinued Use and Removal of Haines Index and Lightning Activity Level in NWCG Products

Purpose: The Fire Weather Subcommittee (FWSC), in agreement with the Fire Environment Committee (FENC), recommend the discontinued use and removal of all references to Haines Index (HI) and Lightning Activity Level (LAL) within NWCG products as of January 1, 2025, should the NWS formally make this decision. As such, this memorandum provides transition direction to NWCG and the field for implementation of these changes.

Please distribute this information through your agency channels.

Action: The FWSC webpage will be updated to provide reference documents describing the reasoning for removal of HI and LAL, as well as resources available to the field throughout this transition. The removal of all references to HI and LAL will occur in the following NWCG products. If removal is not possible due to legacy products, NWCG will add an addendum to the material with verbiage related to the date of removal.

The NWCG publications that include references to HI and/or LAL include:

- *NWCG Glossary of Wildland Fire*, PMS 205 (Data Management Committee)
 - The FWSC recommends leaving the references to HI and LAL within the glossary and adding wording within the glossary that states that these are legacy products that will no longer be in use as of January 1, 2025.
- *NWCG Guide to Fire Weather Forecasts*, PMS 425 (Fire Weather Subcommittee)
 - The FWSC recommends an update to the product with removal of references to HI and LAL. The FWSC also recommends that by January 1, 2025, the page include metadata on changes with information of when and why HI and LAL were removed.
- *Fire Behavior Field Reference Guide*, PMS 437 (Fire Behavior Subcommittee)
 - The FWSC recommends the inclusion of an addendum for both the digital and print versions of the document that annotates HI and LAL will be discontinued on January 1, 2025. These addendums should include links to the FWSC webpage describing the reasoning by January 1, 2025.

NWCG standards are interagency by design; however, the decision to adopt and utilize them is made independently by the individual member agencies and communicated through their respective directives systems.

- *NWCG Incident Response Pocket Guide*, PMS 461 (Incident Operations Subcommittee)
 - The FWSC has submitted a request for change for the January 2025 updates to the *IRPG* recommending the removal of all wording related to HI and LAL.
- *Gaining an Understanding of the National Fire Danger Rating System*, PMS 932 (Fire Danger Subcommittee)
 - This is a legacy product and FWSC recommends leaving it as is. Moving forward with NFDRSv4 will resolve the issue.

The 6 Minutes for Safety Subcommittee (6MFS) pages that include references to HI and/or LAL include:

- Extreme Fire Behavior
 - The FWSC will work with 6MFS to remove the references to HI and add wording on discussing stability in clear text.
- Dude Fire
 - The FWSC will work with 6MFS to remove the references to HI and add wording on discussing stability in clear text.
- Sadler Fire
 - The FWSC will work with 6MFS to remove the references to HI and add wording on discussing stability in clear text.

The training courses that include references to HI and/or LAL include:

- S-190, Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior (Fire Behavior Subcommittee)
 - The FWSC recommends adding an addendum to the instructor guide to not discuss HI or LAL during in-person training. The FWSC also recommends deleting the references to HI and LAL in the online course materials by January 1, 2025.
- S-290, Intermediate Wildland Fire Behavior (Fire Behavior Subcommittee)
 - This course is currently being rewritten and HI and LAL will not be included in future versions.
- S-390, Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior Calculations (Fire Behavior Subcommittee)
 - This course is currently being rewritten and HI and LAL will not be included in future versions.
- S-490, Advanced Fire Behavior Calculations (S-490 Course Steering Committee)
 - This course is currently being rewritten and HI and LAL will not be included in future versions.
- S-491, Intermediate National Fire Danger Rating System (S-491 Course Steering Committee)
 - With the update to NFDRSv4, there will be no references to HI and LAL.
- RT-130, Wildland Fire Safety Training Annual Refresher (Incident and Positions Standards Committee)
 - The FWSC recommends adding addendums to the current material that include wording on how HI and LAL will be discontinued as of January 1, 2025. The FWSC also recommends links to the FWSC webpage describing the changes.

- During the current and planned course revisions for the above courses, and while these classes are still being taught, FWSC recommends adding an addendum to the instructor guide to not discuss HI and LAL during in-person trainings. FWSC also recommends deleting the references to HI and LAL in the online materials for these courses by January 1, 2025.

Coordination: NWCG Memo 24-002 communicates Executive Board support for this action to the National Weather Service and recommends discontinued use of HI and LAL. FWSC will coordinate with the steward committees and subcommittees of the products affected by the removal of HI and LAL. Additionally, FWSC will communicate internally and externally through NWCG to provide the field with needed information and available resources to adjust to this change.

Contact: For questions, please contact Darren Clabo, Chair, FWSC at darren.clabo@sdsmt.edu; Nick Nauslar, Chair, FENC at nick.nauslar@noaa.gov; or Dave Schultz, NWCG Coordinator, at dschultz@blm.gov.

Distribution:

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