



# InForm

## Welcome to issue one

**Eurofire is a European partnership project, funded by EU Leonardo, that is developing a competency based training system based on a new learning outcomes approach.**

**The Eurofire project runs for 24 months from October 2006 to September 2008 and brings together partners with international expertise and experience in wildfire and prescribed fire management and training.**

The system includes examples of good practise from Europe and around the world.

Eurofire is a pilot project that is developing, evaluating and distributing a new EU wide, multi-lingual on-line training resource that covers fire management, fire prevention and fire suppression activities at a basic level.

The new European Qualifications Framework EQF focuses on learning outcomes at particular levels.

In the Eurofire project a set of competency standards are used to describe the learning outcomes that a member of a crew operating at a basic level might need.

Along with the standards more general educational material is being developed for farmers, foresters and other land managers for fire prevention and other fire management activities.

The project partners are the Global Fire Monitoring Center, CTIF (The International Association of Fire and Rescue Services), and Rural Development Initiatives Ltd.

Further information can be found on the project website at [www.euro-fire.eu](http://www.euro-fire.eu)

### Activities at a glance:

**Oct 06** Project starts with research activity

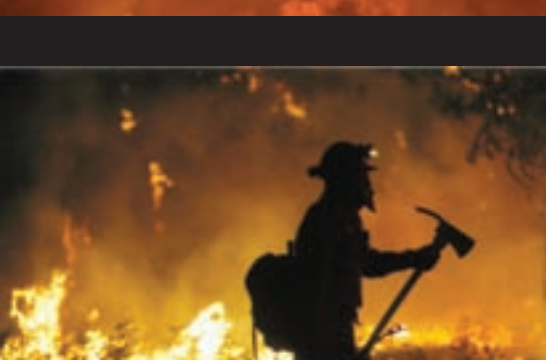
**April 07** Development of competency based training concept

**May 07** Launch at Eurofire & CTIF side meetings at 4th International Wildland Fire Conference

**June – Dec 07** Joint meetings with Fire Paradox Project

**Nov 07** Development of 6 key Level 2 vegetation fire management competency standards

**Oct 07 - March 08** Consultation over standards with interested parties



## Support for Eurofire

“Forest fires are becoming an increasing problem for our forest owner members in many countries in Europe. **We support the efforts of the Eurofire partnership to create a system of education and training materials** to support both the land management and fire services communities in preventing and combating this significant threat.”

**Morten Thorøe**  
Secretary General  
CEPF - Confédération Européenne des Propriétaires Forestiers



## Leonardo key criteria for the Eurofire project:

- To improve skills and competencies of people
- To improve the quality of, and access to continuing vocational training
- Developing relevant and innovative e-learning content
- The promotion of social dialogue in vocational training

EuroFire is being funded with support from the European Commission. The information presented here reflects the views only of the author and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

# Competency based training



Wildfire and prescribed fire managers in Europe come from a diverse range of organisations

**A key context for the Eurofire work is the new European Qualifications Framework (EQF) developed by the EU Commission. The EQF system shifts the focus away from the traditional training approach, which emphasised learning inputs e.g. the hours of training, to the end result.**

Learning outcomes are expressed in the EQF as the skills, knowledge and competencies required at a particular level. The levels are based on the complexity of the tasks and the amount of responsibility that an individual is expected to achieve.

Competency standards, a key part of the new Eurofire system, are a description of learning outcomes, for a work activity, at a level. At this stage only basic, Level 2, standards have been written.

Wildfire and prescribed fire managers in Europe come from a diverse range of organisations. The Eurofire competency standards have therefore been written in a way that takes this diversity into account.

The standards describe competencies using the key activities, tasks and tools that all fire management organisations have in common.

The standards are structured in a series of modules. Each module contains a work activity or series of work activities, which have similar learning outcomes.

## Competency standards, that reflect good work practises, written in terms of learning outcomes:

- 1 support a better match between the needs of the labour market and education and training provision.
- 2 facilitate the validation of practical experience and informal learning as well as formal training.
- 3 help the transparency of qualifications across different countries training systems.

## Competency Standards

**A key context for Eurofire is the new European Qualifications Framework (EQF) from the EU Commission.**

**A core part of the EQF is a set of eight reference levels, describing what skills, knowledge and competence a learner should have to achieve a qualification.**

**Qualifications are to be based on the end result of learning-the learning outcomes. Over time all national qualifications will be cross-referenced to the EQF levels.**

The emphasis on outcomes of learning, the end result is a big change from the traditional approach to training that emphasized inputs e.g. number of training hours.

Competency standards are a description of the performance required on the job and the knowledge needed to support that activity in a context or range of situations, at a level. In other words competency standards can be used to create a structure for work based training and qualifications.

In an industry context a standards based system support a better match between the needs of employers (demand) and training providers (supply).

Competency standards are normally written as general statements sufficient to describe the activity. The detail is in other documents, training manuals, assessment guidance and other reference material.

The Eurofire standards are written at Level 2, a basic level, for people working as part of a team under supervision.

### Units of Final Draft Eurofire Vegetation Fire Management Competency Standards at Level 2:

- EF 1** Ensure that your actions in the vegetation fire workplace reduce the risks to yourself and others:
- EF 2** Apply techniques and tactics to control vegetation fire.
- EF 3** Communicate within a team and with supervisors at vegetation fires
- EF 4** Apply hand tools to control vegetation fires.
- EF 5** Control vegetation fires using pumped water
- EF 6** Apply vegetation ignition techniques

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## 5 steps for fire prevention

**Eurofire is supporting the farmers and foresters of Europe by developing educational material on fire prevention. The material will be based on the “5 steps to risk assessment” approach, along with practical advice on “do’s and don’ts.”**

### Step 1

Identify the fire related hazards

### Step 2

Decide who or what might be harmed or damaged and how

### Step 3

Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

### Step 4

Record your findings and implement them

### Step 5

Review your assessment and update if necessary



## 60 SECONDS with Michael Bruce

Position: EuroFire project manager



**Q. When did you first get interested in fire training?**

A. I've been training people in basic wildfire techniques and setting competency standards for prescribed burning for over 10 years.

**Q. Why do we need competency standards?**

A. It's a way of creating objectives for training and a benchmark for the assessments that are a crucial aspect of work related qualifications.

**Q. How long will it take people to learn the skills and knowledge in the standards?**

A. This depends on a number of things, the person's previous experience and knowledge, access to formal and informal learning etc but as a rough guide each unit has been structured to represent 20 – 30 notional learning hours.

**Q. Notional learning hours, that's a new one on me, what are they?**

A. Ahh, sorry it's an education term, it's an estimate of the length of time that someone needs to acquire a bit of knowledge or skills and it includes all methods - including practical experience, mentoring and coaching, formal teaching, and self-learning. There are so many different ways that people can learn and they are all included!

Thank you, **Editor**

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# Fire Paradox

The Fire Paradox project is creating tools to support professional training and development in the management of wildfires, especially prescribed burning and backfiring techniques. Fire Paradox and Eurofire as two EU funded projects have agreed to work together to support their common objectives.

"The Fire Paradox Project training team has been much encouraged by the support and sharing of knowledge with the Eurofire team. The structured competency based approach to the training of all the people involved in fire management has much to commend it."

**Eric Rigolot**  
Deputy Co-ordinator



Marc Castellnou (GRAF) and Daniel Kraus (GFMC): Fire Paradox Project training team members working with Eurofire.

## In the next Eurofire Inform issue...

- Description of the training materials written to support the standards
- Use of the website to distribute material [www.euro-fire.eu](http://www.euro-fire.eu).
- 3 more standards covering: Map reading, Chainsaws and brushcutters, working with helicopters and aircraft.

## Messages from Partners

**"The increasing need for streamlining international cooperation in wildfire management throughout the European Union and its adjoining countries is requiring the development of collectively agreed standards and training materials. The EuroFire competency standards will enhance capability and efficiency of land managers and fire services, and will allow inter-operable use of European firefighters in international fire emergency response."**

**Johann Goldammer**, Director, Global Fire Monitoring Center

**"Wildfires are an international problem. The Eurofire project is helping to address CTIF's desire to create safer working practices for all types of firefighters across the world. The project has evolved into a set of standards and training materials for basic firefighting at wildfires, which will initially be translated into both French and German, indicating the truly international perspective of the project."**

**Mark Jones**, President Forest Fires Commission CTIF



Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC)  
[www.gfmc.org](http://www.gfmc.org)



The International Association  
of Fire and Rescue Services (CTIF)  
[www.ctif.org](http://www.ctif.org)



Rural Development  
Initiatives (RDI)  
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