

## Lesson 12 – Validation and Creating a Pending Decision

*Estimated time to complete: 15 minutes*

In this lesson, you will:

- Determine that the pre-planned response is an unsuccessful Course of Action (COA) and document why it was not successful
- Exclude the Action Item “Follow the planned initial response” from the COA, and
- Create a pending decision on the Decisions tab.

This lesson contains 3 short exercises.

### When must I Create and Publish a Decision?

You must create and publish a decision in the following circumstances:

- The pre-planned COA is not valid and requires a new COA.
- The situation requires a change in the level of oversight, significant changes to resource requirements, or increased costs require escalation to the next level of authority.
- The incident has escaped initial attack and is escalating into extended attack or long-duration event.

### Validating the Course of Action (COA)

Over the course creating and publishing a decision, you will visit the Validation tab each time you determine that the current COA is unsuccessful and a (new) decision is warranted.

When initial attack efforts failed and the pre-planned initial response was unsuccessful, then the default COA did not satisfy the Strategic Objectives as set forth in planning documents, and it must be excluded from the Action Item list on the COA tab. You must do two things:

1. Navigate to the COA tab to exclude the pre-planned response, and
2. Navigate to the Validation tab, and answer NO to the following question “Does the proposed Course of Action satisfy the incident and strategic objectives?” Document why the pre-planned response was not successful.

Note: These few steps are very important, but easily forgotten, and should be done early on in your decision-making. If not completed, it will appear as if you are validating the first decision twice.

Once you have completed these two tasks, you can create a decision with a new COA. You will visit the Validation tab a second time, in a future lesson, to validate the new COA and provide justification for why you believe it will be successful. Before a decision can be published, the developed COA must be validated.

When determining whether or not the selected COA is valid, consider documenting the answers to the following questions in the Comment section:

- Are the resources available to accomplish this course of action? (If the answer is no, you need to re-visit your course of action.)
- If fire behavior modeling was used, does it suggest that your course of action will meet the objectives?
- Are the estimated costs for the course of action in line with historical costs?

Once the comments are complete, answer the question “Does the proposed Course of Action satisfy the incident and strategic objectives? Yes or No.

Note: If Incident Owners and Editors validate the pre-planned response by selecting Yes on the Validation tab, no decision needs to be published. However, if the COA varies from the pre-planned one, then a decision must be created and a new COA must be validated before a decision can be published.

### Excluding the Pre-planned Response

**Q.** *“I’ve got a pretty good grasp of the fire situation and I’ve completed the relative risk assessment. Am I ready to create Incident Objectives & Requirements and a Course of Action?”*

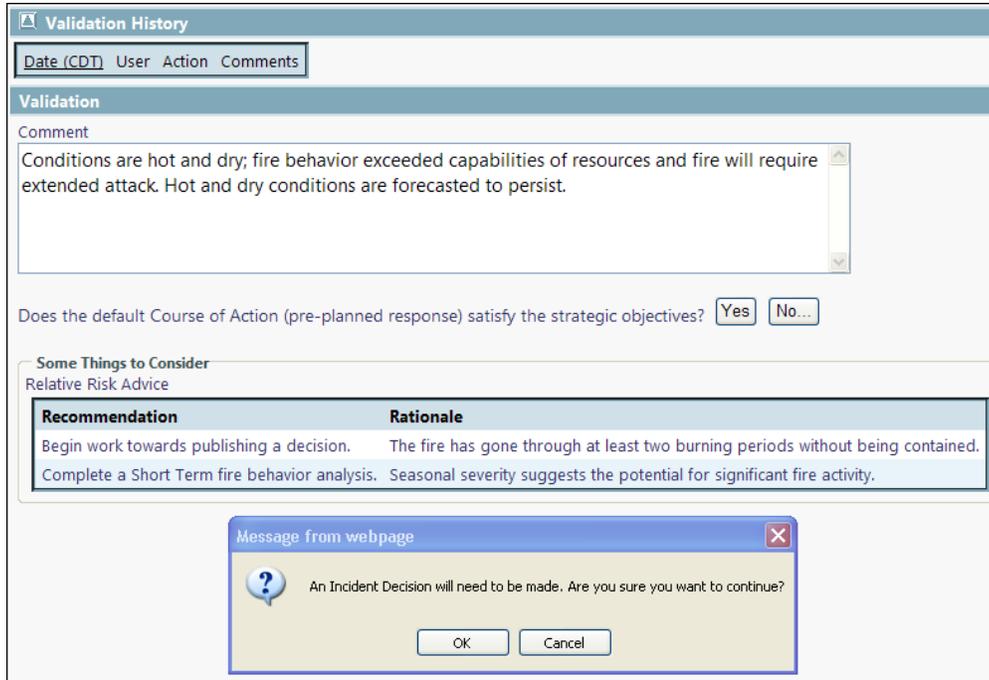
**A.** *No. You’re creating a decision because your fire escaped initial attack and exceeded the capabilities of the pre-planned response—your initial course of action. You need to document that. Here’s what you need to do:*

#### To exclude the pre-planned response:

1. From the Incident List, select the incident for which you would like to exclude the pre-planned response, and then click **View Information**.
2. Click the Course of Action tab.
3. In the table near the bottom of the page, select the radio button beside *Follow the planned initial response* (it will have a ‘Yes’ beside it because until now, it was included in the management of the incident). This selection activates the **Edit**, **Exclude**, and **Delete** buttons beneath it.
4. Click **Exclude**. The **Yes** changes to a **No**. You are excluding it because it is no longer a valid course of action.

#### To document why you excluded the pre-planned response:

1. Click the **Validation** tab. You see **Validation History** at the top of the page and a **Validation Comment** field beneath it.
2. In the comment box, explain why the initial course of action failed; and then answer the question *“Are the Strategic Objectives being satisfied with the current course of action?”* They are not, so select **NO**.
3. Click ‘OK’ when prompted *“An Incident Decision will need to be made. Are you sure you want to continue?”*



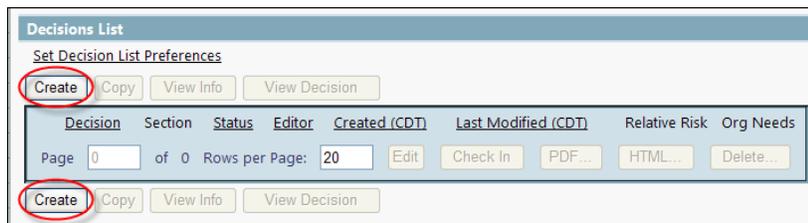
### Creating a Pending Decision

When you create a pending decision from the Decision tab, you are creating the framework for your decision content. This must be done before you can approve, review or publish a decision because this step provides formatting for the document.

All decision inputs previously created roll over into the formatted decision document and all subsequent decision inputs are also added to the structured document. After you create a pending decision, you have access to the Decision Editor where you can fine tune the document, add supportive content, and finalize your inputs. You will approve and publish your pending decision in a later lesson.

#### To create a pending decision:

1. From the Incident List, select the incident you would like to create a decision for, and then click **View Information**.
2. Click the **Decisions** tab.
3. Click **Create**.



4. A list of Requirements displays at the top of the page that must be met before publishing, and the Decision List displays at the bottom of the page. Your Pending

Decision is available (in the screenshot below), with all of its individual parts revealed (Assessment, Objectives, etc.).

The screenshot shows the Wildland Fire Decision Support System interface. At the top, it displays the system name, incident information (sandia2 / 2012-NMCIF-), and a navigation menu with tabs for My Home, Incidents, Analyses, Intelligence, Data Management, and Administration. Below this is a sub-menu with tabs for Information, Situation, Objectives, Course of Action, Validation, Decisions, Periodic Assessment, and Reports. The 'Decisions' tab is active, showing a message: "Decision 'Pending Decision' created." Below this message is a section titled "Requirements that must be completed before the pending decision can be Reviewed / Approved" with a list of requirements:

- A complete Unique Fire Identifier is required ("Year-Unit ID-Local Number" on the Incident Information page).
- An incident size greater than 0 acres is required.
- A Relative Risk Assessment is required.
- At least one Decision Approver must be granted privileges (from the Incident Privileges page).
- At least one Action Item must be included in the Course of Action.
- An Estimated Cost is required for the incident (on the Course of Action page).
- The proposed Course of Action needs to be validated (from the Validation page).
- Content must be added to the "Rationale" section of the decision (with the decision editor).

Below the requirements is a "Decisions List" section with a "Set Decision List Preferences" button and a "Pending KMZ" button. A table lists the components of the decision:

Decision	Section	Status	Editor	Created (CDT)	Last Modified (CDT)	Relative Risk	Org Needs
<input type="radio"/> Pending Decision		Available	Rau, Diane	04/30/2012 18:24	04/30/2012 18:24		
<input type="radio"/> Pending Decision	Assessment	Available	Rau, Diane	04/30/2012 18:24	04/30/2012 18:24		
<input type="radio"/> Pending Decision	Objectives	Available	Rau, Diane	04/30/2012 18:24	04/30/2012 18:24		
<input type="radio"/> Pending Decision	Course of Action	Available	Rau, Diane	04/30/2012 18:24	04/30/2012 18:24		
<input type="radio"/> Pending Decision	Validation	Available	Rau, Diane	04/30/2012 18:24	04/30/2012 18:24		
<input type="radio"/> Pending Decision	Rationale	Available	Rau, Diane	04/30/2012 18:24	04/30/2012 18:24		

At the bottom of the table, there are pagination controls: "Page 1 of 1 Rows per Page: 20" and buttons for "Edit", "Check In", "PDF...", "HTML...", and "Delete...".

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

- [Course of Action](#)
- [Validating the Course of Action](#)