



WILDLAND FIRE LESSONS LEARNED CENTER

Tips for Writing and Submitting Rapid Lesson Sharing (RLS) Reports

Writing Tips

- Strive to adhere to the “A.B.C.” best practice writing principle: “Accuracy, Brevity, Clarity”. Your RLS draft should be accurate, be brief, and be clear.
- From two to four pages seems to be an ideal length for an RLS – of course, where appropriate, there will always be exceptions.
- Remember, your “Lessons” section is extremely important. Use these prompts to develop good lessons:
 - What do folks now know that they wish they’d known before the event?
 - What would folks share with others who could be in a similar situation?
 - What were some successes and challenges?
 - What actions can be taken moving forward?
- While your “Narrative” section is also important – briefly telling the story of what happened – try to keep this introduction to your RLS as succinct and concise as possible. There’s a tendency to want to get down into the weeds here. Try to avoid that tendency.

Formatting Tips

- It is not necessary for you to format the RLS draft that you first submit to the LLC. You can simply submit the text for your Narrative and Lessons sections and include your photos without embedding them into the text. The LLC can then format/design your RLS package for you into the “official” RLS format.
- Of course, for those who would rather format their RLS submission, that is perfectly fine.
- Always including caption information with your photos is helpful. And if you have included direct “pull” quotes from folks in your RLS submission, please remember to include the identity/source of the quote.
- Once the LLC has updated this first draft of your RLS submission, it is returned to you for your review.

Review Process

- The LLC takes great strides to honor the work that is submitted to us. We see our role as doing a “light hand on the land” type editing. This usually involves places (sometimes a single sentence) in the text that might be confusing or unclear. In these cases, we will suggest and implement a rewrite for the author’s review or ask the author to please clarify.
- We also ensure that terms and capitalization are correct and consistent, and that hyperlinks function correctly. And, of course, we’re always on the lookout for minor typos and to help with minor wordsmithing where necessary.
- Our Golden Rule at the LLC is to never make any substantial changes to the RLS without the consent of the RLS author. When the RLS is posted to the LLC’s Incident Review Database this should always be the final draft that the author has reviewed and approved.

