

Chapter 07 Fire Fighting Crews

1

2

3

4 Introduction

5

6 The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Wildland Fire Management (WFM)
7 program typically employs the following types of crews: Hotshot Crews, Type 2
8 IA Crews, Type 2 Crews and Camp Crews. This chapter describes these crew
9 programs. Each crew must meet the minimum National Wildfire Coordinating
10 Group (NWCG) qualifications and standards as identified in **Appendix G-1**.
11 Camp crew configuration will be regionally defined.

12

13 Interagency Hotshot Crews

14

15

16 Policy

17

18 The BIA National Hotshot Crew program represents a cooperative effort within
19 the BIA and between the BIA and Tribally administered Interagency Hotshot
20 Crews (IHC's), to set standardized operating procedures, guidelines and policy
21 for management and administration of BIA funded IHCs.

22

23 Mission

24

25 The mission of the BIA National IHC program is to provide a safe, organized,
26 mobile and highly skilled hand crew for all wildland fire management activities.
27 The crews in this program represent elite fire fighting resources that build their
28 professional reputations on integrity, quality and productivity. Crew members
29 will use their skills and experience to provide training and mentoring in fire
30 suppression and prescribed fire activities.

31

32 Program Guidance

33

34 The Interagency Hotshot Crew Operations Guide documents the minimum
35 training, qualifications, physical fitness, operational procedures, and
36 transportation standards for all IHC's. All IHC's must be certified annually as
37 documented in the operations guide. The arduous duties, specialized
38 assignments, and operations in a variety of geographic areas required of IHC's
39 dictate that training, equipment, communications, transportation, organization,
40 and operating procedures are consistent for all IHC's. This guide is available on
41 the web site: <http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/people/hotshots/>.

42

43 The BIA National Hotshot Crew Management Guide documents specific
44 guidance pertinent to the BIA. The program objectives are as follows:

- 1 • Establish an oversight program and guide to ensure uniform
2 standards and procedures for the BIA National IHC Program.
- 3 • Provide the administrative and supervisory direction for
4 management of the operations of its member crews.
- 5 • Identify legitimate uses of the BIA National IHC Program.
- 6 • Identify a process for entering into the BIA/Tribal National IHC
7 Program.
- 8 • Establish direction and requirements for annual reporting to the
9 IHC Management Board and BIA-National Interagency Fire
10 Center (NIFC).
- 11 • Identify protocol for participation of BIA funded IHC's at the
12 geographical area and national levels.

13 14 **IHC Organization**

15
16 The BIA/Tribal Hotshot Crew Management Board provides national level
17 oversight for the BIA program. The board consists of the crew superintendents
18 and is responsible for providing program accountability, operational oversight,
19 and crew compliance to NWCG and interagency standards and qualifications.

20
21 Crew organization and structure will follow the National IHC Operations Guide
22 and Standardized Position Descriptions for the following positions:
23 Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Squad Leader, Senior Firefighter, and
24 Crew member with required IQCS qualifications tied to the positions
25 description. Each IHC will contain a minimum of seven permanent/career
26 positions.

27
28 All host units will be required to ensure that the IHC has completed and
29 document readiness reviews annually prior to seasonal availability.
30 Documentation then has to be forwarded to the BIA-NIFC office and
31 Geographical Area Coordination Center (GACC). There will be no exception to
32 this requirement for the BIA Host Units or BIA IHC's. (Reference Appendix C
33 and D of the National IHC Guidelines.)

34
35 The minimum mobilization standards for IHC's are as follows.

- 36 • Must have a minimum of 18 qualified personnel to be dispatched.
- 37 • Shall have no more than 20% of the crew with less than one season
38 of fire experience.
- 39 • Must have permanently assigned supervisory staff.
- 40 • Must have an assigned availability period with a minimum of 90
41 consecutive days (including required days off).
- 42 • Must work and train together a minimum of 40 hours per week
43 during their availability period.

- 1 • Will be able to mobilize within 2 hours of receipt of orders during
- 2 their availability period.
- 3 • Will be available for incident assignments with no geographic
- 4 restrictions.
- 5 • Will be able to break down into at least three squads for initial
- 6 attack and/or other independent operations.
- 7 • Must have assigned vehicles, hand tools, power saws and
- 8 communications equipment configured for their needs.
- 9 • Will be logistically self-sufficient utilizing credit card or agency
- 10 purchasing authority.

11
12 The BIA fully funds 7 certified IHC's. Additional information on the BIA IHCs
13 is in **Appendix G-2**.

14 15 **Safety**

16
17 BIA IHC's will promote and maintain a passion for safety. Tactical assignments
18 for crews will not be initiated or continued without strict adherence to the 10
19 Standard Fire Orders, 18 Watch Out Situations, and principles of Lookouts,
20 Communications, Escape Routes and Safety Zones (LCES). It is the
21 responsibility of each crew member to function safely.

22
23 Violation of the minimum mobilization standards of 18 crew members will be
24 considered a safety violation and possible disbanding of the crew immediately.
25 Responsibility to follow this standard belongs to the Host Unit Supervisor and
26 the Crew Superintendent.

27 28 **Training**

29
30 Members of an IHC must receive an annual minimum of 80 hours of required
31 training (refer to Appendix B of the National Interagency Hotshot Crew
32 Operations Guide). Returning members of an IHC must receive 24 hours of
33 critical training before their first assignment in a fire season. New members of
34 an IHC must receive the required training for an IHC crew member prior to
35 being dispatched as a member of an IHC.

36
37 Critical training will include, but is not limited to, crew safety, risk management,
38 firefighting safety, fire behavior, communications, and organization. The final
39 responsibility for crew availability will rest with the Superintendent's
40 certification to management that all training is complete.

41 42 **Physical Fitness Standards**

43

1 Minimum physical fitness requirements are identified in the National Interagency
2 Hotshot Crew Operations Guide.

3

4 **Operational Procedures**

5

6 The core tour of availability for national mobilization of BIA IHC's, excluding
7 required training periods, will be a minimum of 10 pay periods. The core period
8 will be established by the home unit and the GACG.

9

10 In the event a crew is not available for the 10 pay periods of national availability
11 the crew will lose national funding and will be disbanded immediately.

12

13 **Communications**

14

15 BIA IHC's will provide a minimum of five programmable multi-channel radios
16 per crew.

17

18 **Transportation**

19

20 Crews will be provided adequate transportation. This should not exceed four
21 vehicles. All vehicles must adhere to the certified maximum Gross Vehicle
22 Weight (GVW) limitations.

23

24 **Equipment Inventory**

25 Equipment inventory shall be completed annually and forwarded to the
26 respective Regional offices and BIA-NIFC office. Equipment that was
27 purchased using the national IHC account shall be recorded and tagged
28 following property requirements of the BIA Property Management Guidelines.

29

30 In the event a crew is disbanded for any reason all equipment will be returned to
31 the Regional office and used with other IHC's within the Region. In the event
32 the Region has no need for the equipment it should be transferred to another
33 Region that hosts BIA IHC's. The BIA-NIFC office will help facilitate this
34 process if requested to move the property following BIA property regulations.

35

36 **IHC Development Process**

- 37 1. After reviewing and evaluating criteria for establishment of an IHC, the
38 following process must be used to pursue funding and recognition
39 within the BIA and wildland fire community.
- 40 2. The Home Unit must submit an IHC proposal through their respective
41 Regional Office to the supporting GACG for consideration of
42 development of a new IHC. This proposal must identify that there is
43 local support for the crew, develop a training plan to meet the national
44 standards, and develop a budget based on the training program.

- 1 Additional information can be found in the BIA National Hotshot Crew
2 Management Guide.
- 3 3. If the GACG verifies the need for additional IHCs and the Regional
4 Office confirms, the request should be officially sent to BIA-NIFC,
5 Operations.
- 6 4. BIA-NIFC will consolidate proposals and provide them to the BIA
7 Hotshot Crew Management Board.
- 8 5. The Hotshot Crew Management Board will evaluate proposals and
9 make recommendations to BIA-NIFC for incorporation of crews into
10 the BIA funded National IHC Program.
- 11 6. The request for funding new IHC's will be incorporated into the BIA
12 two year out budget request when only funding is available.
- 13 7. If funds are secured, BIA-NIFC will notify the appropriate Regional
14 Office(s) of newly funded IHC(s). The Regional Office should work
15 closely with the supporting GACG to ensure the crews are incorporated
16 into the system as an IHC trainee crew.
- 17 8. Once certified (see National IHC Guide for certification process) the
18 servicing GACG will nominate the crew to the National Interagency
19 Coordination Center (NICC) for inclusion in the National Interagency
20 Mobilization Guide as a designated national IHC. This certification
21 process will be completed annually by all BIA-IHC;s crews.
- 22 9. BIA-NIFC will provide available funding for the IHC to the Home Unit
23 through the respective Regional office.
- 24 10. The Home Unit shall provide direction, support, and review processes
25 to ensure IHC operations are safe, efficient and meet the operations
26 standards as are set forth in the National Interagency Hotshot Crew
27 Operation Guide, BIA Hotshot Crew Annual Operating Plan, BIA
28 National Hotshot Crew Management Guide, National Interagency
29 Mobilization Guide, Interagency Fire Business Management
30 Handbook, Fireline Handbook and other governing documents.

32 **Type 2 Crews**

33 The BIA WFM Program has a long history of providing emergency firefighter
34 (EFF) crews as its contribution to the national wildland fire suppression effort.
35 At maximum mobilization nearly 50% of Type 2 Crews are Native American
36 Indian EFF crews. The EFF program provides an important employment
37 opportunity to the Tribes.

38
39 For the BIA, Type 2 crews usually consist of agency/tribal personnel, and
40 emergency firefighters (EFF). These crews will be formed into 20-person
41 firefighting crews for fireline duties or 10 person crews for fire camp support.
42 The BIA Type 2 fire fighting crews and camp crews typically consist of local
43 individuals that are hired under the Department of the Interior (DOI)
44 Administratively Determined (AD) Pay Plan for Emergency Workers. They are
45 hired for the duration of the emergency and then released from employment.

1

2 Policy

3

4 The EFF Crew program is a cooperative effort within the BIA and between the
5 BIA and Tribes to set standardized operation procedures, guidelines and policy
6 for management and administration of BIA sponsored EFF crews. Information
7 specific to this program is documented in the *BIA Wildland Fire Emergency*
8 *Fire Fighter and Crew Management Guide*.

9

10 In addition, the following handbooks and guides provide information relevant to
11 program operations:

- 12 • National Interagency Mobilization Guide
- 13 • Geographical Area Mobilization Guides
- 14 • Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook
- 15 • Fireline Handbook
- 16 • Local and Regional Crew Guides and Annual Operating Plans

17

18 Regional and/or geographical EFF Crew Management Boards or designated
19 equivalent will be established to provide program accountability, operational
20 oversight and compliance to NWCG and interagency wildland fire qualifications
21 standards.

22

23 The EFF crew program will use the annually revised AD Pay Plan to employ,
24 pay, classify, and establish conditions of hire for all individuals. In addition,
25 local conditions of hire may be implemented.

26

27 Mission

28

29 Provide organized, skilled crews for wildland fire operations by instilling
30 standards, funding and operational consistency throughout the Bureau's WFM
31 program.

32

33 Provide local, regional and national crew resources as the BIA's contribution
34 and fair share to the wildland fire management effort.

35

36 Work with Tribes to enhance employment opportunities, and support the long
37 term tradition of Native American Indian Firefighters.

38

39 Crew Organization

40

41

42 Type 2 Initial Attack (IA) Crew

- 43 • Crew composition shall consist of one Crew Boss, a minimum of 3
44 Type 5 Incident Commanders, and 16 Crew Members. Crew size,

- 1 including trainees shall not exceed 20 persons. In no instance will a
- 2 crew be dispatched with less than 18 persons.
- 3 • Must have a minimum of 18 qualified personnel to be dispatched.
- 4 • The minimum number of inexperienced personnel shall not exceed 8 on
- 5 any one crew of 20 members.
- 6 • Must have basic firefighter training and/or an annual firefighter safety
- 7 refresher.
- 8 • Will be available for incident assignments with no geographic
- 9 restrictions.
- 10 • Will be able to break down into squads for initial attack and/or other
- 11 independent operations, to include burnout.
- 12 • Must have 4 programmable radios.
- 13 • Will be logistically self-sufficient utilizing credit card or agency
- 14 purchasing authority.
- 15

16 **Type 2 Crews**

- 17 • Crew composition shall consist of one Crew Boss, a minimum of two
- 18 Squad Bosses, and 16 Crew Members. Crew size, including trainees
- 19 shall not exceed 20 persons. In no instance will a crew be dispatched
- 20 with less than 18 persons.
- 21 • The minimum number of inexperienced personnel shall not exceed 12
- 22 on any one crew of 20 members.
- 23 • A Crew Representative may accompany a crew when dispatched
- 24 outside of the local unit’s jurisdiction. The Crew Representative is
- 25 responsible for all administrative duties such as time keeping,
- 26 commissary, accident reports and follow-ups, etc.
- 27 • Crew members are responsible for abiding by the “Conditions of
- 28 Hire”, “Rules of Conduct”, and required to conduct themselves in a
- 29 professional work-safe manner at all times.
- 30

31 **Camp Crews**

- 32 • Camp Crews will be composed of approximately 10 members. A
- 33 Camp Crew Leader will be identified for each crew along with a Camp
- 34 Crew Squad Boss and Camp Crew Members.
- 35 • The Camp Crew Leader is responsible for work effectiveness, safety,
- 36 conduct, welfare, discipline, and leadership. The Camp Crew Leader
- 37 will report directly to the Facilities Unit Leader, who will have the
- 38 administrative duties otherwise fulfilled by a Crew Representative.
- 39 • Camp Crew Members are responsible for abiding by the “Conditions-
- 40 of-Hire”, “Rules of Conduct”, and required to conduct themselves in a
- 41 professional work-safe manner at all times.
- 42

1 **National Minimum Standards (Physical Fitness and Training) for Fire**
2 **Fighters**

- 3
- 4 1. Assigned crew overhead (crew boss/squad boss) must meet the minimum
5 standards set forth in *NWCG Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide (PMS*
6 *310-1)*.
 - 7 2. Individuals must meet the arduous physical fitness level as defined in the
8 *Fitness and Work Capacity* publication.
 - 9 3. Individuals must be available for 14-day minimum assignment, excluding
10 travel.
 - 11 4. Crew members are required to have complete S-130 and S-190 and annual
12 refresher training prior to crew assignment. Field exercises that compliment
13 classroom training are recommended.
 - 14 5. Minimum NWCG training and experience requirements are shown in
15 **Appendix G-3.**

16
17 **Personal Gear Requirements for Firefighters**

18
19 The following personal gear represents the minimum NWCG requirements for
20 dispatch outside the local unit for wildland fire fighters.

- 21 1. Personal protective clothing (hard hat, fire resistant shirt and trousers, 8
22 inch leather boots, leather gloves, hearing and eye protection, fire
23 shelter)
- 24 2. Sleeping bags.
- 25 3. Four programmable radios.
- 26 4. Crew First Aid kit and personal First Aid kits.
- 27 5. Web gear, headlamp with batteries, 1 qt. canteen.
- 28 6. Maximum total crew weight 5100 lbs.
- 29 7. Crew members will be allowed two bags (one soft bag, 45 pounds and
30 one day bag, 20 pounds) weighing a total of 65 pounds per individual.
31 All gear and personal items will be carried inside the bag. No
32 aluminum frames will be allowed.

33
34 The following government supplied items will be issued prior to assignments.
35 All government property will be turned into the home unit upon return, even if
36 an item is damaged beyond repair.

- 37 • Hard hat, Fire shelter (fireline crews only).
- 38 • Flame resistant shirt (2 each).
- 39 • Flame resistant trousers.
- 40 • Belt First Aid Kit (Crew Boss and one Squad Boss).
- 41 • Personal Pack.
- 42 • Canteen (fireline crews only).
- 43 • Headlamp, work gloves (all leather), ear plugs, goggles.
- 44 • Individual first aid kit (fireline crews).
- 45 • Day pack/Line pack (fireline crews only, standardized at home unit
46 option).

1

2 **Recommended Personal Items**

- 3 • Work shirt; all cotton, long sleeve (at least one).
- 4 • Work trousers; all cotton, without cuffs (at least one).
- 5 • Coat, jacket or sweatshirt.
- 6 • Underclothes; cotton.
- 7 • Socks; heavy wool or heavy cotton.
- 8 • Handkerchiefs.
- 9 • Ground cloth; plastic or rubber.
- 10 • Personal items; toothbrush, toothpaste, shaving gear and sanitary
- 11 napkins or tampons, prescription medication (at least a 14 day supply),
- 12 etc.

13

14

1 **EFF Program Management and Funding**

2
3

4 **Management and Administration**

5 It is recommended crew management boards be established regionally. The
6 intent of the EFF Crew Management Boards or designee is to provide a
7 consolidated and consistent approach to managing EFF administration, training
8 and operations by:

- 9 • Facilitating and providing accountability for training and crew
10 qualifications.
- 11 • Reviewing, prioritizing and consolidating program funding requests.
- 12 • Identifying and verifying the number of BIA EFF crews available to the
13 national crew system. Report annually to Regional Mobilization
14 Guides prior to print.
- 15 • Establishing procedures to respond to employee conduct issues that are
16 beyond the scope of the home unit.
- 17 • Crew Management Plans are to be sent to the National Office upon
18 revision or implementation, (geographic and/or Agency Specific).

19
20 **Request for Funding Authorization**

21 The authorization and procedure for use of the emergency operations
22 “suppression” (92310) program account, for emergency firefighter training is as
23 follows:

- 24 • A funding request plan must be completed that identifies the program
25 need for EFF funding.
- 26 • The request must be submitted through the EFF Crew Management
27 Boards or equivalent to the respective Regional Fire Management
28 Officer (FMO) by January 1st of each year.
- 29 • Requests will be reviewed and authorized in writing to the respective
30 Crew Management Board and/or Agency.
- 31 • BIA-NIFC will do random audits of this process to ensure program
32 compliance.

33
34 **Training Program Funding Process**

35 See Chapter 4, EFF Program Management and Funding, Sec. g.

36
37 The following describes what may be charged to this activity.

- 38 • Payments for facility rental, fire camps, and related support costs to
39 present EFF required fire training courses and field exercises.
- 40 • Payments for catering when training is located in remote locations that
41 are not conducive to people traveling home and returning the next day.
- 42 • Payments for transportation of EFF personnel to training.
- 43 • Payments for fire training instructors i.e., salary, per diem, and related
44 travel.

- 1 • Payments for maintaining or providing fuel and service equipment used
2 to support the EFF program.
- 3 • Procurement of training course materials and supplies.

4
5 Authorization and procedures for use of the DOI AD Pay Plan for fire training
6 are as follows:

7
8 The plan may be used to fund individuals, other than regular federal employees
9 to attend fire suppression training with the following parameters:

- 10 • Not to exceed a total of 80 hours per year for an individual in
11 preparation for emergency fire situations.
- 12 • Not to exceed a total of 120 hours per year for a qualified individual to
13 prepare, instruct, and issue certificates for required courses for
14 emergency incident situations.
- 15 • Allows the hiring of personnel to attend prescribed fire training and/or
16 to instruct fire suppression or prescribed fire training when weather
17 conditions, training coordination, and a timely response are critical to
18 the success of the training effort. All activities that can be planned well
19 in advance must use traditional methods of payment.
- 20 • Training should take place during regular work hours.

21
22 **Supplies and Materials Funding**

23 Preparedness funding (92120) must be used for such things as one time startup
24 costs for EFF crews. One time startup costs include the cost of equipment,
25 supplies and materials.

26
27 The authorization and procedures for use of the preparedness account are as
28 follows:

- 29 • The format in the BIA Emergency Fire Fighter Crew Management
30 Guide, Appendix C, must be used to develop a onetime request.
- 31 • A documented and approved EFF training program must be established
32 by the home unit in conjunction with the Crew Management Board or
33 equivalent to train EFF personnel for wildland fire or camp crew tasks.
- 34 • The EFF Crew Management Board or equivalent should develop a
35 consolidated funding request.
- 36 • The request should be consolidated into a subsidiary request. Requests
37 for the fiscal year will be submitted through the Crew Management
38 Boards or equivalent and respective Regional FMOs to BIA-NIFC
39 Operations by January 1st of each year. Funding requests will be
40 reviewed and authorized in writing to the respective Regional FMO.

41
42
43

1 **Qualifications and Experience**

2

3 **Program Administration**

- 4 • EFF Crew members will meet the minimum qualifications, training and
5 experience requirements per the *NWCG, PMS 310-1*.
- 6 • EFF firefighting crew members will be certified by using the
7 Emergency Firefighter Certification process through the Incident
8 Qualification and Certification System (IQCS).
- 9 • Crew member qualifications must be documented through the IQCS.
10 Overhead or technical specialist positions must carry a red card printed
11 from IQCS. IQCS provides the only valid qualification credentials for
12 BIA sponsored wildland firefighters.
- 13 • Home Unit FMOs are responsible for ensuring EFF firefighting
14 personnel are entered into the IQCS. FMOs will be held accountable
15 for dispatching qualified personnel. Each crew boss will carry a list of
16 respective crew members certified in the IQCS while on assignment.

17

18 **Crew Mobilization Process**

19 Dispatch procedures are established by the home unit, respective zone dispatch
20 and/or GACC. Dispatch procedures must be established and documented at
21 each home unit.

22

23 Crew dispatches will be identified by the Agency's name and number, Crew
24 Boss last name and respective dispatch number. This will provide some identity
25 to the respective crew and a point of contact during and after assignment.

26

27 **Crew/Individual Member Preparedness Guidelines**

28

- 29 • Crew members must be familiar with mobilization/demobilization
30 procedures.
- 31 • Crew members should not carry expensive personal items (radio,
32 camera, tape recorder, jewelry, etc.). Management will not be
33 responsible for lost, stolen, damaged, or destroyed personal items not
34 essential to the job.
- 35 • Individuals accepting an assignment agree that, under ordinary
36 circumstances, they will remain with the crew for the duration of the
37 crew assignment. Examples of extraordinary circumstances include
38 illness or injury, or disciplinary actions. Return transportation will
39 normally be provided for individuals who quit or are fired while on
40 assignment, however, the cost of the transportation will be deducted
41 from the individual's pay.
- 42 • Crews will be available for a 14 day assignment, excluding travel.
43 Under usual circumstances, the assignment may be extended but may
44 not exceed 21 days.

- 1 • Rest and Relaxation (R&R) will be administered per the Interagency
2 Incident Business Management Handbook.
- 3 • Normal work shifts for crews on fires are intended to be 12 hours duty
4 time per shift, and a minimum of 8 hours non-duty time between shifts.
5 Any shift in excess of 16 hours will require a written justification by
6 the incident commander (IC)

7

8 **Crew Demobilization Process**

9

10 **Functional Responsibility**

11

12 **IC:** Responsible for determining the need for retention or release of all resources
13 assigned to an incident. Individual crews may request release or express a desire
14 to be worked longer through the Crew Representative/Interagency Resource
15 Representative (IARR), but the final decision rests with the IC.

16

17 **Coordination Centers:** May be involved in demobilization either on a local,
18 regional, or national level. Coordination Centers are responsible for establishing
19 demobilization schedules and travel methods based on tentative release from the
20 incident.

21

22 **Crew Representative:** If a Crew representative is assigned that person will
23 accompany the crew to the mobilization staging area and remain with the crew
24 until the crew completes the release process. The Crew Representative will
25 provide to the home unit a complete Crew Representative Report. The Crew
26 Representative Report will consist of :

- 27 • Copies of ICS - Unit Logs.
- 28 • Special/specific documentation regarding significant performance or
29 major offenses.
- 30 • Original CA-1, CA-2, CA-16, Crew Time Report, Crew Performance
31 Ratings, and other required forms.
- 32 • Any other information the home unit may be able to use in the
33 management of crews.
- 34 • Should be a GS employee with purchasing capabilities to logistically
35 support the crew upon dispatch. (Meals and Lodging)

36

37 **Crew Boss:** Fill the role of the Crew Representative if one is not assigned. Ensure that
38 the crew sleeping area is policed and provide assistance to the incident management team
39 (IMT) in demobilization of incident camp. Ensure that crew members are aware that
40 their actions in the hours of demobilization are as important as their fireline actions and
41 have just as much impact on total crew performance evaluations.