
MOBILIZATION TO OPERATIONS

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SW Area Wildfire Response Plan

All Fire Personnel Best Practices

See also:

[Interagency Mobilization Checklist during COVID-19](#)

[MPHAT Screening Tool](#)



Appendix A: All Fire Personnel Best Practices address:

- General Information
- Best Practices
- Practice Social Distancing
- Work under the “Module as One” concept
- Face coverings
- Practice personal hygiene
- PPE laundry – regular basis
- Workplace/equipment/cleaning procedures
- Other steps to reduce personal risk
- Travel/transportation
- Symptom monitoring
- Testing
- Positive Infection
- Contingency planning
- Definitions

- [SW Area Wildland Fire Response Plan](#)

SW Area Wildfire Response Plan

Strategic Public Info Considerations

“Consider national and geographic direction on Information releases regarding COVID-19 specific issues at wildland fire incidents managed by IMTs (type 1-3). All releases must be consistent and follow the IMT’s Delegation of Authority. Local unit(s) who delegated the incident to the team approve all releases of information. Local unit Public Affairs offices will maintain close contact with Regional, National and Department Office directives and be able to guide Public Information Officers (PIOs) on what can/cannot be released.

Many remote communities are not well-served by virtual information dissemination and social media in general. Agencies have traditionally relied on community meetings and staffed information boards to allow personal dialogue in impacted communities. This plan foresees that in almost every case, these tools are no longer available to PIOs in areas impacted by COVID-19. These communities should be identified and be briefed in advance of fire season to manage expectations and explore alternatives.

The PIO BMP in Appendix B provides new and existing information dissemination methods to maximize social distancing. Host units should evaluate and update contact lists and e-traplines in advance, providing them to PIOs within in-briefing packages.”

- [SW Area Wildland Fire Response Plan](#)



Moving to Virtual Platforms

We cannot stress enough the changes that are happening.

Think carefully about whether you can adapt to the new environment. There is currently no way in IROC to indicate your status as being available for field assignments vs. virtual assignments. There may be opportunities for both this season.

Do not accept an assignment that you are not comfortable with. Know that resource orders may come with specific technology and skill needs.

Much of the work will be done via computers and media platforms, including Facebook, Teams, Inciweb, FireNet and potentially other programs.

Consider how you can adapt to the new environment. If you decide to go available in IROC, we encourage you to reach out to your host unit PAO and/or IMT leads to help us identify who may be available virtually this year.

Expect computer issues to happen. Do you have the adaptability to help be part of finding the solution?

For current information on COVID-19 and Agency Plans and response go to the [NIFC PIO Incident Board](#).



“Identify opportunities for personnel to work remotely/virtually...have the technology, training, and coordination to be effective and proficient. Practice and prepare to enhance knowledge and the skills necessary to efficiently conduct work off-site.”

“Be prepared to be self-sufficient for several days, including potential remote/spike camp locations.)”

- [SW Area Wildland Fire Response Plan](#)

[Procedures for Off-Site/Remote Incident Assignments](#)

[Suggested resource order language for ordering a virtual PIO](#)

Pre-Season to Getting the Call

Things To Do To Get
Ready For Fire Season

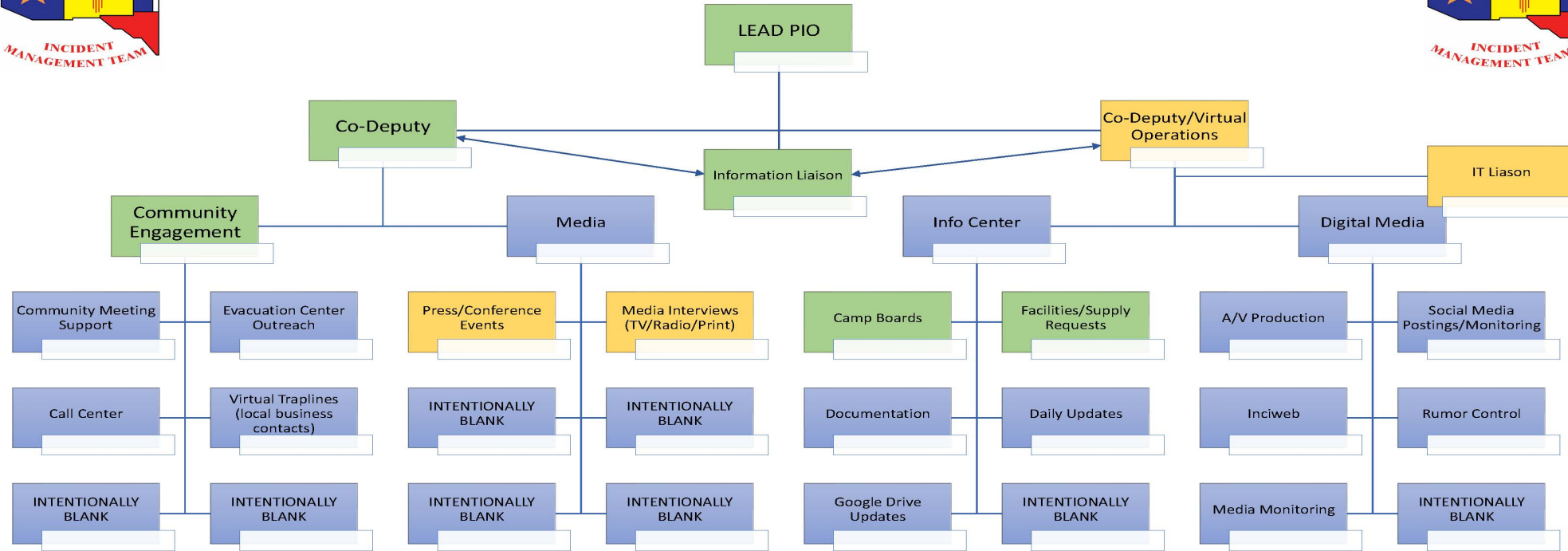
1. Make sure you have a current red card.
 - [FMB memo regarding Adjustments to Wildland Fire Preparedness Activities for the 2020 Fire Year](#) (RT-130 fire refresher)
2. Contact dispatch to update your availability/getting IROC self-status access
 - [Requesting self-status](#) in the new [Interagency Resource Ordering Capability \(IROC\)](#) dispatch system.
3. Make sure your Inciweb password works – reset it or request access if needed. [Instructions](#)
4. Keep up with [Wildland Fire COVID-19 Related Info](#)
5. Bookmark the [NIFC PIO Bulletin Board](#) including [Info for Public Affairs Officers](#)
6. Prepare for an [Incident-Within-An-Incident](#)
7. Add Key Contacts to Your Address Book
8. Network With Colleagues
9. Refresh Your Skills
10. Learn Some New Skills



VIRTUAL PIO ORGANIZATION



VIRTUAL STAFFING MODEL



NOTES:

- All positions are virtual except where indicated with color key at right, those positions will be at ICP.
- Community meetings will be conducted using online meeting software (like Microsoft Teams or Zoom)

KEY:

- Position/function to be at ICP
- Position/function to be Virtual
- Position/function to be at ICP or Virtual

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Internal & External Communication Platforms

Our biggest obstacle will be the transfer of complex important information.

We've also learned to expect the unexpected and know there will be connectivity challenges we will need to adapt to as well.

The Information Liaison and Assistant will be the Point of Contact and disseminate the updates to the leads through different methods.



How will we communicate in this remote environment?

- Firenet/Teams
- Messages/Texts/Chats
- Phone Calls
- Zoom

Other information that we normally have on walls in the Information shop will be posted on TEAMS.

We will have one person assigned to update Firenet boards to reflect the most current information.

Everyone assigned will need to have access to Firenet so they can have access to internal documents.

Mobilization to Operations

The SW Area Wildland Fire Response Plan document is intended to be used as a tool for extended attack/complex wildland fire response for Fire Information Section during the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic.

The following guidelines were developed in response to the current COVID-19 conditions.

Availability of training opportunities and Position Task Books (PTBs).



“Implement a strategy that utilizes a “skeleton” staff physically located at the incident, with support staff off-site. On-site PIO would coordinate with other functions and resources, funneling current information to rest of Info staff for dissemination.

“Leverage resources with cooperators and partners when looking outside the agencies for PIO skills to support efforts (coordinate with AZ Department of Emergency and Military Affairs).”

“Utilize existing systems like Inciweb, Fire EGP, websites and social media platforms (AZ Fire Info, AZEIN, NM Fire Info, and SWCC Fire Info) to the fullest extent.”

“Utilize non-traditional media (newspapers, radio) and consider staffing call centers to serve more rural populations, especially if connectivity is limited.”

“Conduct daily COVID-19 Screening Tool.”

“Limit media visits to ICP and the fire line; visitors should be medically screened according to approved protocols and equipped with appropriate PPE. Maximize remote interview options.”

“Use email lists and/or email subscription services to distribute daily incident updates, maps and other information as an “electronic trapline.”

“Utilize ‘portable’ info boards, in the form of an electronic community newsletter for dissemination of information to affected entities; enlist the cooperation of businesses or other establishments to ‘adopt’ an information bulletin board to post maps and information (distributed by PIO via electronic means).”

“Conduct video/virtual community information meetings using available technology. Ensure a consistent feedback loop for two-way communication with the community.”

- SW Area Wildland Fire Response Plan

Position Task Books (PTBs)

While efforts will be made to work on PTBs, understand that new procedures may limit what tasks you can complete on an incident

PTBs will be addressed on an incident-by-incident basis. Communicate with your designated point of contact for more information once assigned

Requesting Feedback on NWCG PIO Positions

The [NWCG PIO Subcommittee](#) is proposing adding a PIO3 position and changing PIOF to PIO4.

[Review the comparison table with descriptions for proposed NWCG PIO positions.](#)

They are soliciting feedback on the addition of the new position as well as the roles and responsibilities of all four positions. Please provide feedback through your agency [PIO Subcommittee member](#) by May 31, 2020.

A Publication of the
National Wildfire
Coordinating Group

NWCG Task Book for the Position of:
**PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER
(PIOF)**

PMS 311-07 JUNE 2009

Task Book Assigned To:

Trainee's Name: _____
Home Unit/Agency: _____
Home Unit Phone Number: _____

*FEMA is looking at moving to a 4-tier system. They are currently working with members of the NWCG subcommittee for what that could look like. FEMA currently does not have updates available to reference on their website. This change would allow us to be in line with FEMA.

Camp Assignment

- If you are assigned to ICP or remote (within 20 minutes) from the Incident Camp, make sure you are ready to be self-sustaining for 72 hours. This includes food, shelter, PIO supplies, computers, chargers for phones, and your own sanitizing wipes and gels.
- Depending on complexity of assignments, special crews may not be in place to support the cleaning and safety of the camp and equipment. Please be prepared to decontaminate your equipment and vehicle as needed.
- Protocols are in-place for how we will safely interface with personnel, media and public if staged at ICP.
- Considerations include masks, social distancing, and constant use of hand washing or hand sanitizers.
- Conduct daily COVID-19 Screening, as per the [Southwest Wildfire Response Plan](#) Appendix C – Wildland Fire COVID-19 Screening Tool.



Working at Home as a Virtual PIO

- Ø Check-in will be done virtually.
- Ø Working at home as a PIO you have a responsibility to be as productive as when you were in fire camp. Our expectations are that you will be as accessible during the time while on assignment shift through computer or phone. With the exception of breaks and lunch/dinner.
- Ø Time will be documented on CTRs and approved by section leads virtually. (Community, Media, Info Center, Digital Media)
 - Ø [How to scan documents on your iPhone, iPad, or iPod touch](#)
 - Ø [How To scan documents with Google Drive - Android](#)
 - Ø Unit logs and incident documentation will be completed online
- Ø Leads in the different function areas have been identified and notified. You will be assigned into a virtual area and wait for instructions from your lead.
- Ø All communication will go through your lead unless otherwise discussed during incident and adjusted.

PREPARING FOR AN INCIDENT WITHIN AN INCIDENT

[NIFC Critical Incident Resources Preparedness Guide for](#)

[Firefighters and their Families](#)

[U.S. Forest Service Supplement](#)



- *“Direct all media questions and reactions to the potential exposure to the incident PIO or to the local or state public health official, following all agency protocols and HIPAA regulations to protect personal privacy.*
- *Follow the most current direction from the CDC, state, and local health authorities including jurisdictional/responsible agency direction.*
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus>
- *Implement team or local unit exposure response plan.*
- *Implement specific agency response protocols for the affected individual(s).*
- *Ensure local health officials are involved.*
- *Determine reporting process for COVID-19 related exposure (local level, home unit, 209, etc.). “*

- SW Area Wildland Fire Response Plan

- If there is an Incident Within an Incident (IWI) each PIO team Cadre Lead will have protocols as to how they will identify and implement their response.
- Review and be up to date with IWI responsibilities (PIO Incident Organizer)
- Coordinate with Information Liaison to coordinate with Leads and provide updates as they become available

Stress First Aid

Disaster Distress Hotline

SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Helpline provides 24/7, 365-day-a-year crisis counseling and support to people experiencing emotional distress related to natural or human-caused disasters.

Includes support for Deaf/Hard of Hearing & Spanish Speakers

Call or Text

Callers to the hotline can also connect with counselors in over 100 other languages via 3rd-party interpretation services



The following is an excerpt from the peer support class Stress First Aid (SFA)+. It highlights seven actions to help identify and address stress reactions in yourself and others.

The **Stress Continuum The Stress Continuum Model** is a visual tool to assess stress responses. Stress responses vary in severity and type. There is no “normal” response to stress, and stress responses are not signs of mental illness. Every person reacts to stressful stimuli, but individual responses depend on how well a person is prepared to confront the stressor, along with their individual interpretation of the stressor. A person’s stress response can rapidly change from Green to Yellow to Orange to Red and back again. SFA falls in the middle of the care spectrum somewhere between training, stress management, prevention, and clinical treatments from healthcare providers. It offers a set of procedures to help manage stress reactions when someone is moving from Yellow to Orange or even Red. Mitigation actions can and should be applied by anyone, anywhere. - [Preparedness Guide for Firefighters and their Families](#)

READY	REACTING	INJURED	ILL
<p>Definition: Active coping and mastery. Optimal functioning wellness.</p> <p>Features: Well trained and prepared. Fit and focused. In control. Behaving ethically. Having fun.</p>	<p>Definition: Mild, transient distress that goes away. Loss of optimal functioning. Low risk for illness.</p> <p>Features: Irritable, angry. Anxious or depressed. Physically too pumped up or tired. Poor focus and/or sleep. Not having fun.</p>	<p>Definition: More severe, persistent distress and loss of function. Leaves a “scar.” Higher risk of illness.</p> <p>Causes: Life threat; Loss; Inner conflict; Wear and tear.</p> <p>Features: Panic or rage. Loss of control of body or mind. Can’t sleep. Recurrent nightmares or bad memories. Persistent shame, guilt or blame. Loss of moral values & beliefs.</p>	<p>Definition: Persistent and disabling distress and loss of function. Clinical mental disorders. Unhealed stress injuries.</p> <p>Types: PTSD Depression Anxiety Substance abuse</p> <p>Features: Symptoms and disability persist over many weeks. Symptoms and disability get worse over time.</p>

Demob

- Demob will look different this season.
- Flexibility and patience with new processes will be key to assuring a successful assignment.
- As season progresses processes may change in this non-traditional season.
- All efforts will be made to accommodate task books and signatures.