Chapter 08
Interagency Coordination & Cooperation

Introduction

Fire management planning, preparedness, prevention, suppression, restoration and rehabilitation, monitoring, research, and education will be conducted on an interagency basis with the involvement of cooperators and partners. The same capabilities used in wildland fire management will also be used, when appropriate and authorized, on non-fire incidents in the United States, and on both wildland fires and non-fire incidents internationally.

National Wildland Fire Cooperative Agreements

USDOI and USDA Interagency Agreement for Fire Management

The objectives of the Interagency Agreement for Fire Management Between the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), National Park Service (NPS), Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) of the United States Department of the Interior (DOI) and the Forest Service (FS) of the United States Department of Agriculture are:

• To provide a basis for cooperation among the agencies on all aspects of wildland fire management and as authorized in non-fire emergencies.
• To facilitate the exchange of personnel, equipment (including aircraft), supplies, services, and funds among the agencies.

DOI, USDA, and DOD Interagency Agreement

The purpose of the Interagency Agreement for the Provision of Temporary Support During Wildland Firefighting Operations among the United States Department of the Interior, the United States Department of Agriculture, and the United States Department of Defense is:

• To establish the general guidelines, terms and conditions under which the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) will request, and DOD will provide, temporary support to NIFC in wildland fire emergencies occurring within all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and all U.S. Territories and Possessions, including fires on State and private lands. It is also intended to provide the basis for reimbursement of DOD under the Economy Act.

These and other agreements pertinent to interagency wildland fire management can be found in their entirety in Chapter 40 of the National Interagency Mobilization Guide online at: http://www.nifc.gov/nicc/mobguide/CHAPTER40.pdf

Release Date: January 2012
**National Wildland Fire Management Structure**

**Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC)**
The WFLC is a cooperative, interagency organization dedicated to achieving consistent implementation of the goals, actions, and policies in the National Fire Plan and the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy. The WFLC provides leadership and oversight to ensure policy coordination, accountability, and effective implementation of the National Fire Plan and the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy.

The Council consists of the Department of Agriculture's Undersecretary for Natural Resources and the Environment and the Chief of the U.S. Forest Service; the Department of the Interior's Directors of the National Park Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Land Management, the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs and the Chief of Staff to the Secretary of the Interior; the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Fire Administration; the Intertribal Timber Council; the Western Governors Association; the National Association of State Foresters; and the National Association of Counties.

Staffing the Council will be coordinated by the Department of Agriculture's Office of Fire and Aviation Management and the Department of the Interior's Office of Wildland Fire Coordination.

**Federal Fire Policy Council (FFPC)**
The Federal Fire Policy Council carries out the federal component of wildland fire management. The primary responsibilities of the FFPC include establishing national policy guidance; formulating, coordinating, and integrating wildland fire policy; providing policy direction for the formulation of the wildland fire budgets; providing a forum to consider and resolve inter- and intra-departmental policy issues; ensuring that program goals are identified and that results are measured for wildland fire; and maintaining national level fire activity situational awareness.

The Federal Fire Policy Council is composed of the USDA Deputy Under Secretary – National Resources and Environment; the Chief of the Forest Service and the Deputy Chief of State and Private Forestry; and for DOI the Assistant Secretaries for Policy, Management and Budget, Fish and Wildlife and Parks, Indian Affairs, Land and Minerals Management, and Water and Science; the Bureau Directors of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Land Management, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, and the US Geological Survey; the Deputy Assistant Secretary – Law Enforcement, Security & Emergency Management; the Assistant Administrator of DHS-US Fire Administration; and the Environmental Protection Agency representative.

**Wildland Fire Executive Council (WFEC)**
The Wildland Fire Executive Council provides coordinated interagency federal executive level wildland fire policy leadership, direction, and program oversight.
Members include the Director, USDA FS Fire & Aviation Management; the Director, DOI Office of Wildland Fire Coordination; the BLM Assistant Director, Office of Fire and Aviation Management; the NPS Associate Director, Visitor and Resource Protection; the FWS Assistant Director, National Wildlife Refuge System; the BIA Deputy Director, Trust and Services; the Associate Director, DOI Aviation Management Division; the Administrator, DHS U. S. Fire Administration; and the Chair, NWCG, in an ex officio capacity.

Interior Fire Executive Council (IFEC)
The Interior Fire Executive Council (IFEC) provides coordination and interagency executive level wildland fire policy leadership, direction, and program oversight. IFEC is the focal point for discussing wildland fire policy issues that affect the DOI and provides a forum for gathering the interests of the DOI bureaus to formulate a DOI recommendation and/or position to be taken forward to the Wildland Fire Executive Council (WFEC).

The IFEC is composed of the Director, Office of Wildland Fire Coordination (OWFC) and the four DOI fire directors and their respective senior executive. Associate members include the Director, Aviation Management Directorate and a representative from USGS.

Office of Wildland Fire Coordination (OWFC)
The OWFC is a Department of the Interior organization responsible for managing and overseeing all wildland fire management activities executed by the bureaus. OWFC coordinates the Department’s wildland fire programs within the Department and with other federal and non-federal partners, to establish legally and scientifically based Department-wide policies and budgets, and to provide strategic leadership and oversight, that result in safe, comprehensive, cohesive, efficient, and effective wildland fire programs for the nation consistent with the bureaus’ statutory authorities and constraints.

OWFC has three functional areas:
- The Budget and Performance Management Division which manages and oversees the DOI Wildland Fire Management financial account and budget operations;
- The Policy Division which develops wildland fire management program policies, strategies, and plans for wildland fire operations, fuels and biomass coordination, emergency management coordination, science advisory, international cooperation, and strategic planning; and
- The Enterprise Systems and Decision Support Division which coordinates with Federal and non-Federal partners on inter-departmental/intra-governmental Information Technology systems that support interagency wildland fire business management, fire operations and program management activities and other decision support tools. This functional area also manages the Fire Program Analysis Group (FPA), Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS), the Integrated Reporting of Wildland-
National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG)
The NWCG is made up of the USDA FS; four Department of the Interior agencies: BLM, NPS, BIA, and the FWS; Intertribal Timber Council; U.S. Fire Administration; and state forestry agencies through the National Association of State Foresters (NASF). The mission of the NWCG is to provide leadership in establishing and maintaining consistent interagency standards and guidelines, qualifications, and communications for wildland fire management. Its goal is to provide more effective execution of each agency’s fire management program. The group provides a formalized system to agree upon standards of training, equipment, qualifications, and other operational functions.

Multi-Agency Management and Coordination

National Multi-Agency Coordinating (NMAC) Group
National multi-agency coordination is overseen by the NMAC Group, which consists of one representative each from the following agencies: BLM, FWS, NPS, BIA, FS, NASF, and the USFA, who have been delegated authority by their respective agency directors to manage wildland fire operations on a national scale when fire management resource shortages are probable. The delegated authorities include:

- Provide oversight of general business practices between the NMAC group and the Geographic Area Multi-Agency Coordination groups.
- Establish priorities among geographic areas.
- Activate and maintain a ready reserve of national resources for assignment directly by NMAC as needed.
- Implement decisions of the NMAC.

Geographic Area Multi-Agency Coordinating (GMAC) Groups
Geographic area multi-agency coordination is overseen by GMAC Groups, which are comprised of geographic area (State, Region) lead administrators or fire managers from agencies that have jurisdictional or support responsibilities, or that may be significantly impacted by resource commitments. GMAC responsibilities include:

- Establish priorities for the geographic area.
- Acquire, allocate, and reallocate resources.
- Provide NMAC with National Ready Reserve (NRR) resources as required.
- Issue coordinated and collective situation status reports.
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National Dispatch/Coordination System

The wildland fire dispatch system in the United States has three levels (tiers):

- National
- Geographic
- Local

Logistical dispatch operations occur at all three levels, while initial attack dispatch operations occur primarily at the local level. Any geographic area or local dispatch center using a dispatch system outside the three-tier system must justify why a non-standard system is being used and request written authorization from the DOI National Office or USFS Regional Office.

National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC)

The NICC is located at NIFC, Boise, Idaho. The principal mission of the NICC is the cost-effective and timely coordination of land management agency emergency response for wildland fire at the national level. This is accomplished through planning, situation monitoring, and expediting resource orders between the BIA Areas, BLM States, National Association of State Foresters, FWS Regions, FS Regions, NPS Regions, National Weather Service (NWS) Regions, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Regions through the United States Fire Administration (USFA), and other cooperating agencies.

NICC supports non-fire emergencies when tasked by an appropriate agency, such as FEMA, through the National Response Framework. NICC collects and consolidates information from the GACCs and disseminates the National Incident Management Situation Report through the NICC website at http://www.nifc.gov/nicc/sitreprt.pdf.

Geographic Area Coordination Centers (GACCs)

There are 11 GACCs, each of which serves a specific geographic portion of the United States. Each GACC interacts with the local dispatch centers, as well as with NICC and neighboring GACCs. Refer to the National Interagency Mobilization Guide for a complete directory of GACC locations, addresses, and personnel.

The principal mission of each GACC is to provide the cost-effective and timely coordination of emergency response for all incidents within the specified geographic area. GACCs are also responsible for determining needs, coordinating priorities, and facilitating the mobilization of resources from their areas to other geographic areas.

Each GACC prepares an intelligence report that consolidates fire and resource status information received from each of the local dispatch centers in its area. This report is sent to NICC and to the local dispatch centers, caches, and agency managers in the geographic area.
Local Dispatch Centers

Local dispatch centers are located throughout the country as dictated by the needs of fire management agencies. The principal mission of a local dispatch center is to provide safe, timely, and cost-effective coordination of emergency response for all incidents within its specified geographic area. This entails the coordination of initial attack responses and the ordering of additional resources when fires escape initial attack.

Local dispatch centers are also responsible for supplying intelligence information relating to fires and resource status to their GACC and to their agency managers and cooperators. Local dispatch centers may work for or with numerous agencies, but should only report to one GACC.

Some local dispatch centers are also tasked with law enforcement and agency administrative workloads for non-fire operations; if this is the case, a commensurate amount of funding and training should be provided by the benefiting activity to accompany the increased workload. If a non-wildland fire workload is generated by another agency operating in an interagency dispatch center, the agency generating the additional workload should offset this increased workload with additional funding or personnel.

Local and Geographic Area Drawdown

Drawdown is the predetermined number and type of suppression resources that are required to maintain viable initial attack (IA) capability at either the local or geographic area. Drawdown resources are considered unavailable outside the local or geographic area for which they have been identified. Drawdown is intended to:

- Ensure adequate fire suppression capability for local and/or geographic area managers.
- Enable sound planning and preparedness at all management levels.

Although drawdown resources are considered unavailable outside the local or geographic area for which they have been identified, they may still be reallocated by the Geographic Area or National MAC to meet higher priority obligations.

Establishing Drawdown Levels

Local drawdown is established by the local unit and/or the local MAC group and implemented by the local dispatch office. The local dispatch office will notify the Geographic Area Coordination Center (GACC) of local drawdown decisions and actions.

Geographic area drawdown is established by the GMAC and implemented by the GACC. The GACC will notify the local dispatch offices and the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) of geographic area drawdown decision and actions.
National Ready Reserve (NRR)

NRR is a means by which the NMAC identifies and readies specific categories, types, and quantities of fire suppression resources in order to maintain overall national readiness during periods of actual or predicted national suppression resource scarcity.

NRR implementation responsibilities are as follows:

- NMAC establishes national ready reserve requirements by resource category, type, and quantity.
- NICC implements NMAC intent by directing individual GACCs to place specific categories, types, and quantities of resources on national ready reserve.
- GACCs direct local dispatch centers and/or assigned IMTs to specifically identify resources to be placed on national ready reserve.
- GACCs provide NICC specific names of national ready reserve resources.
- NICC mobilizes national ready reserve assets through normal coordination system channels as necessary.

National ready reserve resources must meet the following requirements:

- May be currently assigned to ongoing incidents.
- Must be able to demobe and be enroute to new assignment in less than 2 hours.
- Resources must have a minimum of 7 days left in 14 day rotation (extensions will not be factored in this calculation).
- May be assigned to incidents after being designated ready reserve, in coordination with NICC.
- Designated ready reserve resources may be adjusted on a daily basis.

NMAC will adjust ready reserve requirements as needed. Furthermore, in order to maintain national surge capability, the NMAC may retain available resources within a geographic area, over and above the established geographic area drawdown level.

National Interagency Mobilization Guide

The National Interagency Mobilization Guide (NFES 2092) identifies standard procedures which guide the operations of multi-agency logistical support activity throughout the coordination system. The guide is intended to facilitate interagency dispatch coordination, ensuring timely and cost effective incident support. Local and Geographic Area Mobilization Guides should be used to supplement the National Interagency Mobilization Guide.
All federal agencies have adopted the NWCG Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook (IIBMH) as the official guide to provide execution of each agency’s incident business management program. Unit offices, geographic areas, or NWCG may issue supplements, as long as policy or conceptual data is not changed.

Since consistent application of interagency policies and guidelines is essential, procedures in the IIBMH will be followed. Agency manuals provide a bridge between manual sections and the IIBMH so that continuity of agency manual systems is maintained and all additions, changes, and supplements are filed in a uniform manner.

- **BLM** - The IIBMH replaces BLM Manual Section 1111.
- **FWS** - Refer to Service Manual 095 FW 3 Wildland Fire Management.
- **NPS** - Refer to RM-18.
- **FS** - Refer to FSH 5109.34.

### Standards for Cooperative Agreements

#### Agreement Policy

Agreements will be comprised of two components: the actual agreement and an operations plan. The agreement will outline the authority and general responsibilities of each party and the operations plan will define the specific operating procedures.

Any agreement which obligates federal funds or commits anything of value must be signed by the appropriate warranted contracting officer. Specifications for funding responsibilities should include billing procedures and schedules for payment.

Any agreement that extends beyond a fiscal year must be made subject to the availability of funds. Any transfer of federal property must be in accordance with federal property management regulations.

All agreements must undergo periodic joint review; and, as appropriate, revision. Assistance in preparing agreements can be obtained from local or state office fire and/or procurement staff.

All appropriate agreements and operating plans will be provided to the servicing dispatch center. The authority to enter into interagency agreements is extensive.

Types of Agreements

National Interagency Agreements
The national agreement, which serves as an umbrella for interagency assistance among federal agencies is the interagency agreement between the Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service of the United States Department of the Interior, and the Forest Service of the United States Department of Agriculture. This and other national agreements give substantial latitude while providing a framework for the development of state and local agreements and operating plans.

Regional/State Interagency Agreements
Regional and state cooperative agreements shall be developed for mutual assistance. These agreements are essential to the fire management program. Concerns for area-wide scope should be addressed through these agreements.

Local Interagency Agreements
Local units are responsible for developing agreements with local agencies and fire departments to meet mutual needs for suppression and/or prescribed fire services.

Emergency Assistance
Approved, established reimbursable agreements are the appropriate and recommended way to provide emergency assistance. If no agreements are established, refer to your agency administrator to determine the authorities delegated to your agency to provide emergency assistance.

Contracts
Contracts may be used where they are the most cost-effective means of providing for protection commensurate with established standards. A contract, however, does not absolve an agency administrator of the responsibility for managing a fire program. The office’s approved fire management plan must define the role of the contractor in the overall program.

Contracts should be developed and administered in accordance with federal acquisition regulations. In particular, a contract should specify conditions for abandonment of a fire in order to respond to a new call elsewhere.

Elements of an Agreement
The following elements should be addressed in each agreement:
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• The authorities appropriate for each party to enter in an agreement.
• The roles and responsibilities of each agency signing the agreement.
• An element addressing the cooperative roles of each participant in prevention, pre-suppression, suppression, fuels, and prescribed fire management operations.
• Reimbursements/Compensation - All mutually approved operations that require reimbursement and/or compensation will be identified and agreed to by all participating parties through a cost-share agreement. The mechanism and timing of the funding exchanges will be identified and agreed upon.
• Appropriation Limitations - Parties to this agreement are not obligated to make expenditures of funds or reimbursements of expenditures under terms of this agreement unless the Congress of the United States of America appropriates such funds for that purpose by the Counties of _____, by the Cities of _____, and/or the Governing Board of Fire Commissioners of_____.
• Liabilities/Waivers - Each party waives all claims against every other party for compensation for any loss, damage, personal injury, or death occurring as a consequence of the performance of this agreement unless gross negligence on any part of any party is determined.
• Termination Procedure - The agreement shall identify the duration of the agreement and cancellation procedures.
• A signature page identifying the names of the responsible officials shall be included in the agreement.

• NPS - Refer to DO-20 for detailed instructions and format for developing agreements.

Annual Operating Plans (AOPs)

Annual Operating Plans shall be reviewed, updated, and approved prior to the fire season. The plan may be amended after a major incident as part of a joint debriefing and review. The plan shall contain detailed, specific procedures which will provide for safe, efficient, and effective operations.

General Elements of an AOP

The following items should be addressed in the AOP:

• Mutual Aid
  The AOP should address that there may be times when cooperators are involved in emergency operations and unable to provide mutual aid. In this case, other cooperators may be contacted for assistance.

• Command Structure
  Unified command should be used, as appropriate, whenever multiple jurisdictions are involved, unless one or more parties request a single agency IC. If there is a question about jurisdiction, fire managers should mutually decide and agree on the command structure as soon as they arrive.
on the fire; agency administrators should confirm this decision as soon as possible. Once this decision has been made, the incident organization in use should be relayed to all units on the incident as well as dispatch centers. In all cases, the identity of the IC must be made known to all fireline and support personnel.

Communications

In mutual aid situations, a common designated radio frequency identified in the AOP should be used for incident communications. All incident resources should utilize and monitor this frequency for incident information, tactical use, and changes in weather conditions or other emergency situations. In some cases, because of equipment availability/capabilities, departments/agencies may have to use their own frequencies for tactical operations, allowing the “common” frequency to be the link between departments. It is important that all department/agencies change to a single frequency or establish a common communications link as soon as practical. Clear text should be used. Avoid personal identifiers, such as names. This paragraph in the AOP shall meet Federal Communications Commission (FCC) requirements for documenting shared use of radio frequencies.

Distance/Boundaries

Responding and requesting parties should identify any mileage limitations from mutual boundaries where “mutual aid” is either pay or non-pay status. Also, for some fire departments, the mileage issue may not be one of initial attack “mutual aid”, but of mutual assistance. In this situation, you may have the option to make it part of this agreement or identify it as a situation where the request would be made to the agency having jurisdiction, which would then dispatch the fire department.

Time/Duration

Responding and requesting parties should identify time limitations (usually 24 hours) for resources in a non-reimbursable status, and “reimbursable rates” when the resources are in a reimbursable status.

Qualifications/Minimum Requirements

As per the NWCG memorandum Qualification Standards During Initial Action, March 22, 2004 and the PMS 310-1 Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide:

- The 310-1 qualification/certification standards are mandatory only for national mobilization of wildland fire fighting resources.
- During initial action, all agencies (federal, state, local and tribal) accept each other’s standards. Once jurisdiction is clearly established, then the standards of the agency(s) with jurisdiction prevail.
  - BLM- During initial attack, all agencies accept each other’s standards. When an incident exceeds initial attack and jurisdiction has been established, the standards of the jurisdictional agency(s) prevail.
- Prior to the fire season, federal agencies should meet with their state, local, and tribal agency partners and jointly determine the qualification/
certification standards that will apply to the use of local, non-federal firefighters during initial action on fires on lands under the jurisdiction of a federal agency.
  - The Geographic Area Coordinating Group should determine the application of 310-1 qualification/certification standards for mobilization within the geographic area.
  - On a fire where a non-federal agency is also an agency with legal jurisdiction, the standards of that agency apply.
  - The AOP should address qualification and certification standards applicable to the involved parties.

- **Reimbursement/Compensation**
  Compensation shall be as close to actual expenditures as possible. This should be clearly identified in the AOP. Vehicles and equipment operated under the federal excess property system will only be reimbursed for maintenance and operating costs.

- **Cooperation**
  The annual operating plan will be used to identify how the cooperators will share expertise, training, and information on items such as prevention, investigation, safety, and training.

- **Agency Reviews and Investigations**
  Annual operating plans should describe processes for conducting agency specific reviews and investigations.

- **Dispatch Centers**
  Dispatch centers will ensure all resources know the name of the assigned IC and announce all changes in incident command. Geographic Area Mobilization Guides, Zone Mobilization Guides, and Local Mobilization Guides should include this procedure as they are revised for each fire season.

**Fiscal Responsibility Elements of an AOP**

Annual Operating Plans should address the following:
- The level of communication required with neighboring jurisdictions regarding the management of all wildland fires, especially those with multiple objectives.
- The level of communication required with neighboring jurisdictions regarding suppression resource availability and allocation, especially for wildland fires with objectives that include benefit.
- Identify how to involve all parties in developing the strategy and tactics to be used in preventing wildland fire from crossing the jurisdictional boundary, and how all parties will be involved in developing mitigations which would be used if a wildland fire does cross jurisdictional boundaries.
- Jurisdictions, which may include state and private lands, should identify the conditions under which wildland fire may be managed to achieve benefit, and the information or criteria that will be used to make that determination.
Jurisdictions will identify conditions under which cost efficiency may dictate where suppression strategies and tactical actions are taken (i.e. it may be more cost effective to put the containment line along an open grassland than along a mid-slope in timber). Points to consider include loss and benefit to land, resource, social and political values, and existing legal statutes.

The cost-sharing methodologies that will be utilized should wildfire spread to a neighboring jurisdiction in a location where fire is not wanted.

The cost-share methodologies that will be used should a jurisdiction accept or receive a wildland fire and manage it to create benefit.

Any distinctions in what cost-share methodology will be used if the reason the fire spreads to another jurisdiction is attributed to a strategic decision, versus environmental conditions (weather, fuels, and fire behavior), or tactical considerations (firefighter safety, resource availability) that preclude stopping the fire at jurisdictional boundaries. Examples of cost-sharing methodologies may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- When a wildland fire that is being managed for benefit spreads to a neighboring jurisdiction because of strategic decisions, and in a location where fire is not wanted, the managing jurisdiction shall be responsible for wildfire suppression costs.

- In those situations where weather, fuels, or fire behavior of the wildland fire precludes stopping at jurisdiction boundaries cost-share methodologies may include, but are not limited to:
  a) Each jurisdiction pays for its own resources – fire suppression efforts are primarily on jurisdictional responsibility lands,
  b) Each jurisdiction pays for its own resources – services rendered approximate the percentage of jurisdictional responsibility, but not necessarily performed on those lands,
  c) Cost share by percentage of ownership,
  d) Cost is apportioned by geographic division. Examples of geographic divisions are: Divisions A and B (using a map as an attachment); privately owned property with structures; or specific locations such as campgrounds,
  e) Reconciliation of daily estimates (for larger, multi-day incidents). This method relies upon daily agreed to cost estimates, using Incident Action Plans or other means to determine multi-Agency contributions. Reimbursements can be made upon estimates instead of actual bill receipts.

For further information, refer to **NWCG Memorandum #009-2009 Revisions to the Annual Operating Plans for Master Cooperative Fire and Stafford Act Agreements due to Implementation of Revised Guidance for the Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy, April 13, 2009**
All-Hazards Coordination and Cooperation

All-hazards incidents are natural, technological, or human-caused incidents that warrant action to protect life, property, environment, and public health or safety, and to minimize disruptions of school activities. Wildland fire is one type of all-hazard incident. All-hazards incidents are managed using a standardized national incident management system and response framework.

Stafford Act Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance

The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Public Law 93-288, as amended) establishes the programs and processes for the Federal Government to provide disaster and emergency assistance to states, local governments, tribal nations, individuals, and qualified private non-profit organizations. The provisions of the Stafford Act cover all hazards including natural disasters and terrorist events. In a major disaster or emergency as defined by the act, the President “may direct any federal agency, with or without reimbursement, to utilize its authorities and the resources granted to it under federal law (including personnel, equipment, supplies, facilities, managerial, technical, and advisory services) in support of state and local assistance efforts.”

Homeland Security Act

The Homeland Security Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-296) established the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) with the mandate and legal authority to protect the American people from the continuing threat of terrorism. In the act, Congress also assigned DHS as the primary focal point regarding natural and manmade crises and emergency planning.


Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD-5), Management of Domestic Incidents, February 28, 2003, is intended to enhance the ability of the United States to manage domestic incidents by establishing a single, comprehensive national incident management system. HSPD-5 designates the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Principal Federal Official (PFO) for domestic incident management and empowers the Secretary to coordinate Federal resources used in response to or recovery from terrorist attacks, major disasters, or other emergencies in specific cases.

National Response Framework

Federal disaster relief and emergency assistance are coordinated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) using the National Response Framework (NRF). The NRF, using the National Incident Management System (NIMS), establishes a single, comprehensive framework for the management of domestic incidents. The NRF provides the structure and mechanisms for the coordination of federal support to state, local, and tribal incident managers; and for exercising direct federal authorities and responsibilities. Information about
the National Response Framework can be found at:
http://www.fema.gov/nrf/index.htm

National Incident Management System (NIMS)
HSPD-5 directed that the DHS Secretary develop and administer a National
Incident Management System to provide a consistent, nationwide approach for
Federal, State, and local governments to work effectively and efficiently
together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents,
regardless of cause, size, or complexity. To provide for interoperability and
compatibility among federal, state, and local capabilities, the NIMS will include
a core set of concepts, principles, terminology, and technologies covering the
incident command system; multi-agency coordination systems; unified
command; training; identification and management of resources (including
systems for classifying types of resources); qualifications and certification; and
the collection, tracking, and reporting of incident information and incident
resources.

Emergency Support Function (ESF) Annexes
Emergency Support Function (ESF) Annexes are the components of the NRF
that detail the mission, policies, structures, and responsibilities of federal
agencies. They are utilized for coordinating resource and programmatic support
to the states, tribes, and other federal agencies or other jurisdictions and entities
during Incidents of National Significance. Each ESF Annex identifies the ESF
coordinator and the primary and support agencies pertinent to the ESF. The
primary agency serves as a federal executive agent under the Federal
Coordinating Officer to accomplish the ESF mission. Support agencies, when
requested by the DHS or the designated ESF primary agency, are responsible for
carrying out the ESF mission using their own authorities, subject-matter experts,
capabilities, or resources. USDA-FS is the coordinator and primary agency for
ESF #4 - Firefighting. For ESF #4 operations that occur in the State of Alaska,
the USDA-FS remains the primary agency under the NRF, and works closely
with the Department of the Interior (DOI)/Bureau of Land Management, who
serves as the operational lead for firefighting response in Alaska. See
ESF #4.

Other NRF USDA-FS and DOI responsibilities are:

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### National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP, 40 CFR 300)

The NCP provides the organizational structure and procedures for preparing for and responding to discharges of oil and releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, and contaminants. The NCP is required by section 105 of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA), 42 U.S.C. 9605, as amended by the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 (SARA), P.L. 99–499, and by section 311(d) of the Clean Water Act (CWA), 33 U.S.C. 1321(d), as amended by the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA), P.L. 101–380. The NCP identifies the national response organization that may be activated in response actions to discharges of oil and releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, and contaminants in accordance with the authorities of CERCLA and the CWA. It specifies responsibilities among the federal, state, and local governments and describes resources that are available for response, and provides procedures for involving state governments in the initiation, development, selection, and implementation of response actions, pursuant to CERCLA. The NCP works in conjunction with the National Response Framework through Emergency Support Function 10 – Oil and Hazardous Material Response.

### Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act

The Post-Katrina Emergency Reform Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-295) amended the Homeland Security Act. This law established the FEMA Administrator as responsible for managing the Federal response to emergencies and disasters, and for reporting directly to the President. The Secretary of Homeland Security is the Principal Federal Official, but has no direct authority for response or coordination.
Presidential Policy Directive-8 (PPD-8), National Preparedness, March 30, 2011 is intended to strengthen all-of-Nation preparedness. PPD-8 directs the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop a national preparedness goal and a national preparedness system in coordination and consultation with other federal departments and agencies, state, local, tribal, and territorial governments, private and non-profit sectors, and the public. The national preparedness system will be comprised of:

- National planning frameworks for the prevention, protection, mitigation, response to, and recovery from national threats. These frameworks will be similar and complementary to the National Response Framework (NRF).
- Corresponding interagency and agency operational plans.
- Guidance for the national interoperability of personnel and equipment.
- Guidance for business, community, family, and individual preparedness.

All-Hazards Coordination and Cooperation

In an actual or potential Incident of National Significance that is not encompassed by the Stafford Act, the President may instruct a federal department or agency, subject to any statutory limitations on the department or agency, to utilize the authorities and resources granted to it by Congress. In accordance with Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5, federal departments and agencies are expected to provide their full and prompt support, cooperation, available resources, consistent with their own responsibilities for protecting national security. Personnel assigned to all-hazard incidents may only perform duties within agency policy, training, and capability.

USFS All-Hazards Guiding Principles and Doctrine

The Forest Service has developed doctrine, known as the Foundational Doctrine for All-Hazard Response, outlining the guiding principles, roles, and responsibilities of the agency during all-hazards response. Forest Service responders and leadership are expected to follow this doctrine, established to help ensure the safest response conditions possible.

The following principles encompass the guidelines, roles, and responsibilities established in this doctrine:

- The intent of Forest Service all-hazard response and support is to protect human life, property, and at-risk lands and resources while imminent threats exist.
- Personnel should be prepared and organized to support all-hazard responses by providing trained personnel to utilize their inherent skills, capabilities, and assets -without requiring significant advanced training and preparation. Support to cooperators requiring wildland resources will be consistent with employee core skills, capabilities, and training.
- As incidents move from the response phase to the recovery phase, there should be a shift to demobilizing agency resources.
• Within all-hazard response environments, agency personnel may encounter situations in which there is an imminent threat to life and property outside of their Agency’s jurisdiction. These environments include scenarios ranging from being first on scene at a vehicle accident, to committing Agency resources to protect a local community. Leaders are therefore expected to use their judgment and respond appropriately.

• Wildland resources deployed to all-hazard responses will understand the dynamic and complex environment and utilize their leadership, training, and skills to adapt, innovate, and bring order to chaos.

• Leaders are expected to operate within the incident organizational structure encountered on all-hazard responses. When such structure is absent, they will utilize National Incident Management System principles to assure safe and effective utilization of agency resources.

• Leaders are expected to operate under existing policies and doctrine under normal conditions. On all-hazard responses, fire and aviation business and safety standards may have to be adapted to the situation to successfully accomplish the mission. When conflicts occur, employees will use their judgment, weigh the risk versus gain, and operate within the intent of Agency policy and doctrine.

• All-hazard response will be focused on missions that we perform consistently and successfully. Workforce assignments will be directed toward the core skills developed through our existing training and curriculum.

• Agency employees will be trained to operate safely and successfully in the all-hazard environment. Preparedness training will focus on gaining general knowledge of all-hazard response, disaster characteristics, as well as the effects from these events on citizens and responders.

• Specific operational skills will be facilitated through the National Incident Management System, working with the responsible agencies who supply the technical specialists who, in turn, provide the specific skill sets. The Forest Service will not train or equip to meet every hazard.

• Wildland employees are expected to perform all-hazard support as directed within their qualifications and physical capabilities. All employees have the right to a safe assignment. The employee may suspend his or her work whenever any environmental condition—or combination of conditions—become so extreme than an immediate danger is posed to employee health and safety that cannot be readily mitigated by the use of appropriate, approved protective equipment or technology.

• Acceptable risk is risk mitigated to a level that provides for reasonable assurances that the all-hazard task can be accomplished without serious injury to life or damage to property.

• All-hazard incident-specific briefing and training will be accomplished prior to task implementation. This preparation will usually occur prior to mobilization where incident description, mission requirements, and known hazards are addressed. Key protective equipment and associated needs for
these all-hazard task that wildland employees do not routinely encounter or perform will be identified. This will be done- and be in place-prior to task implementation.

- Agency employees will be provided with appropriate vaccinations, credentials, and personal protective equipment to operate in the all-hazard environment to which they are assigned.
- Additional information can be found in the Forest Service Foundational Doctrine for All-Hazard Response:
  http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/doctrine/conferences/all_hazard_response.pdf

### International Wildland Fire Coordination and Cooperation

#### U.S. - Mexico Cross Border Cooperation on Wildland Fires

In June of 1999, the Department of Interior and the Department of Agriculture signed a Wildfire Protection Agreement with Mexico. The agreement has two purposes:

- To enable wildfire protection resources originating in the territory of one country to cross the United States-Mexico border in order to suppress wildfires on the other side of the border within the zone of mutual assistance (10 miles/16 kilometers) in appropriate circumstances.
- To give authority for Mexican and U.S. fire management organizations to cooperate on other fire management activities outside the zone of mutual assistance.

National Operational Guidelines for this agreement are located in Chapter 40 of the *National Interagency Mobilization Guide* available online. These guidelines cover issues at the national level and also provide a template for those issues that need to be addressed in local operating plans. The local operating plans identify how the agreement will be implemented by the GACCs (and Zone Coordination Centers) that have dispatching responsibility on the border. The local operating plans will provide the standard operational procedures for wildfire suppression resources that could potentially cross the U.S. border into Mexico.

#### U.S. - Canada, Reciprocal Forest Firefighting Arrangement

Information about United States - Canada cross border support is located in Chapter 40 of the *National Interagency Mobilization Guide* available online. This chapter provides policy guidance, which was determined by an exchange of diplomatic notes between the U.S. and Canada in 1982. This chapter also provides operational guidelines for the Canada - U.S. Reciprocal Forest Fighting Arrangement. These guidelines are updated yearly.

#### U.S. - Australia/New Zealand Wildland Fire Arrangement

Information about United States - Australia/New Zealand support is located in Chapter 40 of the *National Interagency Mobilization Guide* available online. This chapter provides a copy of the arrangements signed between the U.S. and the states of Australia and the country of New Zealand for support to one
another during severe fire seasons. It also contains the AOP that provides more
detail on the procedures, responsibilities, and requirements used during
activation.

International Non-Wildland Fire Coordination and Cooperation

International Disasters Support

Federal wildland fire employees may be requested through the FS to support the
U.S. Government’s (USG) response to international disasters by serving on
Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DARTs). A DART is the operational
equivalent of an ICS team used by the U.S. Agency for International
Development’s Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) to provide an on-
the-ground operational capability at the site of an international disaster. Prior to
being requested for a DART assignment, employees will have completed a
weeklong DART training course covering information about:

• USG agencies charged with the responsibility to coordinate USG responses
to international disaster.
• The purpose, organizational structure, and operational procedures of a
  DART.
• How the DART relates to other international organizations and countries
during an assignment. Requests for these assignments are coordinated
  through the FS International Programs, Disaster Assistance Support
  Program (DASP).
• DART assignments should not be confused with technical exchange
  activities, which do not require DART training.

More information about DARTs can be obtained at the FS International