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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

USDOJ 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 wildfire 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>

1 National Wildland Fire Management Structure

2

3 Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC)

4 The WFLC is a cooperative, interagency body dedicated to achieving consistent
5 implementation of the goals, actions, and policies in the National Fire Plan and
6 the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy. The WFLC provides a forum
7 for high-level dialogues between federal and non-federal entities to set strategic
8 direction for national fire management.

9

10 The Council consists of the Department of Agriculture's Undersecretary for
11 Natural Resources and Environment, the Deputy Undersecretary for Natural
12 Resources and Environment, and the Chief of the U.S. Forest Service; the
13 Department of the Interior's (DOI) Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management
14 and Budget, the Directors of the National Park Service, Bureau of Indian
15 Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S.
16 Geological Survey; the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Fire
17 Administration Administrator; the President of the Intertribal Timber Council;
18 two state governors selected from the National Governors Association; a county
19 commissioner serving as a member of the National Association of Counties; a
20 mayor serving as a member of the National League of Cities; a State Forester
21 serving at the request of a senior state elected official; and a fire chief serving at
22 the request of a senior local government elected official.

23

24 The Council is coordinated by the Department of Agriculture's Deputy
25 Undersecretary for Natural Resources and Environment and DOI's Assistant
26 Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget.

27

28 Wildland Fire Executive Council (WFEC)

29 The WFEC is an advisory council that provides recommendations on national
30 wildland fire management to the secretaries of Agriculture and Interior through
31 WFLC. Members include the Director, USDA FS Fire & Aviation
32 Management; the Director, DOI Office of Wildland Fire; the Deputy
33 Administrator, DHS U. S. Fire Administration; an NWCG Executive Board
34 representative; a National League of Cities representative; an Intertribal Timber
35 Council representative; a Fire Committee representative from the National
36 Association of State Foresters; a National Association of Counties
37 representative; an International Association of Fire Chiefs representative, and a
38 National Governors Association representative.

39

40 Federal Fire Policy Council (FFPC)

41 The FFPC provides a common national federal agency approach to wildland fire
42 management. FFPC ensures that wildland fire management policies, programs,
43 activities, and budgets are coordinated and consistent among and between the
44 member agencies and strives for coordinated and consistent policies and
45 programs with non-federal partner and cooperator agencies. FFPC sets strategic
46 policy and program direction, provides coordinated recommendations to the

1 Secretaries of Agriculture, the Interior, and Homeland Security and resolves
2 inconsistencies among and between federal wildland fire programs.

3

4 The FFPC is accountable and has the authority to:

- 5 • Set the vision and provide leadership for the federal wildland fire program
- 6 • Set national federal strategic wildland fire program goals and priorities
- 7 • Establish the Fire Executive Council

8

9 The FFPC is responsible to:

- 10 • Provide coordinated federal wildland fire management policy direction
- 11 • Resolve policy and program management inconsistencies
- 12 • Set strategic budget priorities for wildland fire management
- 13 • Coordinate and communicate with non-federal entities

14

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

25

26 **Fire Executive Council (FEC)**

27 The FEC provides a common, integrated, and coordinated federal agency
28 approach to wildland fire policy, leadership, budget, and program oversight.

29 Within the broad strategic direction and vision set by the FFPC, the FEC ensures
30 that the wildland fire management policies, programs, activities, and budgets are
31 coordinated and consistent among and between the member agencies. FEC sets
32 policy and program direction for federal wildland fire program implementation,
33 provides coordinated recommendations to the FFPC, and resolves
34 inconsistencies among and between federal wildland fire programs. FEC
35 ensures policy and program coordination and integration with non-fire
36 management programs and activities as well as non-federal partners and
37 cooperators.

38

39 The FEC is accountable and has the authority to:

- 40 • Establish strategic federal fire program budget direction and priorities
- 41 • Ensure coordinated federal policy development
- 42 • Develop federal business requirements and priorities

43

44

45

1 The FEC is responsible and has the authority to:

- 2 • Provide coordinated federal interagency executive level wildland fire policy
- 3 leadership, direction, and program oversight
- 4 • Provide coordinated recommendations and advice to the FFPC
- 5 • Provide wildland fire policy and program direction to the Fire Management
- 6 Board (FMB)
- 7 • Provide strategic policy and program integration with resource
- 8 management, aviation, and other related program areas
- 9 • Coordinate and communicate with other non-federal entities
- 10 • Set strategic budget direction and recommendations
- 11 • Establish strategic direction and requirements for wildland fire information
- 12 and technology, wildland fire administrative/business support, scientific and
- 13 research support, and other program areas
- 14 • Approve wildland fire policy, as appropriate
- 15 • Resolve policy and program management inconsistencies and differences
- 16 • Oversee compliance with policy, budget, and program direction
- 17 • Charter the Fire Management Board
- 18 • Charter the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) along with the
- 19 Intertribal Timber Council and the National Association of State Foresters

20

21 The FEC is composed of the Director and Deputy Directors, USFS Fire and
22 Aviation Management (USDA); the Director, Office of Wildland Fire, Director,
23 Office of Aviation Services, Fire Executives from BLM, NPS, BIA, and
24 USFWS (DOI); and the US Fire Administration Chief, Emergency Support
25 Branch, National Fire Programs (USDHS-FEMA).

26

27 **Fire Management Board (FMB)**

28 The FMB provides a mechanism for coordinated and integrated federal wildland
29 fire program management and implementation. The FMB, taking strategic
30 policy and program direction from the FEC, directs, coordinates and oversees
31 the development and implementation of federal wildland fire policy and
32 programs to provide consistent and cost-effective program management.

33

34 The FMB is accountable and has the authority to:

- 35 • Coordinate federal program management and oversight

36

37 The FMB is responsible for and has the authority to:

- 38 • Provide common, integrated implementation strategies, approaches,
- 39 programs, and oversight for implementing federal wildland fire policies
- 40 • Provide federal wildland fire program strategy, policy, budget and program
- 41 recommendations to the FEC
- 42 • Provide recommendations on information and technology requirements,
- 43 priorities, and investments to the Wildland Fire Information and
- 44 Technology Executive Board

- 1 • Provide recommendations on science and research requirements and
- 2 priorities necessary to support wildland fire program management activities
- 3 • Identify requirements and recommend priorities for standards necessary to
- 4 ensure interoperability of intergovernmental wildland fire activities and
- 5 operations
- 6 • Consult with our non-federal partners
- 7 • Develop recommendations for interagency wildland fire
- 8 administrative/business support needs

9
10 The FMB is composed of the USFS Fire and Aviation Management Assistant
11 Directors (USDA); the Deputy Director, Office of Wildland Fire, the Deputy
12 Director, Office of Aviation Services, the Fire Directors for BIA, BLM,
13 USFWS, and NPS (DOI); and the Wildfire Program Manager, US Fire
14 Administration (USDHS-FEMA).

15 16 **National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG)**

17 The NWCG is made up of the USFS, BIA, BLM, FWS, and NPS; Intertribal
18 Timber Council; U.S. Fire Administration (USFA); state forestry agencies
19 through the National Association of State Foresters (NASF); and the
20 International Association of Fire Chiefs. The mission of the NWCG is to
21 provide leadership in establishing, maintaining, and communicating consistent
22 interagency standards, guidelines, and qualifications for wildland fire
23 management. Its goal is to provide more effective execution of each agency's
24 fire management program. The group provides a formalized system to agree
25 upon standards of training, equipment, qualifications, and other operational
26 functions.

27 28 **Interior Fire Executive Council (IFEC)**

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

35
36 The IFEC is composed of the Director, Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) and the
37 four DOI fire directors and their respective senior executives, as well as the
38 Director, Aviation Management Directorate and a representative from USGS.

39 40 **Office of Wildland Fire (OWF)**

41 The OWF is a Department of the Interior organization responsible for managing
42 and overseeing all wildland fire management activities executed by the bureaus.
43 OWF coordinates the Department's wildland fire programs within the
44 Department and with other federal and non-federal partners, to establish legally
45 and scientifically based Department-wide policies and budgets, and to provide
46 strategic leadership and oversight, that result in safe, comprehensive, cohesive,

1 efficient, and effective wildland fire programs for the nation consistent with the
2 bureaus' statutory authorities and constraints.

3

4 OWF has three functional areas:

- 5 • The Budget and Performance Management Division which manages and
6 oversees the DOI Wildland Fire Management financial account and budget
7 operations;
- 8 • The Policy Division which develops wildland fire management program
9 policies, strategies, and plans for wildland fire operations, fuels and biomass
10 coordination, emergency management coordination, science advisory,
11 international cooperation, and strategic planning; and
- 12 • The Enterprise Systems and Decision Support Division which coordinates
13 with Federal and non-Federal partners on inter-departmental/intra-
14 governmental Information Technology systems that support interagency
15 wildland fire business management, fire operations and program
16 management activities and other decision support tools. This functional
17 area also manages the Fire Program Analysis Group (FPA), Wildland Fire
18 Decision Support System (WFDSS), the Integrated Reporting of Wildland-
19 Fire Information Group (iRWIn), and Ecosystem Management Decision
20 Support (EMDS).

21

22 **Multi-Agency Management and Coordination**

23

24 **National Multi-Agency Coordinating (NMAC) Group**

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

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

37

38 **Geographic Area Multi-Agency Coordinating (GMAC) Groups**

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

- 44 • Establish priorities for the geographic area.
- 45 • Acquire, allocate, and reallocate resources.

- 1 • Provide NMAC with National Ready Reserve (NRR) resources as required.
- 2 • Issue coordinated and collective situation status reports.

3

4 **National Dispatch/Coordination System**

5

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

- 7 • National
- 8 • Geographic
- 9 • Local

10

11 Logistical dispatch operations occur at all three levels, while initial attack
12 dispatch operations occur primarily at the local level.

13

14 **National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC)**

15 The NICC is located at NIFC, Boise, Idaho. The principal mission of the NICC
16 is the cost-effective and timely coordination of land management agency
17 emergency response for wildland fire at the national level. This is accomplished
18 through planning, situation monitoring, and expediting resource orders between
19 the BIA Areas, BLM States, National Association of State Foresters, FWS
20 Regions, FS Regions, NPS Regions, National Weather Service (NWS) Regions,
21 and other cooperating agencies.

22

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

28

29 **Geographic Area Coordination Centers (GACCs)**

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

35

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

41

42 **Local Dispatch Centers**

43 Local dispatch centers are located throughout the country as dictated by the
44 needs of fire management agencies. The principal mission of a local dispatch
45 center is to provide safe, timely, and cost-effective coordination of emergency
46 response for all incidents within its specified geographic area. This entails the

1 coordination of initial attack responses and the ordering of additional resources
2 when fires escape initial attack.

3

4 **Local and Geographic Area Drawdown**

5

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

11 • Ensure adequate fire suppression capability for local and/or geographic area
12 managers.

13 • Enable sound planning and preparedness at all management levels.

14 Although drawdown resources are considered unavailable outside the local or
15 geographic area for which they have been identified, they may still be
16 reallocated by the Geographic Area or National MAC to meet higher priority
17 obligations. Refer to Chapter 19 for guidance on establishment of drawdown
18 levels.

19

20 **National Ready Reserve (NRR)**

21

22 NRR is a means by which the NMAC identifies and readies specific categories,
23 types, and quantities of fire suppression resources in order to maintain overall
24 national readiness during periods of actual or predicted national suppression
25 resource scarcity. Refer to Chapter 19 for NRR implementation responsibilities
26 and requirements.

27

28 **Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook**

29

30 All federal agencies have adopted the NWCG *Interagency Incident Business*
31 *Management Handbook* (IIBMH) as the official guide to provide execution of
32 each agency's incident business management program. Unit offices, geographic
33 areas, or NWCG may issue supplements, as long as policy or conceptual data is
34 not changed.

35

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

41 • **BLM** - *The IIBMH replaces BLM Manual Section 1111.*

42 • **FWS** - *Refer to Service Manual 621 FW 1 Wildland Fire Management.*

43 • **NPS** - *Refer to RM-18.*

44 • **FS** - *Refer to FSH 5109.34.*

45

46

1 **Standards for Cooperative Agreements**

2

3 **Agreement Policy**

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

8

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

13

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

17

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

21

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

24 • **BLM** - *BLM Manual 9200, Departmental Manual 620 DM, the Reciprocal*
25 *Fire Protection Act, 42 U.S.C. 1856, and the Federal Wildland Fire*
26 *Management Policy and Program Review.*

27 • **FWS** - *Service Manual, Departmental Manual 620 DM, and Reciprocal*
28 *Fire Protection Act, 42U.S.C. 1856.*

29 • **NPS** - *Chapter 2, Federal Assistance and Interagency Agreements*
30 *Guideline (DO-20), and the Departmental Manual 620 (DM-620). NPS-*
31 *RM-18, Interagency Agreements, Release Number 1, 02/22/99.*

32 • **FS** - *FSM 1580, 5106.2 and FSH 1509.11.*

33

34 **Types of Agreements**

35

36 **National Interagency Agreements**

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

44

45

46

1 **Regional/State Interagency Agreements**

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

5

6 **Local Interagency Agreements**

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

10

11 **Emergency Assistance**

12 Approved, established reimbursable agreements are the appropriate and
13 recommended way to provide emergency assistance. If no agreements are
14 established, refer to your Agency Administrator to determine the authorities
15 delegated to your agency to provide emergency assistance.

16

17 **Contracts**

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

23

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

27

28 **Elements of an Agreement**

29

30 The following elements should be addressed in each agreement:

- 31 • The authorities appropriate for each party to enter in an agreement.
- 32 • The roles and responsibilities of each agency signing the agreement.
- 33 • An element addressing the cooperative roles of each participant in
34 prevention, pre-suppression, suppression, fuels, and prescribed fire
35 management operations.
- 36 • Reimbursements/Compensation - All mutually approved operations that
37 require reimbursement and/or compensation will be identified and agreed to
38 by all participating parties through a cost-share agreement. The mechanism
39 and timing of the funding exchanges will be identified and agreed upon.
- 40 • Appropriation Limitations - Parties to this agreement are not obligated to
41 make expenditures of funds or reimbursements of expenditures under terms
42 of this agreement unless the Congress of the United States of America
43 appropriates such funds for that purpose by the Counties of _____, by the
44 Cities of _____, and/or the Governing Board of Fire Commissioners
45 of _____.

- 1 • Liabilities/Waivers - Each party waives all claims against every other party
2 for compensation for any loss, damage, personal injury, or death occurring
3 as a consequence of the performance of this agreement unless gross
4 negligence on any part of any party is determined.
- 5 • Termination Procedure - The agreement shall identify the duration of the
6 agreement and cancellation procedures.
- 7 • A signature page identifying the names of the responsible officials shall be
8 included in the agreement.
- 9
- 10 • *NPS - Refer to DO-20 for detailed instructions and format for developing*
11 *agreements.*

13 Annual Operating Plans (AOPs)

14

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

20 General Elements of an AOP

21 The following items should be addressed in the AOP:

- 22 • **Mutual Aid**
23 The AOP should address that there may be times when cooperators are
24 involved in emergency operations and unable to provide mutual aid. In this
25 case, other cooperators may be contacted for assistance.
- 26 • **Command Structure**
27 Unified command should be used, as appropriate, whenever multiple
28 jurisdictions are involved, unless one or more parties request a single
29 agency IC. If there is a question about jurisdiction, fire managers should
30 mutually decide and agree on the command structure as soon as they arrive
31 on the fire; Agency Administrators should confirm this decision as soon as
32 possible. Once this decision has been made, the incident organization in
33 use should be relayed to all units on the incident as well as dispatch centers.
34 In all cases, the identity of the IC must be made known to all fireline and
35 support personnel.
- 36 • **Communications**
37 In mutual aid situations, a common designated radio frequency identified in
38 the AOP should be used for incident communications. All incident
39 resources should utilize and monitor this frequency for incident
40 information, tactical use, and changes in weather conditions or other
41 emergency situations. In some cases, because of equipment availability/
42 capabilities, departments/agencies may have to use their own frequencies
43 for tactical operations, allowing the “common” frequency to be the link
44 between departments. It is important that all department/agencies change to
45 a single frequency or establish a common communications link as soon as
46 practical. Clear text should be used. Avoid personal identifiers, such as

- 1 names. This paragraph in the AOP shall meet Federal Communications
2 Commission (FCC) requirements for documenting shared use of radio
3 frequencies.
- 4 • **Distance/Boundaries**
5 Responding and requesting parties should identify any mileage limitations
6 from mutual boundaries where “mutual aid” is either pay or non-pay status.
7 Also, for some fire departments, the mileage issue may not be one of initial
8 attack “mutual aid”, but of mutual assistance. In this situation, you may
9 have the option to make it part of this agreement or identify it as a situation
10 where the request would be made to the agency having jurisdiction, which
11 would then dispatch the fire department.
- 12 • **Time/Duration**
13 Responding and requesting parties should identify time limitations (usually
14 24 hours) for resources in a non-reimbursable status, and “reimbursable
15 rates” when the resources are in a reimbursable status.
- 16 • **Qualifications/Minimum Requirements**
17 As per the NWCG memorandum *Qualification Standards During Initial*
18 *Action, March 22, 2004* and the PMS 310-1 *Wildland Fire Qualification*
19 *System Guide*:
- 20 ○ The 310-1 qualification/certification standards are mandatory only for
21 national mobilization of wildland fire fighting resources.
- 22 ○ During initial action, all agencies (federal, state, local and tribal) accept
23 each other’s standards. Once jurisdiction is clearly established, then
24 the standards of the agency(s) with jurisdiction prevail.
- 25 ■ *BLM- During initial attack, all agencies accept each other’s*
26 *standards. When an incident exceeds initial attack and*
27 *jurisdiction has been established, the standards of the*
28 *jurisdictional agency(s) prevail.*
- 29 ○ Prior to the fire season, federal agencies should meet with their state,
30 local, and tribal agency partners and jointly determine the qualification/
31 certification standards that will apply to the use of local, non-federal
32 firefighters during initial action on fires on lands under the jurisdiction
33 of a federal agency.
- 34 ○ The Geographic Area Coordinating Group should determine the
35 application of 310-1 qualification/certification standards for
36 mobilization within the geographic area.
- 37 ○ On a fire where a non-federal agency is also an agency with legal
38 jurisdiction, the standards of that agency apply.
- 39 ○ The AOP should address qualification and certification standards
40 applicable to the involved parties.
- 41 • **Reimbursement/Compensation**
42 Compensation shall be as close to actual expenditures as possible. This
43 should be clearly identified in the AOP. Vehicles and equipment operated
44 under the federal excess property system will only be reimbursed for
45 maintenance and operating costs.
- 46

- 1 • **Cooperation**
2 The annual operating plan will be used to identify how the cooperators will
3 share expertise, training, and information on items such as prevention,
4 investigation, safety, and training.
- 5 • **Agency Reviews and Investigations**
6 Annual operating plans should describe processes for conducting agency
7 specific reviews and investigations.
- 8 • **Dispatch Centers**
9 Dispatch centers will ensure all resources know the name of the assigned IC
10 and announce all changes in incident command. Geographic Area
11 Mobilization Guides, Zone Mobilization Guides, and Local Mobilization
12 Guides should include this procedure as they are revised for each fire
13 season.
14
- 15 **Fiscal Responsibility Elements of an AOP**
16 Annual Operating Plans should address the following:
- 17 • The level of communication required with neighboring jurisdictions
18 regarding the management of all wildland fires, especially those with
19 multiple objectives.
- 20 • The level of communication required with neighboring jurisdictions
21 regarding suppression resource availability and allocation, especially for
22 wildland fires with objectives that include benefit.
- 23 • Identify how to involve all parties in developing the strategy and tactics to
24 be used in preventing wildland fire from crossing the jurisdictional
25 boundary, and how all parties will be involved in developing mitigations
26 which would be used if a wildland fire does cross jurisdictional boundaries.
- 27 • Jurisdictions, which may include state and private lands, should identify the
28 conditions under which wildland fire may be managed to achieve benefit,
29 and the information or criteria that will be used to make that determination
30 (e.g. critical habitat, hazardous fuels, and land management planning
31 documents).
- 32 • Jurisdictions will identify conditions under which cost efficiency may
33 dictate where suppression strategies and tactical actions are taken (i.e. it
34 may be more cost effective to put the containment line along an open
35 grassland than along a mid-slope in timber). Points to consider include loss
36 and benefit to land, resource, social and political values, and existing legal
37 statutes.
- 38 • The cost-sharing methodologies that will be utilized should wildfire spread
39 to a neighboring jurisdiction in a location where fire is not wanted.
- 40 • The cost-share methodologies that will be used should a jurisdiction accept
41 or receive a wildland fire and manage it to create benefit.
- 42 • Any distinctions in what cost-share methodology will be used if the reason
43 the fire spreads to another jurisdiction is attributed to a strategic decision,
44 versus environmental conditions (weather, fuels, and fire behavior), or
45 tactical considerations (firefighter safety, resource availability) that preclude

- 1 stopping the fire at jurisdictional boundaries. Examples of cost-sharing
2 methodologies may include, but are not limited to, the following:
- 3 ○ When a wildland fire that is being managed for benefit spreads to a
4 neighboring jurisdiction because of strategic decisions, and in a
5 location where fire is not wanted, the managing jurisdiction shall be
6 responsible for wildfire suppression costs.
 - 7 ○ In those situations where weather, fuels, or fire behavior of the
8 wildland fire precludes stopping at jurisdiction boundaries cost-share
9 methodologies may include, but are not limited to:
 - 10 a) Each jurisdiction pays for its own resources – fire suppression
11 efforts are primarily on jurisdictional responsibility lands,
 - 12 b) Each jurisdiction pays for its own resources – services rendered
13 approximate the percentage of jurisdictional responsibility, but not
14 necessarily performed on those lands,
 - 15 c) Cost share by percentage of ownership,
 - 16 d) Cost is apportioned by geographic division. Examples of
17 geographic divisions are: Divisions A and B (using a map as an
18 attachment); privately owned property with structures; or specific
19 locations such as campgrounds,
 - 20 e) Reconciliation of daily estimates (for larger, multi-day incidents).
21 This method relies upon daily agreed to cost estimates, using Incident
22 Action Plans or other means to determine multi-Agency
23 contributions. Reimbursements can be made upon estimates instead
24 of actual bill receipts.

25
26 For further information, refer to *NWCG Memorandum #009-2009 Revisions to*
27 *the Annual Operating Plans for Master Cooperative Fire and Stafford Act*
28 *Agreements due to Implementation of Revised Guidance for the Implementation*
29 *of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy, April 13, 2009*
30

31 **All-Hazards Coordination and Cooperation**

32
33 All-hazards is defined by NWCG as an incident, natural or manmade, that
34 warrants action to protect life, property, environment, and public health or
35 safety, and to minimize disruptions of government, social, or economic
36 activities. Wildland fire is one type of all-hazard incident. All-hazards incidents
37 are managed using a standardized national incident management system and
38 response framework.

39 **Stafford Act Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance**

40 The *Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Public*
41 *Law 93-288, as amended)* establishes the programs and processes for the Federal
42 Government to provide disaster and emergency assistance to states, local
43 governments, tribal nations, individuals, and qualified private non-profit
44 organizations. The provisions of the Stafford Act cover all hazards including
45 natural disasters and terrorist events. In response to, or in anticipation of, a
46

1 major disaster or emergency as defined by the act, the President “may direct any
2 federal agency, with or without reimbursement, to utilize its authorities and the
3 resources granted to it under federal law (including personnel, equipment,
4 supplies, facilities, managerial, technical, and advisory services) in support of
5 state and local assistance efforts.”
6

7 **Homeland Security Act**

8 The *Homeland Security Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-296)* established the
9 Department of Homeland Security (DHS) with the mandate and legal authority
10 to protect the American people from the continuing threat of terrorism. In the
11 act, Congress also assigned DHS as the primary focal point regarding natural
12 and manmade crises and emergency planning.
13

14 **Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5**

15 *Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD-5), Management of Domestic*
16 *Incidents, February 28, 2003*, is intended to enhance the ability of the United
17 States to manage domestic incidents by establishing a single, comprehensive
18 national incident management system. HSPD-5 designates the Secretary of
19 Homeland Security as the Principal Federal Official (PFO) for domestic incident
20 management and empowers the Secretary to coordinate Federal resources used
21 in response to or recovery from terrorist attacks, major disasters, or other
22 emergencies in specific cases.
23

24 **National Response Framework**

25 Federal disaster relief and emergency assistance are coordinated by the Federal
26 Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) using the National Response
27 Framework (NRF). The NRF, using the National Incident Management System
28 (NIMS), establishes a single, comprehensive framework for the management of
29 domestic incidents. The NRF provides the structure and mechanisms for the
30 coordination of federal support to state, local, and tribal incident managers; and
31 for exercising direct federal authorities and responsibilities. Information about
32 the National Response Framework can be found at:
33 www.fema.gov/national-response-framework
34

35 **National Incident Management System (NIMS)**

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

1 resources. Information about the NIMS can be found at:
 2 www.fema.gov/national-incident-management-system

3
 4 **Emergency Support Function (ESF) Annexes**

5 Emergency Support Function (ESF) Annexes are the components of the NRF
 6 that detail the mission, policies, structures, and responsibilities of federal
 7 agencies. They are utilized for coordinating resource and programmatic support
 8 to the states, tribes, and other federal agencies or other jurisdictions and entities
 9 during Incidents of National Significance. Each ESF Annex identifies the ESF
 10 coordinator and the primary and support agencies pertinent to the ESF. USDA-
 11 FS and USFA are the Co-coordinators of ESF #4- Firefighting. USDA-FS
 12 coordinates at the national and regional levels with FEMA, state agencies, and
 13 cooperating agencies on all issues related to response activities. USFA
 14 coordinates with appropriate state agencies and local fire departments to expand
 15 structural firefighting resource capacity in the existing national firefighting
 16 mobilization system and provides information on protection of emergency
 17 services sector critical infrastructure.

18
 19 The ESF primary agency serves as a federal executive agent under the Federal
 20 Coordinating Officer to accomplish the ESF mission. The ESF support
 21 agencies, when requested by the designated ESF primary agency, are
 22 responsible for conducting operations using their own authorities, subject-matter
 23 experts, capabilities, or resources. USDA-FS is the primary agency for ESF #4 -
 24 Firefighting. See
 25 [http://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/orig/fema_pdfs/pdf/emergency/nrf/nrf-](http://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/orig/fema_pdfs/pdf/emergency/nrf/nrf-esf-04.pdf)
 26 [esf-04.pdf](http://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/orig/fema_pdfs/pdf/emergency/nrf/nrf-esf-04.pdf) for further information regarding ESF #4.

27
 28 Other NRF USDA-FS and DOI responsibilities are:

ESF Support Annex	USDA-FS Role	DOI Role
#01 Transportation	Support	Support
#02 Communications	Support	Support
#03 Public Works and Engineering	Support	Support
#04 Firefighting	Coordinator & Primary	Support
#05 Emergency Management	Support	Support
#06 Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing, & Human Services	Support	Support
#07 Logistics Management and Resources Support	Support	Support
#08 Public Health and Medical Services	Support	Support
#09 Search and Rescue	Support	Primary
#10 Oil and Hazardous Materials Response	Support	Support
#11 Agriculture and Natural Resources	Primary	Primary

#12 Energy		Support
#13 Public Safety and Security	Support	Support
#15 External Affairs	Support	Support

1

2 **National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP,**
3 **40 CFR 300)**

4 The NCP provides the organizational structure and procedures for preparing for
5 and responding to discharges of oil and releases of hazardous substances,
6 pollutants, and contaminants. The NCP is required by section 105 of the
7 Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of
8 1980 (CERCLA), 42 U.S.C. 9605, as amended by the Superfund Amendments
9 and Reauthorization Act of 1986 (SARA), P.L. 99–499, and by section 311(d) of
10 the Clean Water Act (CWA), 33 U.S.C. 1321(d), as amended by the Oil
11 Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA), P.L. 101–380. The NCP identifies the national
12 response organization that may be activated in response actions to discharges of
13 oil and releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, and contaminants in
14 accordance with the authorities of CERCLA and the CWA. It specifies
15 responsibilities among the federal, state, and local governments and describes
16 resources that are available for response, and provides procedures for involving
17 state governments in the initiation, development, selection, and implementation
18 of response actions, pursuant to CERCLA. The NCP works in conjunction with
19 the National Response Framework through Emergency Support Function 10 –
20 Oil and Hazardous Material Response.

21

22 **Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act**

23 The *Post-Katrina Emergency Reform Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-295)*
24 amended the Homeland Security Act. This law established the FEMA
25 Administrator as responsible for managing the Federal response to emergencies
26 and disasters, and for reporting directly to the President. The Secretary of
27 Homeland Security is the Principal Federal Official, but has no direct authority
28 for response or coordination.

29

30 **Presidential Policy Directive-8**

31 *Presidential Policy Directive-8 (PPD-8), National Preparedness, March 30,*
32 *2011* is intended to strengthen all-of-Nation preparedness. PPD-8 directs the
33 Secretary of Homeland Security to develop a national preparedness goal and a
34 national preparedness system in coordination and consultation with other federal
35 departments and agencies, state, local, tribal, and territorial governments, private
36 and non-profit sectors, and the public. The national preparedness system is
37 comprised of:

- 38 • National planning frameworks for the prevention, protection, mitigation,
39 response to, and recovery from national threats. These frameworks are
40 similar and complementary to the National Response Framework (NRF).
- 41 • Corresponding Federal interagency operational plans.
- 42 • Guidance for the national interoperability of personnel and equipment.

- 1 • Guidance for business, community, family, and individual preparedness.

2

3 **All-Hazards Coordination and Cooperation**

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

13

14 **NWCG Role in Support, Coordination, and All-Hazards Response by
15 Wildland Fire Agencies**

16 The National Wildfire Coordinating Group has established guidelines to define
17 NWCG's role in the preparedness for, coordination of, and support to all-
18 hazards incidents.

19

20 General All-Hazards Guidelines for NWCG:

- 21 • The National Incident Management System (NIMS) is the foundation of all
22 response. NWCG principles, procedures, and publications will comply with
23 and support NIMS. NWCG expects that all local, State, and Federal
24 response agencies and organizations will comply with NIMS.
- 25 • NWCG uses the NIMS definition of All-Hazards, which includes wildland
26 fire. This definition is:
- 27 ○ All-Hazards: Describing an incident, natural or manmade, that
28 warrants action to protect life, property, environment, and public
29 health or safety, and to minimize disruptions of government, social, or
30 economic activities.
- 31 • NWCG recognizes FEMA's role in overseeing the development,
32 implementation, and maintenance of NIMS, which includes the Incident
33 Command System (ICS) and its components (forms, core competencies,
34 training, qualifications and standards, etc.).
- 35 • NWCG accepts the components of NIMS and will develop an endorsement
36 process and additional qualifications requirements for positions having
37 specific wildland fire application.
- 38 • NWCG recognizes and supports the use of position-specific qualifications
39 from other NIMS compliant disciplines (law enforcement, structure fire,
40 hazmat, etc.)
- 41 • NWCG supports the ongoing development and maintenance of wildland fire
42 systems to be adaptable for all-hazards response.
- 43 • NWCG expects that all wildland fire personnel engaged in all-hazards
44 response, whether at the national, regional or local level will base actions on
45 both NWCG and agency policies, standards, doctrine, and procedures.

- 1 • NWCG member agencies ensure all personnel responding to all-hazards
2 incidents are properly trained, equipped, and qualified for their assigned
3 position.
- 4 • NWCG encourages all wildland fire agencies and personnel to receive
5 appropriate preparedness training, focusing on general knowledge of all-
6 hazards response, disaster characteristics, and the effects from these events
7 on citizens and responders.
- 8 • NWCG encourages all wildland fire agencies and personnel to consider
9 appropriate risk mitigation measures (e.g. vaccinations, personal protective
10 equipment, etc.) prior to responding to all-hazards incidents.
- 11 • NWCG coordinates with member agencies to ensure accountability of
12 wildland fire personnel during all-hazards response.

13

14 **USFS All-Hazards Guiding Principles and Doctrine**

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

20

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

- 23 • The intent of Forest Service all-hazard response and support is to protect
24 human life, property, and at-risk lands and resources *while imminent threats*
25 *exist*.
- 26 • Personnel should be prepared and organized to support all-hazard responses
27 by providing trained personnel to utilize their inherent skills, capabilities,
28 and assets -without requiring significant advanced training and preparation.
29 Support to cooperators requiring wildland resources will be consistent with
30 employee core skills, capabilities, and training.
- 31 • As incidents move from the *response phase* to the *recovery phase*, there
32 should be a shift to demobilizing agency resources.
- 33 • Within all-hazard response environments, agency personnel may encounter
34 situations in which there is an imminent threat to life and property outside
35 of their Agency's jurisdiction. These environments include scenarios
36 ranging from being first on scene at a vehicle accident, to committing
37 Agency resources to protect a local community. Leaders are therefore
38 expected to use their judgment and respond appropriately.
- 39 • Wildland resources deployed to all-hazard responses will understand the
40 dynamic and complex environment and utilize their leadership, training, and
41 skills to adapt, innovate, and bring order to chaos.
- 42 • Leaders are expected to operate within the incident organizational structure
43 encountered on all-hazard responses. When such structure is absent, they
44 will utilize National Incident Management System principles to assure safe
45 and effective utilization of agency resources.

- 1 • Leaders are expected to operate under existing policies and doctrine under
2 normal conditions. On all-hazard responses, fire and aviation business and
3 safety standards may have to be adapted to the situation to successfully
4 accomplish the mission. When conflicts occur, employees will use their
5 judgment, weigh the risk versus gain, and operate within the intent of
6 Agency policy and doctrine.
- 7 • All-hazard response will be focused on missions that we perform
8 consistently and successfully. Workforce assignments will be directed
9 toward the core skills developed through our existing training and
10 curriculum.
- 11 • Agency employees will be trained to operate safely and successfully in the
12 all-hazard environment. Preparedness training will focus on gaining
13 general knowledge of all-hazard response, disaster characteristics, as well as
14 the effects from these events on citizens and responders.
- 15 • Specific operational skills will be facilitated through the National Incident
16 Management System, working with the responsible agencies who supply
17 the technical specialists who, in turn, provide the specific skill sets. The
18 Forest Service will not train or equip to meet every hazard.
- 19 • Wildland employees are expected to perform all-hazard support as directed
20 within their qualifications and physical capabilities. All employees have the
21 right to a safe assignment. The employee may suspend his or her work
22 whenever any environmental condition –or combination of conditions-
23 become so extreme than an immediate danger is posed to employee health
24 and safety that cannot be readily mitigated by the use of appropriate,
25 approved protective equipment or technology.
- 26 • Acceptable risk is risk mitigated to a level that provides for reasonable
27 assurances that the all-hazard task can be accomplished without serious
28 injury to life or damage to property.
- 29 • All-hazard incident-specific briefing and training will be accomplished
30 *prior* to task implementation. This preparation will usually occur prior to
31 mobilization where incident description, mission requirements, and known
32 hazards are addressed. Key protective equipment and associated needs for
33 these all-hazard task that wildland employees do not routinely encounter or
34 perform will be identified. This will be done- and be in place- *prior* to task
35 implementation.
- 36 • Agency employees will be provided with appropriate vaccinations,
37 credentials, and personal protective equipment to operate in the all-hazard
38 environment to which they are assigned.
- 39 • Additional information can be found in the Forest Service Foundational
40 Doctrine for All-Hazard Response:
41 http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/doctrine/conferences/all_hazard_response.pdf
42
43
44
45

1 International Wildland Fire Coordination and Cooperation

2

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

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

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

14

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

23

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

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

31

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

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

40

41 International Non-Wildland Fire Coordination and Cooperation

42

43 International Disasters Support

44 Federal wildland fire employees may be requested through the FS to support the
45 U.S. Government's (USG) response to international disasters by serving on
46 Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DARTs). A DART is the operational

- 1 equivalent of an ICS team used by the U.S. Agency for International
2 Development's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) to provide an on-
3 the-ground operational capability at the site of an international disaster. Prior to
4 being requested for a DART assignment, employees will have completed a
5 weeklong DART training course covering information about:
- 6 • USG agencies charged with the responsibility to coordinate USG responses
7 to international disaster.
 - 8 • The purpose, organizational structure, and operational procedures of a
9 DART.
 - 10 • How the DART relates to other international organizations and countries
11 during an assignment. Requests for these assignments are coordinated
12 through the FS International Programs, Disaster Assistance Support
13 Program (DASP).
 - 14 • DART assignments should not be confused with technical exchange
15 activities, which do not require DART training.
- 16
17 More information about DARTs can be obtained at the FS International
18 Program's website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/global/aboutus/dasp/welcome.htm>.