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## Chapter 11 Incident Management and Response

### 3 **National Response Framework**

4 The National Response Framework presents the guiding principles that enable  
5 all response partners to prepare for and provide a unified national response to  
6 disasters and emergencies—from the smallest incident to the largest catastrophe.

7 The Framework establishes a comprehensive, national, all-hazards approach to  
8 domestic incident response. Information about the National Response  
9 Framework can be found at <http://www.fema.gov/national-response-framework>.

### 10 **National Incident Management System**

11 The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) follows the National  
12 Incident Management System (NIMS), which is a component of the National  
13 Response Framework. NIMS provides a universal set of structures, procedures,  
14 and standards for agencies to respond to all types of emergencies. NIMS will be  
15 used to complete tasks assigned to the interagency wildland fire community  
16 under the National Response Framework.

### 17 **Incident Management and Coordination Components of NIMS**

18 Effective incident management requires:

- 19 • Command organizations to manage on-site incident operations.
- 20 • Coordination and support organizations to provide direction and supply  
21 resources to the on-site organization.

### 22 **Incident Command System (ICS)**

23 The ICS is the on-site management system used in NIMS. The ICS is a  
24 standardized emergency management system specifically designed to provide  
25 for an integrated organizational structure that reflects the complexity and  
26 demands of single or multiple incidents, without being hindered by jurisdictional  
27 boundaries. ICS is the combination of facilities, equipment, personnel,  
28 communications, and procedures operating within a common organizational  
29 structure to manage incidents. ICS will be used by the agencies to manage  
30 wildland fire operations and all-hazard incidents.

### 31 **Wildfire Complexity**

32 Wildfires are typed by complexity, from Type 5 (least complex) to Type 1 (most  
33 complex). The ICS organizational structure develops in a modular fashion based  
34 on the complexity of the incident. Complexity is determined by completing a  
35 Risk and Complexity Assessment (Refer to samples in Appendix E and F).

1 Incidents not meeting the recommended incident typing characteristics in the  
2 *Wildland Fire Incident Management Field Guide* (PMS 210) and later in this  
3 chapter should have a documented Risk and Complexity Assessment (Appendix  
4 E) verifying the command organization is appropriate.

#### 5 **Wildfire Risk and Complexity Assessment**

6 The National Wildfire Coordinating Group has adopted the Risk and  
7 Complexity Assessment (RCA) form as a replacement for the Incident  
8 Complexity Analysis form and the Organizational Needs Assessment form. The  
9 RCA assists personnel with evaluating the situation, objectives, risks, and  
10 management considerations of an incident and recommends the appropriate  
11 organization necessary to manage the incident. The Risk and Complexity  
12 Assessment is found in Appendix E.

13 The RCA also includes common indicators of incident complexity to assist  
14 firefighters and managers with determining incident management organizational  
15 needs. These common indicators are found in Appendix F.

16 The RCA can be used to populate the Relative Risk Assessment and  
17 Organization Assessment portions of the Wildland Fire Decision Support  
18 System (WFDSS).

19 The RCA is also available at <http://www.nwcg.gov/publications/210>.

### 20 **Command Organizations**

#### 21 **Incident Command**

22 All wildfires, regardless of complexity, will have an Incident Commander (IC).  
23 The IC is a single individual responsible to the Agency Administrator(s) for all  
24 incident activities. ICs are qualified according to the NWCG *National Incident*  
25 *Management System: Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide* (PMS 310-1)  
26 and any additional agency requirements. The IC may assign personnel to any  
27 combination of ICS functional area duties in order to operate safely and  
28 effectively. ICS functional area duties should be assigned to the most qualified  
29 or competent individuals available.

30 Incident Commanders are responsible for:

- 31 • Obtaining a Delegation of Authority and/or expectations to manage the  
32 incident from the Agency Administrator. For Type 3, 4, or 5 incidents,  
33 delegations/expectations may be written or oral;
  - 34 ○ ***BLM – BLM District/Field Managers will provide a written***  
35 ***Delegation of Authority and/or expectations to the unit's Type 3, 4,***  
36 ***and 5 Incident Commanders annually prior to fire season.***
- 37 • Ensuring that safety receives priority consideration in all incident activities,  
38 and that the safety and welfare of all incident personnel and the public is  
39 maintained;

- 1 • Assessing the incident situation, both immediate and potential;
- 2 • Maintaining command and control of the incident management  
3 organization;
- 4 • Ensuring transfer of command is communicated to host unit dispatch and to  
5 all incident personnel;
- 6 • Developing incident objectives, strategies, and tactics;
- 7 • Developing the organizational structure necessary to manage the incident;
- 8 • Approving and implementing the Incident Action Plan, as needed;
- 9 • Ordering, deploying, and releasing resources;
- 10 • Ensuring incident financial accountability and expenditures meet agency  
11 policy and standards; and
- 12 • Ensuring incident documentation is complete.

13 For purposes of initial attack, the first IC on scene qualified at any level will  
14 assume the duties of initial attack IC. The initial attack IC will assume the duties  
15 and have responsibility for all suppression efforts on the incident up to his/her  
16 level of qualification until relieved by an IC qualified at a level commensurate  
17 with incident complexity.

18 As an incident escalates and de-escalates, a continuing reassessment of  
19 complexity should be completed to validate the current command organization  
20 or identify the need for a different level of incident management.

21 An IC is expected to establish the appropriate organizational structure for each  
22 incident and manage the incident based on his/her qualifications, incident  
23 complexity, and span of control. If the incident complexity exceeds the  
24 qualifications of the current IC, the IC must continue to manage the incident  
25 within his/her capability and span of control until replaced.

#### 26 **On-site Command Organizations**

27 Command organizations responsible for incident management include:

- 28 • Type 5 Incident Command;
- 29 • Type 4 Incident Command;
- 30 • Type 3 Incident Command;
- 31 • Type 2 Incident Command;
- 32 • Type 1 Incident Command;
- 33 • National Incident Management Organizations (NIMO);
- 34 • Area Command; and
- 35 • Unified Command.

### 36 **Incident Characteristics**

#### 37 **Type 5 Incident Characteristics**

- 38 • Ad hoc organization managed by a Type 5 Incident Commander.
- 39 • Primarily local resources used.

- 1 • ICS command and general staff positions are not activated.
- 2 • Resources vary from two to six firefighters.
- 3 • Incident is generally contained within the first burning period and often
- 4 within a few hours after resources arrive on scene.
- 5 • Additional firefighting resources or logistical support are not usually
- 6 required.
- 7 • May require a Published Decision in WFDSS.

#### 8 **Type 4 Incident Characteristics**

- 9 • Ad hoc organization managed by a Type 4 Incident Commander.
- 10 • Primarily local resources used.
- 11 • ICS command and general staff positions are not activated.
- 12 • Resources vary from a single resource to multiple resource task forces or
- 13 strike teams.
- 14 • Incident is usually limited to one operational period. However, incidents
- 15 may extend into multiple operational periods.
- 16 • Written Incident Action Plan (IAP) is not required. A documented
- 17 operational briefing will be completed for all incoming resources. Refer to
- 18 the *Incident Response Pocket Guide* for a briefing checklist.
- 19 • May require a Published Decision in WFDSS or other decision support
- 20 document.

#### 21 **Type 3 Incident Characteristics**

- 22 • Ad hoc or pre-established Type 3 organization managed by a Type 3
- 23 Incident Commander.
- 24 • The IC develops the organizational structure necessary to manage the
- 25 incident. Some or all of ICS functional areas are activated, usually at the
- 26 Division/Group Supervisor and/or unit leader level.
- 27 • The incident complexity analysis process is formalized and certified daily
- 28 with the jurisdictional agency. It is the IC's responsibility to continually
- 29 reassess the complexity level of the incident. When the assessment of
- 30 complexity indicates a higher complexity level, the IC must ensure that
- 31 suppression operations remain within the scope and capability of the
- 32 existing organization and that span of control is consistent with established
- 33 ICS standards.
- 34 • Local and non-local resources used.
- 35 • Resources vary from several resources to several task forces/strike teams.
- 36 • May be divided into divisions.
- 37 • May require staging areas and incident base.
- 38 • May involve low complexity aviation operations.
- 39 • May involve multiple operational periods prior to control, which may
- 40 require a written Incident Action Plan (IAP).

- 1 • Documented operational briefings will occur for all incoming resources and
- 2 before each operational period. Refer to the *Incident Response Pocket*
- 3 *Guide* for a briefing checklist.
- 4 • ICT3s will not serve concurrently as a single resource boss or have any non-
- 5 incident related responsibilities.
- 6 • May require a Published Decision in WFDSS.
- 7 • May require a written Delegation of Authority.

### 8 **Type 3 Incident Command**

9 When ICT3s are required to manage an incident, they must not have concurrent  
10 responsibilities that are not associated with the incident and they must not  
11 concurrently perform single resource boss duties.

12 In 2014, NWCG established the following Type 3 General Staff qualifications in  
13 the PMS 310-1: OPS3, LSC3, PSC3, FSC3. The establishment of these positions  
14 does not preclude the use of the minimum qualification standards described in  
15 the table below.

16 The following table lists minimum qualification requirements for functional  
17 responsibilities to manage a Type 3 incident. Activation of these functions is at  
18 the discretion of the Incident Commander.

| Type 3 Functional Responsibility | Minimum Qualification Standards   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Incident Command                 | Incident Commander Type 3 (ICT3)  |
| Safety                           | Line Safety Officer (SOFR)  |
| Operations                       | Task Force Leader (TFLD)  |
| Division                         | Single Resource Boss – Operational qualification must be commensurate with resources assigned (i.e., more than one resource assigned requires a higher level of qualification). |
| Plans                            | Local entities can establish level of skill to perform function.  |
| Logistics                        | Local entities can establish level of skill to perform function.  |
| Information                      | Local entities can establish level of skill to perform function.  |
| Finance                          | Local entities can establish level of skill to perform function.  |

### 19 **Type 2 Incident Characteristics**

- 20 • Pre-established incident management team managed by Type 2 Incident
- 21 Commander.

- 1 • ICS command and general staff positions activated.
- 2 • Many ICS functional units required and staffed.
- 3 • Geographic and/or functional area divisions established.
- 4 • Complex aviation operations.
- 5 • Incident command post, base camps, staging areas established.
- 6 • Incident extends into multiple operational periods.
- 7 • Written Incident Action Plan required for each operational period.
- 8 • Operations personnel often exceed 200 per operational period and total
- 9 personnel may exceed 500.
- 10 • Requires a Published Decision in WFDSS or other decision support
- 11 document.
- 12 • Requires a written Delegation of Authority to the Incident Commander.

### 13 **Type 2 Incident Command**

14 These ICs command pre-established Incident Management Teams that are  
15 configured with ICS Command Staff, General Staff and other leadership and  
16 support positions. Personnel performing specific Type 2 command and general  
17 staff duties must be qualified at the Type 1 or Type 2 level according to the  
18 *310-1* standards and any additional agency requirements.

### 19 **Type 1 Incident Characteristics**

- 20 • Pre-established Incident Management Team managed by Type 1 Incident
- 21 Commander.
- 22 • ICS command and general staff positions activated.
- 23 • Most ICS functional units required and staffed.
- 24 • Geographic and functional area divisions established.
- 25 • May require branching to maintain adequate span of control.
- 26 • Complex aviation operations.
- 27 • Incident command post, incident camps, staging areas established.
- 28 • Incident extends into multiple operational periods.
- 29 • Written Incident Action Plan required for each operational period.
- 30 • Operations personnel often exceed 500 per operational period and total
- 31 personnel may exceed 1000.
- 32 • Requires a Published Decision in WFDSS or other decision support
- 33 document.
- 34 • Requires a written Delegation of Authority to the Incident Commander.

### 35 **Type 1 Incident Command**

36 These ICs command pre-established Incident Management Teams that are  
37 configured with ICS Command Staff, General Staff and other leadership and  
38 support positions. Personnel performing specific Type 1 Command and General  
39 Staff duties must be qualified at the Type 1 level according to the PMS 310-1  
40 standards and any additional agency requirements.

## 1 **Incident Management Teams**

### 2 **Area Command**

3 Area Command is an Incident Command System organization established to:

- 4 • Oversee the management of large or multiple incidents to which several  
5 Incident Management Teams have been assigned. Area Command may  
6 become Unified Area Command when incidents are multi-jurisdictional; or
- 7 • Provide strategic support and coordination services to decision makers such  
8 as Geographic Area MAC Groups, sub-geographic area MAC Groups,  
9 Agency Administrators, Geographic Area Coordination Centers, emergency  
10 operations centers, agency operations centers, or FEMA Joint Field Offices.

11 The primary determining factor for establishing area command is the span of  
12 control of the Agency Administrator.

13 National Area Command teams are managed by the National Multi-Agency  
14 Coordinating Group (NMAC) and are comprised of the following:

- 15 • Area Commander (ACDR);
- 16 • Assistant Area Commander, Planning (AAPC);
- 17 • Assistant Area Commander, Logistics (AALC); and
- 18 • Area Command Aviation Coordinator (ACAC).

19 Depending on the complexity of the interface between the incidents, other  
20 specialists may also be assigned in areas such as aviation safety, information,  
21 long-term fire planning, and risk assessment and analysis.

22 Area Command functions typically include:

- 23 • Establishing overall strategy, objectives, and priorities for the incident(s)  
24 under its command;
- 25 • Allocating critical resources according to agency priorities (i.e., aircraft,  
26 IHCs, incident support needs such as medical services, communication and  
27 internet operability equipment);
- 28 • Ensuring that incidents are properly managed;
- 29 • Coordinating mobilization, team transitions, and demobilization;
- 30 • Supervising, managing, and evaluating Incident Management Teams under  
31 its command; and
- 32 • Minimizing duplication of effort and optimize effectiveness by combining  
33 multiple agency efforts under a single Area or Geographic Theater Plan.

### 34 **Type 1 Incident Management Teams**

35 Type 1 Teams are managed by Geographic Area Multi-Agency Coordinating  
36 Groups and are mobilized by the Geographic Area Coordination Centers. At  
37 national preparedness levels 4 and 5, these teams are managed by the National  
38 Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC).

## 1 **National Incident Management Organization (NIMO)**

2 NIMO Teams are managed by the Forest Service Fire and Aviation's  
3 Washington Office and are ordered thru the NICC. The mission of NIMO is to  
4 promote continuous improvement by introducing innovative concepts,  
5 approaches, and technologies while providing adaptive and agile incident  
6 management. The NIMO Coordinator can assist ordering units to order teams in  
7 short or long configurations, customized configuration for special capabilities,  
8 and managing long duration incidents.

9 NIMO's standard configuration consists of seven Command and General Staff  
10 positions qualified at the Type 1 level. If needed, NIMO can expand to meet  
11 various complexity levels.

12 Types of NIMO assignments include:

- 13 ● National or Geographic Area/Regional support to provide strategic planning  
14 assistance, during incident review, and feedback.
- 15 ● Work with Type 2 candidates on Type 1 incidents for successional  
16 planning.
- 17 ● To serve as mentors, trainers and evaluators on a Type 2 or Type 3 incident  
18 or designated projects.
- 19 ● Manage multiple Type 3 ignitions within an area (i.e., GACC, Forest,  
20 Zone).
- 21 ● Support and mentoring to an Agency Administrator with a complex fire  
22 situation.
- 23 ● International assignments.
- 24 ● All-hazard incidents.
- 25 ● Mission-specific assignments – NIMO will continue to assist Forest Service  
26 units and other agencies with special missions. Examples from the past  
27 include R2 Bark Beetle, R5 Marijuana Eradication, or support to Regions as  
28 a Force Multiplier during higher planning/activity levels.

## 29 **Type 2 Incident Management Teams**

30 Most Type 2 teams are managed by Geographic Area Multi-Agency  
31 Coordinating Groups and are coordinated by the Geographic Area Coordination  
32 Centers. Some Type 2 teams are managed by non-federal agencies (e.g., state or  
33 local governments) and availability of these teams is determined on a case by  
34 case basis.

## 35 **Unified Command**

36 Unified Command is an application of the Incident Command System used  
37 when there is more than one agency with incident jurisdiction or when incidents  
38 cross political jurisdictions. Under Unified Command, agencies work together  
39 through their designated Incident Commanders at a single incident command  
40 post to establish common objectives and issue a single Incident Action Plan.  
41 Unified Command may be established at any level of incident management or

1 area command. Under Unified Command, all agencies with jurisdictional  
2 responsibility at the incident contribute to the process of:

- 3 • Determining overall strategies;
- 4 • Selecting alternatives;
- 5 • Ensuring that joint planning for tactical activities is accomplished; and
- 6 • Maximizing use of all assigned resources.

7 Advantages of Unified Command are:

- 8 • A single set of objectives is developed for the entire incident;
- 9 • A collective approach is used to develop strategies to achieve incident  
10 objectives;
- 11 • Information flow and coordination is improved between all jurisdictions and  
12 agencies involved in the incident;
- 13 • All involved agencies have an understanding of joint priorities and  
14 restrictions; and
- 15 • No agency's legal authorities will be compromised or neglected.

### 16 **All-Hazard Incident Management Teams (IMTs) and Other Non-Wildland** 17 **Fire IMT**

18 Many different entities have developed IMTs based on ICS core competencies  
19 under the National Incident Management System (NIMS). See Chapter 8 for  
20 more information.

### 21 **Coordination and Support Organizations**

22 Organizations that provide coordination and support to on-site command  
23 organizations include:

- 24 • Initial Attack Dispatch;
- 25 • Expanded Dispatch;
- 26 • Buying/Payment Teams;
- 27 • National and Geographic Area Coordination Centers (refer to Chapter 8);
- 28 • Local, Geographic Area, and National Multi-Agency Coordinating (MAC)  
29 Groups.

30 Refer to Chapter 19 for Initial Attack and Expanded Dispatch information.

### 31 **Buying/Payment Teams**

32 Buying/Payment Teams support incidents by procuring services, supplies, and  
33 renting land, facilities, and equipment. These teams may be ordered when  
34 incident support requirements exceed local unit capacity. These teams report to  
35 the Agency Administrator or the local unit administrative officer. See the  
36 *Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook* for more information.

**1 Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC)**

2 Multi-Agency Coordination Groups are part of the National Interagency  
3 Incident Management System (NIIMS) and are an expansion of the off-site  
4 coordination and support system. MAC groups are activated by the Agency  
5 Administrator(s) when the character and intensity of the emergency situation  
6 significantly impacts or involves other agencies. A MAC group may be  
7 activated to provide support when only one agency has incident(s). The MAC  
8 group is made up of agency representatives who are delegated authority by their  
9 respective Agency Administrators to make agency decisions and to commit  
10 agency resources and funds. The MAC group relieves the incident support  
11 organization (dispatch, expanded dispatch) of the responsibility for making key  
12 decisions regarding prioritization of objectives and allocation of critical  
13 resources. The MAC group makes coordinated Agency Administrator level  
14 decisions on issues that affect multiple agencies. The MAC group is supported  
15 by situation, resource status and intelligence units who collect and assemble data  
16 through normal coordination channels.

17 MAC group direction is carried out through dispatch and coordination center  
18 organizations. When expanded dispatch is activated, the MAC group direction is  
19 carried out through the expanded dispatch organization. The MAC group  
20 organization does not operate directly with Incident Management Teams or with  
21 Area Command Teams, which are responsible for on-site management of the  
22 incident.

23 MAC groups may be activated at the local, geographic, or national level.  
24 National level and Geographic Area level MAC groups should be activated in  
25 accordance with the preparedness levels criteria established in the National and  
26 Geographic Area Mobilization Guides.

27 The MAC Group Coordinator facilitates organizing and accomplishing the  
28 mission, goals and direction of the MAC group. The MAC group coordinator:

- 29 • Provides expertise on the functions of the MAC group and on the proper  
30 relationships with dispatch centers and incident managers;
- 31 • Fills and supervises necessary unit and support positions as needed, in  
32 accordance with coordination complexity;
- 33 • Arranges for and manages facilities and equipment necessary to carry out  
34 the MAC group functions;
- 35 • Facilitates the MAC group decision process; and
- 36 • Implements decisions made by the MAC group.

37 Activation of a MAC group improves interagency coordination and provides for  
38 allocation and timely commitment of multi-agency emergency resources.

39 Participation by multiple agencies in the MAC effort will improve:

- 40 • Overall situation status information;
- 41 • Incident priority determination;
- 42 • Resource acquisition and allocation;

- 1 • State and Federal disaster coordination;
- 2 • Political interfaces;
- 3 • Consistency and quality of information provided to the media and involved
- 4 agencies; and
- 5 • Anticipation of future conditions and resource needs.

#### 6 **Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS)**

7 The Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS) is a web-based decision  
8 support system that provides a single dynamic documentation system for use  
9 beginning at the time of discovery and concluding when the fire is declared out.  
10 WFDSS allows the Agency Administrator to describe the fire situation, create  
11 Incident Objectives and Requirements, develop a Course of Action, evaluate  
12 Relative Risk, complete an Organization Assessment, and publish a decision.

13 For detailed information on the tools and capabilities in WFDSS, how managers  
14 may use the tools, and suggested WFDSS refresher training items, refer to  
15 Appendix N.

16 A number of fire applications, including WFDSS, FireCode, Sit/209, and  
17 WildCAD (version 6) use the Integrated Reporting of Wildfire Information  
18 (IRWIN) data exchange system to share fire information and reduce data entry  
19 workload. All wildfires passed to the IRWIN system are initiated in WFDSS  
20 automatically.

21 WFDSS will be used for decision support documentation for all fires that escape  
22 initial attack, exceed initial response, or are being managed for multiple  
23 objectives. These incidents will have a Published Decision within WFDSS. A  
24 Published WFDSS Decision establishes objectives, a Course of Action and  
25 Rationale for incidents with varying duration, spread potential, costs, or other  
26 considerations. The level of documentation to publish a decision should be  
27 commensurate to the incident duration, spread potential, cost, or Relative Risk.  
28 Agency-specific direction established in memos or other policy documents may  
29 further define WFDSS documentation requirements.

- 30 • **BLM** – Refer to Chapter 2 for additional requirements for WFDSS  
31 implementation.
- 32 • **NPS** – Refer to Chapter 3 for additional requirements for WFDSS  
33 implementation.

#### 34 **Initial Decision**

35 An initial decision should be published within 24 hours after the determination  
36 that a Published Decision is needed, or within 24 hours of requesting an incident  
37 management team.

1 Considerations for determining that a decision is needed include:

- 2 • The fire has not been contained by initial attack resources dispatched to the
- 3 fire;
- 4 • The fire will not have been contained within the initial attack management
- 5 objectives established for that zone or area according to the unit's planning
- 6 documents;
- 7 • The Incident Objectives include both protection and resource benefit
- 8 elements consistent with land management planning documents;
- 9 • The fire affects or is likely to affect more than one agency or more than one
- 10 administrative unit within a single agency (for example more than one
- 11 National Forest);
- 12 • The fire is burning into or expected to burn into wildland-urban interface;
- 13 • Significant safety or other concerns such as air quality are present or
- 14 anticipated; and
- 15 • The Relative Risk Assessment indicates the need for additional evaluation
- 16 and development of best management practices for achieving land and
- 17 resource objectives.

### 18 **New Decision**

19 As incident complexity increases or decreases, it may become necessary for  
20 additional supporting analyses to inform decision making. If additional analysis  
21 indicates the decision needs modification, a new decision is required. Depending  
22 on the complexity of the incident, a new decision should be published within 2-3  
23 days for less complex incidents and within 4-7 days for more complex incidents.  
24 The same criteria above plus the following considerations can guide  
25 determinations about publishing a new decision:

- 26 • The Periodic Assessment indicates the Course of Action is no longer valid;
- 27 • The management needs of the incident exceed existing capability;
- 28 • The expected costs of incident management exceed the estimated costs in
- 29 the initial Decision or agency-established thresholds for level of approval
- 30 authority;
- 31 • The fire moves or is expected to move beyond the Planning Area analyzed;
- 32 • Management Action Points have been established since the initial Decision
- 33 was published and additional information is needed to further manage the
- 34 incident over time; and
- 35 • The line officer is considering ordering an IMT.

36 Additional information about WFDSS can be found in Appendix N. User  
37 support information, training materials, and other resources can be found at the  
38 WFDSS homepage, <http://wfdss.usgs.gov/>.

### 39 **WFDSS Decision Approval and Publication**

40 Decisions in WFDSS are approved and published by the appropriate Line  
41 Officer as defined in the tables below. Incident privileges must be assigned  
42 within WFDSS to designate the Approver(s). During the approval process, prior

1 to publishing a decision, the Periodic Assessment timeframe can be set from 1 to  
2 14 days.

3 It is imperative that a decision be reviewed carefully as once approved and  
4 published, a decision becomes a system of record and all WFDSS users can  
5 view the information. Additionally, the action CANNOT be undone. If there is  
6 an error in the information, or new information is added for documentation or  
7 update (i.e., fire behavior, Management Action Points) a new decision must be  
8 published to officially update the record.

9 All agencies having jurisdiction included in a WFDSS Planning Area should be  
10 notified prior to publication of a decision.

11 **WFDSS Approval Requirements by Agency**

12 **DOI WFDSS Approval Requirements**

| Cost Estimate <sup>1</sup> | WFDSS Approval  |
|----------------------------|---|
| Less Than \$5 Million      | BIA Agency Superintendent, NPS Park Superintendent, FWS Refuge Manager, BLM District/Field Manager <sup>3</sup> |
| \$5 Million - \$10 Million | BIA/NPS/FWS Regional Director <sup>2</sup><br>BLM District/Field Manager <sup>3</sup>                           |
| Greater Than \$10 Million  | BIA/NPS/FWS National Director <sup>2</sup><br>BLM District/Field Manager <sup>3</sup>                           |

13 **USFS WFDSS Approval Requirements**

| Incident Type | USFS Approval  |
|---------------|--|
| Type 3,4,5    | District Ranger level with oversight by the Forest Supervisor                |
| Type 2        | Forest Supervisor level with oversight by the Regional Forester <sup>4</sup> |
| Type 1        | Regional Forester level with National oversight <sup>4</sup>                 |

14 <sup>1</sup>**DOI** – Cost estimate should be based on proportionate agency share of the  
15 estimated final cost of the incident. For example, on a \$20 million fire managed  
16 by a Type 1 IMT that is 98% FS, 1% BLM, and 1% NPS, the USFS Regional  
17 Forester and the BLM and NPS local Agency Administrators would be the  
18 approving officials in a jointly published WFDSS decision.

19 <sup>2</sup>**BIA/NPS/FWS** – Regional Directors and National Director may delegate  
20 WFDSS approval authority as per agency policy.

21 <sup>3</sup>**BLM** – District/Field Managers will approve WFDSS decisions and provide  
22 written notification to the state and/or national director when approaching \$5

1 million and/or \$10 million cost estimates. Refer to Chapter 2 for additional  
2 information regarding delegation of WFDSS approval.  
3 <sup>4</sup>FS – This authority may be delegated to the next lower level provided that the  
4 line officer at the lower next level meets Line Officer wildfire response  
5 certification requirements.

#### 6 **WFDSS Support**

7 The Wildland Fire Management Research Development and Application (WFM  
8 RD&A) group provides the national infrastructure for wildland fire decision  
9 making and WFDSS support. Field users should contact their WFDSS  
10 Geographic Area Editor for assistance prior to contacting WFM RD&A.  
11 Information for requesting assistance from WFM RD&A can be found at the  
12 WFDSS homepage at <http://wfdss.usgs.gov/>.

### 13 **Managing the Incident**

#### 14 **Agency Administrator Definition**

15 An Agency Administrator is the official responsible for the management of a  
16 geographic unit or functional area. Agency Administrators are the managing  
17 officer of an agency, division thereof, or jurisdiction having statutory  
18 responsibility for incident mitigation and management. Some examples include:  
19 NPS Park Superintendent, BIA Agency Superintendent, USFS Forest  
20 Supervisor, BLM District Manager, FWS Refuge Manager, State Forester,  
21 Tribal Chairperson, Fire Chief, Police Chief.

#### 22 **Agency Administrator Responsibilities**

23 The Agency Administrator (AA) manages the land and resources on their  
24 organizational unit according to the established land management plan. Fire  
25 management is part of that responsibility.

26 Agency Administrators are responsible for safety oversight, and may request  
27 additional safety oversight as needed.

28 Situations that may require additional safety oversight:

- 29 • A fire escapes initial attack or when extended attack is probable;
- 30 • There is complex or critical fire behavior;
- 31 • There is a complex air operation;
- 32 • The fire is in an urban intermix/interface; and
- 33 • Other extraordinary circumstances.

34 The AA establishes specific performance objectives for the Incident  
35 Commander (IC) and delegates the authority to the IC to take specific actions to  
36 meet those objectives. Agency Administrator responsibilities to an Incident  
37 Management Team (IMT) include:

- 1 • Conduct an initial briefing to the Incident Management Team (Appendix  
2 D).
- 3 • Provide an approved WFDSS Decision.
  - 4 ○ ***FS – Ensure that significant decisions related to strategy and costs  
5 are included in WFDSS.***
- 6 • Complete a Risk and Complexity Assessment (Appendix E and F) to  
7 accompany the WFDSS Published Decision.
  - 8 ○ ***FS – Complete a Risk and Complexity Assessment (RCA) for Type 1,  
9 2, and 3 incidents within WFDSS.***
- 10 • Coordinate with neighboring agencies on multi-jurisdiction fires to issue a  
11 joint Delegation of Authority and develop a single Published Decision in  
12 WFDSS for the management of unplanned ignitions.
- 13 • Issue a written Delegation of Authority (Appendix G) to the Incident  
14 Commander and to other appropriate officials, Agency Administrator  
15 Representative, Resource Advisor, and Incident Business Advisor. The  
16 delegation should:
  - 17 ○ State specific and measurable objectives, priorities, expectations,  
18 Agency Administrator’s intent, constraints, and other required  
19 direction;
  - 20 ○ Establish the specific time for transfer of command;
  - 21 ○ Assign clear responsibilities for initial attack;
  - 22 ○ Define your role in the management of the incident;
  - 23 ○ Describe procedures for Conducting during action reviews with the IC;
  - 24 ○ Assign a resource advisor(s) to the IMT;
  - 25 ○ Define public information responsibilities;
  - 26 ○ Address accident investigation procedures and notification  
27 requirements for fire managers, line officer(s), and  
28 dispatch/coordination centers;
  - 29 ○ Assign a local government liaison to the IMT (if necessary);
  - 30 ○ Assign a local fire management liaison to the IMT (if necessary);
  - 31 ○ Assign an Incident Business Advisor (IBA) to provide incident  
32 business management oversight commensurate with complexity; and
  - 33 ○ Direct the IMT to address rehabilitation of areas affected by  
34 suppression activities.
- 35 • Coordinate mobilization with the Incident Commander:
  - 36 ○ Negotiate filling of mobilization order with the IC;
  - 37 ○ Establish time and location of Agency Administrator briefing;
  - 38 ○ Consider approving support staff additional to the IMT as requested by  
39 the IC; and
  - 40 ○ Consider authorizing transportation needs as requested by the IC.
- 41 • Provide pertinent support materials and documents (L/RMP, FMP, GIS  
42 data, local unit SOP’s, maps, Service and Supply Plan, etc.) to the IMT.

43 In situations where one agency provides fire suppression service under  
44 agreement to the jurisdictional agency, both jurisdictional and protecting

1 agencies will be involved in the development of and signatories to the  
2 Delegation of Authorities to the Incident Management Teams and the Published  
3 Decision in WFDSS.

#### 4 **Agency Administrator Representative Responsibilities**

5 The Agency Administrator Representative (the on-scene Agency Administrator)  
6 is responsible for representing the political, social, and economic issues of the  
7 Agency Administrator to the Incident Commander. This is accomplished by  
8 participating in the Agency Administrator briefing, in the IMT planning and  
9 strategy meetings and in the operational briefings.

10 Responsibilities include representing the Agency Administrator to the IMT  
11 regarding:

- 12 • Compliance with the Delegation of Authority and the Published Decision in  
13 WFDSS;
- 14 • Public Concerns (air quality, road or trail closures, smoke management,  
15 threats);
- 16 • Public safety (evacuations, access/use restrictions, temporary closures);
- 17 • Public information (fire size, resources assigned, threats, concerns, appeals  
18 for assistance);
- 19 • Socioeconomic, political, or tribal concerns;
- 20 • Land and property ownership concerns;
- 21 • Interagency and inter-governmental issues;
- 22 • Wildland urban interface impacts; and
- 23 • Media contacts.

#### 24 **Resource Advisor Responsibilities**

25 The Resource Advisor is responsible for anticipating the impacts of fire  
26 operations on natural and cultural resources and for communicating protection  
27 requirements for those resources to the Incident Commander. The Resource  
28 Advisor should ensure IMT compliance with the Land/Resource Management  
29 Plan and Fire Management Plan. The Resource Advisor should provide the  
30 Incident Commander with information, analysis, and advice on these areas:

- 31 • Rehabilitation requirements and standards;
- 32 • Land ownership;
- 33 • Hazardous materials;
- 34 • Fuel breaks (locations and specifications);
- 35 • Water sources and ownership;
- 36 • Critical watersheds;
- 37 • Critical wildlife habitat;
- 38 • Noxious weeds/aquatic invasive species;
- 39 • Special status species (threatened, endangered, proposed, sensitive);
- 40 • Fisheries;
- 41 • Poisonous plants, insects and snakes;
- 42 • Mineral resources (oil, gas, mining activities);

- 1 • Archeological site, historic trails, paleontological sites;
- 2 • Riparian areas;
- 3 • Military issues;
- 4 • Utility rights-of-way (power, communication sites);
- 5 • Native allotments;
- 6 • Grazing allotments;
- 7 • Recreational areas; and
- 8 • Special management areas (wilderness areas, wilderness study areas,
- 9 recommended wilderness, national monuments, national conservation areas,
- 10 national historic landmarks, areas of critical environmental concern,
- 11 research natural areas, wild and scenic rivers).

12 The Resource Advisor and Agency Administrator Representative positions are  
13 generally filled by local unit personnel. These positions may be combined and  
14 performed by one individual. Duties are stated in the *Resource Advisor's Guide*  
15 *for Wildland Fire* (NWCG PMS 313, NFES 1831, Jan 2004).

#### 16 **Use of Trainees**

17 Use of trainees is encouraged. On wildland fire incidents, trainees may supervise  
18 trainees. However, when assigning trainees to positions where critical life-safety  
19 decisions are affected, trainees must be directly supervised by a fully qualified  
20 individual. For example:

- 21 • A Division Group Supervisor (DIVS) trainee may not work directly for an  
22 Operations Section Chief without additional field supervision. The potential  
23 for high hazard work with high risk outcomes calls for a fully qualified  
24 DIVS to be assigned supervision of the DIVS trainee.
- 25 • A Supply Unit Leader (SPUL) trainee may supervise a  
26 Receiving/Distribution Manager (RCDM) trainee. In this case, supervision  
27 may be successfully provided in a lower hazard environment with  
28 appropriate risk mitigation.

#### 29 **Incident Action Plan**

30 When a written Incident Action Plan is required, suggested components may  
31 include objectives, organization, weather forecast, fire behavior forecast,  
32 division assignments, air operations summary, safety message, communications  
33 plan, and incident map. An incident medical plan is required in all written  
34 Incident Action Plans.

#### 35 **Incident Status Reporting**

36 The Incident Status Summary (ICS-209), submitted to the GACC, is used to  
37 report large wildland fires and any other significant events on lands under  
38 federal protection or federal ownership. Lands administered by states and other  
39 federal cooperators may also report in this manner.

1 Large fires are classified as 100 acres or larger in timber fuel types, 300 acres or  
2 larger in grass fuel types, or when a NIMO, Type 1 or 2 Incident Management  
3 Team is assigned, regardless of the size of the incident or the suppression  
4 management strategy. An ICS-209 should be submitted daily for all uncontained  
5 full suppression wildfires that meet large fire criteria. An ICS-209 should be  
6 submitted weekly (Thursday evening), for all wildfires meeting large fire criteria  
7 that are being managed under strategies that are less than full suppression. The  
8 Agency Administrator may require additional reporting times. Refer to local,  
9 zone and/or GACC guidance for additional reporting requirements.

#### 10 **Incident History and Financial Records**

11 Wildfire incidents on Federal lands managed by the FS and DOI (except BIA)  
12 require creation of an Incident History File (IHF) to document significant  
13 events, actions taken, lessons learned and other information with long-term  
14 value for managing natural resources. IHF contents and instructions, and tools  
15 for creating the IHF are found at  
16 <http://www.nwccg.gov/committees/incident-records-subcommittee/resources>.

17 The host unit will be responsible for retaining the incident documentation  
18 package including the IHF and financial records.

#### 19 **Document and Computer Security**

20 Precautions must be taken to secure incident information in its various formats.  
21 All forms of information shall be treated as Controlled Unclassified Information  
22 (CUI) and care must be exercised when handling the data to prevent the  
23 inadvertent viewing or unauthorized disclosure of information. CUI paper copies  
24 that compromise privacy and security shall be shredded before disposal when no  
25 longer needed. All computers used at the incident must be patched and have  
26 anti-virus software installed with recently updated definition files. All media  
27 used to transfer information into the incident (for example, but not limited to,  
28 USB flash drives, portable hard drives and CD/DVDs) must be scanned prior to  
29 use. Autorun capabilities must be disabled to prevent the spread of malware. All  
30 computers and storage devices shall be physically secured at all times.

#### 31 **Transfer of Command**

32 The following guidelines will assist in the transfer of incident command  
33 responsibilities from the local unit to incoming Incident Management Team and  
34 back to the local unit.

- 35 • The local team or organization already in place remains in charge until the  
36 local representative briefs their counterparts on the incoming team, a  
37 Delegation of Authority has been signed, and a mutually agreed time for  
38 transfer of command has been established.
- 39 • The ordering unit will specify times of arrival and transfer of command, and  
40 discuss these timeframes with both the incoming and outgoing command  
41 structures.

- 1 • Clear lines of authority must be maintained in order to minimize confusion  
2 and maintain operational control.
- 3 • Transfers of command should occur at the beginning of an operational  
4 period, whenever possible.
- 5 • All operational personnel will be notified on incident command frequencies  
6 when transfer of command occurs.

#### 7 **Release of Incident Management Teams**

8 The release of an IMT should follow an approved transfer of command process.

9 The Agency Administrator must approve the date and time of the transfer of  
10 command. The transition plan should include the following elements:

- 11 • Remaining organizational needs and structure;
- 12 • Tasks or work to be accomplished;
- 13 • Communication systems and radio frequencies;
- 14 • Local safety hazards and considerations;
- 15 • Incident Action Plan, including remaining resources and weather forecast;
- 16 • Facilities, equipment, and supply status;
- 17 • Arrangement for feeding remaining personnel;
- 18 • Financial and payment processes needing follow-up; and
- 19 • Risk and Complexity Assessment.

#### 20 **Team Evaluation**

21 At completion of assignment, Incident Commanders will receive a written  
22 performance evaluation from the Agency Administrator(s) prior to the teams'  
23 release from the incident. Certain elements of this evaluation may not be able to  
24 be completed at the closeout review. These include accountability and property  
25 control, completeness of claims investigation/documentation, and completeness  
26 of financial and payment documentation.

27 The final evaluation incorporating all of the above elements should be sent to  
28 the Incident Commander and the respective GACC within 60 days. See  
29 Appendix I for the IMT evaluation form.

30 The Delegation of Authority, the Published Decision in WFDSS, and other  
31 documented Agency Administrator's direction will serve as the primary  
32 standards against which the IMT is evaluated.

33 The Agency Administrator will provide a copy of the evaluation to the IC and  
34 the state/regional FMO, and retain a copy for the final fire package.

35 The state/regional FMO will review all evaluations and will be responsible for  
36 providing a copy of evaluations documenting performance to the Geographic  
37 Area Coordinating Group or agency managing the IMT.

**1 Unit/Area Closures**

2 Threats to public safety may require temporary closure of a unit/area or a  
3 portion of it. When a fire threatens escape from the unit/area, adjacent  
4 authorities must be given as much advance notice as possible in order to achieve  
5 orderly evacuation.

**6 Incident Emergency Management Planning and Services**

7 Refer to Chapter 7 for further guidance.

**8 Fire Management in Wilderness**

9 Actions taken in wilderness will be conducted to protect life and safety, to meet  
10 natural and cultural resource objectives, and to minimize negative impacts of the  
11 fire management actions and the fires themselves. In evaluating fire  
12 management actions, the potential degradation of wilderness character will be  
13 considered before, and given significantly more weight than, economic  
14 efficiency and convenience. Unless human life or private property is  
15 immediately threatened, only those actions that preserve wilderness character  
16 and/or have localized, short-term adverse impacts to wilderness character will be  
17 acceptable. Any delegation of authority to Incident Management Teams will  
18 convey appropriate emphasis on the protection of wilderness character and  
19 resources and will ensure interaction with local wilderness resource advisors.

- 20 • **BLM/NPS/FWS** – *For all wilderness fire management actions proposing*  
21 *the use of any of the Wilderness Act 4(c) prohibitions, a minimum*  
22 *requirements analysis will be completed.*
- 23 • **FS** – *For all wilderness fire management actions proposing the use of any*  
24 *Wilderness Act 4(c) prohibitions, a minimum requirements analysis is*  
25 *recommended.*

**26 Operational Guidelines for Aquatic Invasive Species**

27 In order to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species, it is important that fire  
28 personnel not only recognize the threat aquatic invasive species pose to  
29 ecological integrity, but how our fire operations and resulting actions can  
30 influence their spread. Each local land management unit may have specific  
31 guidelines related to aquatic invasive species. Therefore, it is recommended that  
32 you consult established local jurisdictional guidelines for minimizing the spread  
33 of aquatic invasive species and for equipment cleaning guidance specific to  
34 those prevalent areas and associated species. To minimize the potential  
35 transmission of aquatic invasive species, it is recommended that you:

- 36 • Consult with local biologists, Resource Advisors (READ) and fire  
37 personnel for known aquatic invasive species locations in the area and avoid  
38 them when possible;

- 1 • Avoid entering (driving through) water bodies or saturated areas whenever  
2 possible;
- 3 • Avoid transferring water between drainages or between unconnected waters  
4 within the same drainage when possible;
- 5 • Use the smallest screen possible that does not negatively impact operations  
6 and avoid sucking organic and bottom substrate material into water intakes  
7 when drafting from a natural water body;
- 8 • Avoid obtaining water from multiple sources during a single operational  
9 period when possible; and
- 10 • Remove all visible plant parts, soil and other materials from external  
11 surfaces of gear and equipment after an operational period. If possible,  
12 power-wash all accessible surfaces with clean, hot water (ideally > 140° F)  
13 in an area designated by a local READ.
  - 14 ○ *BLM – For additional information and guidelines please refer to the*  
15 *links provided in the document titled “BLM Fire Program Aquatic*  
16 *Invasive Species Guidance,” found at*  
17 *<http://web.blm.gov/internal/fire/fpjm/docs/aquatic.pdf>.*

### 18 **Noxious Weed Prevention**

19 To reduce the transport, introduction, and establishment of noxious weeds or  
20 other invasive species on the landscape due to fire suppression activities, all fire  
21 suppression and support vehicles, tools, and machinery should be cleaned at a  
22 designated area prior to arriving and leaving the incident. Onsite fire equipment  
23 should be used to thoroughly clean the undercarriage, fender wells, tires,  
24 radiator, and exterior of the vehicle. Firefighter personnel should clean personal  
25 equipment, boots, clothing, etc. of weed or other invasive species materials,  
26 including visible plant parts, soil, and other materials as identified by the fire  
27 resource advisor. The cleaning area should also be clearly marked to identify the  
28 area for post fire control treatments, as needed.

29 Ensure that seed mixes, mulch, and/or straw wattles contain no federally or state  
30 designated noxious weeds by using seed mixes, mulches or straw wattles that  
31 have been examined by a laboratory or have current weed free certification from  
32 a state seed laboratory or equivalent qualified testing agent.

### 33 **Responding to Non-Wildland Fire Incidents**

34 Managers will avoid giving the appearance that their wildland fire resources are  
35 trained and equipped to perform structure, vehicle, and dump fire suppression, to  
36 respond to hazardous materials releases, or to perform emergency medical  
37 response for the public.

### 38 **Wildland Urban Interface**

39 The operational roles of the federal agencies as partners in the wildland urban  
40 interface are wildfire suppression, structure protection (see below), prescribed

1 fire, hazard reduction, cooperative prevention and education, and technical  
2 assistance. Structural fire suppression is the responsibility of tribal, state, or  
3 local governments. Federal agencies may assist with exterior structural fire  
4 protection activities under formal fire protection agreements that specify the  
5 mutual responsibilities of the partners, including funding (some federal agencies  
6 have full structural protection authority for their facilities on lands they  
7 administer and may also enter into formal agreements to assist state and local  
8 governments with structural protection).

9       – *Review and Update of the 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Management*  
10       *Policy, January 2001, page 23.*

11 Funding is not provided to prepare for or respond to emergency non-wildland  
12 fire response activities such as structure fires, vehicle fires, dump fires,  
13 hazardous materials releases, and emergency medical responses. Managers must  
14 ensure that fire management plans, interagency agreements, and annual  
15 operating plans clearly state agency and cooperator roles and responsibilities for  
16 non-wildland fire response activities that agency personnel are exposed to as a  
17 result of working in the interagency fire environment. Managers will also ensure  
18 that federal wildland fire resources are not identified on run cards or in dispatch  
19 plans for non-wildland fire responses.

#### 20 **Structure, Vehicle, Dumpster, Trash, and Landfill Fires**

21 Wildland firefighters will not take direct suppression action on structure,  
22 vehicle, dumpster, trash, or landfill fires. Structure, vehicle, and landfill fire  
23 suppression is not a functional responsibility of wildland fire resources. These  
24 fires have the potential to emit high levels of toxic gases. This policy will be  
25 reflected in suppression response plans.

26 Wildland firefighters who encounter structure, vehicle, or landfill fires, or who  
27 are dispatched to such fires due to significant threat to adjacent agency protected  
28 lands/resources, will not engage in direct suppression action. Structure  
29 protection (not suppression) activities will be limited to exterior efforts, and only  
30 when such actions can be accomplished safely and in accordance with  
31 established wildland fire operations standards.

- 32 • *NPS – For structural fire (including vehicle, trash and dumpster fires)*  
33 *response, training, medical examination, and physical fitness requirements,*  
34 *and hazardous material response or control guidance, refer to Chapter 3.*
- 35 • *FS – Wildfires other than vegetation (such as dumpster, trash, landfill, or*  
36 *vehicle) as the primary fuel present hazards that are outside of the basic*  
37 *wildland firefighters training and protective equipment. Response actions*  
38 *will be limited to protection of life, property, and resources when they can*  
39 *be safely undertaken with proper risk assessment and mitigation. When*  
40 *agency employees are trained, qualified, and equipped to take action on*  
41 *other than vegetation fires, they may do so with proper risk assessment and*  
42 *mitigation (Incident Response Pocket Guide, PMS 461).*

**1 Public Emergency Medical Response**

2 Public emergency medical response is not a functional responsibility of wildland  
3 fire resources, and should not be part of a preplanned response that requires  
4 these duties. When wildland firefighters encounter emergency medical response  
5 situations, their efforts should be limited to immediate care (e.g., first aid, first  
6 responder) actions that they are trained and qualified to perform.

- 7 • *NPS – NPS employees who provide emergency medical services will adhere*  
8 *to the requirements contained in Director’s Order and Reference Manual*  
9 *#51, Emergency Medical Services.*

**10 Post-Wildfire Activities**

11 Each wildland fire management agency is responsible for taking prompt action  
12 to determine the need for, and to prescribe and implement, emergency  
13 treatments to minimize threats to life or property or to stabilize and prevent  
14 unacceptable degradation to natural and cultural resources resulting from the  
15 effects of a fire on the lands they manage.

16 Post-wildfire activities references can be found in *Interagency Burned Area*  
17 *Emergency Response Guidebook, Interpretation of Department of the Interior*  
18 *620 DM 3 and USDA Forest Service Manual 2523, For the Emergency*  
19 *Stabilization of Federal and Tribal Trust Lands, Version 4.0 dated Feb. 2006*  
20 *and Interagency Burned Area Rehabilitation Guidebook, Interpretation of*  
21 *Department of the Interior 620 DM 3, For the Burned Area Rehabilitation of*  
22 *Federal and Tribal Trust Lands, Version 1.3 dated October 2006 at*  
23 <http://www.fws.gov/fire/ifcc/Esr/home.htm>.

24 Damages resulting from wildfires are addressed through four activities:

- 25 • **Wildfire Management Activity Damage Repair** – Planned actions taken to  
26 repair the damages to resources, lands, and facilities resulting from wildfire  
27 suppression actions and documented in the Incident Action Plan. These  
28 actions are usually implemented prior to, or immediately after containment  
29 of the wildfire by the incident management organization. Repairs under this  
30 activity may be completed to return the value to pre-wildfire management  
31 activity condition as practical but may not improve the condition beyond  
32 what was existing prior to the incident.
- 33 • **Emergency Stabilization** – Planned actions to stabilize and prevent  
34 unacceptable degradation to natural and cultural resources, to minimize  
35 threats to life or property resulting from the effects of a wildfire, or to  
36 repair/replace/construct physical improvements necessary to prevent  
37 degradation of land or resources. Emergency stabilization actions must be  
38 taken within one year following containment of a wildfire and documented  
39 in a Burned Area Emergency Response Plan.
- 40 • **Rehabilitation** – Efforts taken within three years of containment of a  
41 wildfire to repair or improve wildfire-damaged lands unlikely to recover  
42 naturally to management approved conditions, or to repair or replace minor

- 1 facilities damaged by wildfire. These efforts are documented in a separate
- 2 Burned Area Rehabilitation Plan.
- 3 • Restoration – Continuing the rehabilitation beyond the initial three years or
- 4 the repair or replacement of major facilities damaged by the wildfire.

**Post-Fire Activities**

|                       | <b>Suppression Repair</b>     | <b>Emergency Stabilization</b>        | <b>Rehabilitation</b>             | <b>Restoration</b>              |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Objective</b>      | Repair suppression damages    | Protect life and property             | Repair damages                    | Long Term Ecosystem Restoration |
| <b>Damage due to</b>  | Suppression activities        | Post-fire events and fire             | Fire                              | Fire                            |
| <b>Urgency</b>        | Immediately after containment | 1-12 months                           | 1-3 years                         | 3 + years                       |
| <b>Responsibility</b> | IC/Agency Administrator       | Agency Administrator                  | Agency Administrator              | Agency Administrator            |
| <b>Funding type</b>   | Suppression (fire)            | Suppression (Emergency Stabilization) | Rehabilitation or regular program | Regular program                 |

**Emergency Stabilization Approval Authorities**

|                                      | <b>BIA</b>                             | <b>BLM</b>                 | <b>FWS</b>   | <b>NPS</b>                                      | <b>FS</b>   |
|--------------------------------------|--|----------------------------|--|---|---|
| <b>Local Approval Level</b>          | <\$250,000 Agency Supt.                | \$0 Field/District Manager | \$0 Refuge Manager   | \$0 Park Supt.                                  | \$0 District Ranger   |
|                                      |  |                            |  |   | \$0 Forest Supervisor   |
| <b>Regional/State Approval Level</b> | \$250,000-\$500,000 Regional Director  | <\$100,000 State Director  | <\$500,000 Regional Director with Regional Fire Management Coordinator concurrence | <\$500,000 Regional Director                    | \$500,000 Western Regional Foresters                              |
|                                      |  |                            |  |   | \$100,000 Eastern Regional Foresters                              |
| <b>National Approval Level</b>       | >\$500,000 Director of Fire Management | >\$100,000 Director        | >\$500,000 Chief, Branch of Fire Management  | >\$500,000 Chief, Division of Fire and Aviation | >\$100,000 or \$500,000 Director, Watershed & Wildlife Management |

## 1 **Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) Teams**

2 BAER Teams are a standing or ad hoc group of technical specialists (e.g.,  
3 hydrologists, biologists, soil scientists, etc.) that develop and may implement  
4 portions of the Burned Area Emergency Response Plans. They will meet the  
5 requirements for unescorted personnel found in Chapter 7 under “Visitors to the  
6 Fireline” when working within the perimeter of an uncontrolled wildfire. The  
7 team’s skills and size should be commensurate with the size and complexity of  
8 the wildfire.

9 It is the Agency Administrator’s responsibility to designate an interdisciplinary  
10 BAER team. However, BAER teams must coordinate closely with IC and  
11 Incident Management teams to work safely and efficiently. Initial requests for  
12 funding for BAER should be submitted to the appropriate Agency Administrator  
13 for approval within 7 calendar days after the total containment of the fire. If  
14 additional time is needed, extensions may be negotiated with those having  
15 approval authority.

16 • **DOI** – *The Department of Interior maintains one National BAER Team to*  
17 *assist field units in planning for complex post-fire emergency stabilization.*  
18 *The National BAER Team is scalable in long and short configurations. It*  
19 *may be ordered as command and general staff, or ordered as individual*  
20 *resources. The full National BAER Team is dispatched to more difficult*  
21 *incidents involving extreme risks to human life and critical Federal assets.*  
22 *Potential floods, mud and debris flows, watershed/municipal water*  
23 *supplies, urban interface, and complex and multiple jurisdictions are the*  
24 *dispatch prioritization criteria issues factored into the mobilization*  
25 *decision. Less complex incidents will use local, regional, interagency, and*  
26 *contracted ad hoc BAER teams that may be supplemented with National*  
27 *BAER Team personnel. Bureau coordinators maintain rosters of BAER*  
28 *personnel for less complex incidents.*

29 • **DOI** – *The DOI-BAER Teams should be requested at least 10 days prior to*  
30 *expected date of wildfire containment and ordered as per the National*  
31 *Mobilization Guide.*

32 • **FS** – *Each Forest Service unit identifies a core BAER team prior to fire*  
33 *season. Regional coordinators maintain rosters of experienced BAER*  
34 *personnel in the Region. When needed, specific BAER personnel*  
35 *representing needed specialties from other units can either be contacted*  
36 *directly or through dispatch. See FSM 2523 and FSH 2509.13 for agency-*  
37 *specific policy and direction for BAER teams.*

## 38 **Incident Business Management**

39 Specific incident business management guidance is contained in the *Interagency*  
40 *Incident Business Management Handbook* (PMS 902). This handbook assists  
41 participating agencies of the NWCG to constructively work together to provide  
42 effective execution of each agency's incident management program by  
43 establishing procedures for:

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- 1 • Uniform application of regulations on the use of human resources, including
- 2 classification, payroll, commissary, injury compensation, and travel;
- 3 • Acquisition of necessary equipment and supplies from appropriate sources
- 4 in accordance with applicable procurement regulations;
- 5 • Managing and tracking government property;
- 6 • Financial coordination with the protection agency and maintenance of
- 7 finance, property, procurement, and personnel records and forms;
- 8 • Use and coordination of incident business management functions as they
- 9 relate to sharing of resources among federal, state, and local agencies,
- 10 including the military;
- 11 • Investigation and reporting of accidents;
- 12 • Investigating, documenting, and reporting claims;
- 13 • Documenting costs and implementing cost-effective criteria for managing
- 14 incident resources; and
- 15 • Non-fire incidents administrative processes.
- 16 ○ *DOI – The Department of the Interior All Hazards-Supplement to the*
- 17 *Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook establishes*
- 18 *business management guidelines for the Department of the Interior’s*
- 19 *(DOI’s) all-hazards incidents. The DOI Supplement is available at*
- 20 *<http://www.doi.gov/emergency/emergency-policy.cfm>.*

### 21 **Cost Management**

22 An Incident Business Advisor (IBA) must be assigned to any wildfire with costs  
23 of \$5 million or more. If a qualified IBA is not available, the approving official  
24 will appoint a financial advisor to monitor expenditures.

25 Incident cost objectives will be included as a performance measure in Incident  
26 Management Team evaluations.

### 27 **Large Fire Cost Reviews**

28 An Interagency Large Fire Cost Review will be conducted when an incident  
29 (single fire or complex) meets or exceeds Federal combined expenditures of \$10  
30 million.

31 A review may also be conducted when an incident (single fire or fire complex)  
32 meets or is expected to meet one or more of the following criteria:

- 33 • The predicted time to achieve the fire management objective exceeds 21
- 34 days;
- 35 • There are significant political, social, natural resource, or policy concerns;
- 36 • There are significant and complicated cost-share or multi-jurisdictional
- 37 issues; or
- 38 • The affected agency requests a review.

39 It is the responsibility of the Agency Administrator to monitor large fire costs  
40 and advise the appropriate individual(s) within their agency of the need for a

1 Large Fire Cost Review. When a multi-jurisdictional fire requires review, the  
2 local Agency Administrator will determine which agency will be designated as  
3 the lead in the review process.

4 The Agency Director will provide a Delegation of Authority to the Cost Review  
5 Team authorizing the implementation of a review. When possible, Large Fire  
6 Cost Reviews should be conducted when the Incident Management Team is still  
7 in place to allow prompt access to records and incident personnel.

- 8 • *BLM – The Assistant Director, Fire and Aviation will initiate, facilitate,  
9 and provide oversight for the LFCR process. Upon determination of the  
10 need for a LFCR, the AD will coordinate with the appropriate state director  
11 and assemble a LFCR team, provide a delegation of authority, and initiate  
12 the LFCR using direction found at  
13 [http://web.blm.gov/internal/fire/budget/Reports/Report\\_Menu\\_new.htm](http://web.blm.gov/internal/fire/budget/Reports/Report_Menu_new.htm).  
14 The AD will provide briefings to the Bureau Director, as appropriate.*

## 15 **Cache Management**

16 Agencies often serve as interagency partners in national support caches and  
17 local area support caches, and may operate single agency initial attack caches.  
18 All caches will maintain established stocking levels, receive and process orders  
19 from participating agencies and follow ordering and fire replenishment  
20 procedures as outlined by the national and geographic area cache management  
21 plans and mobilization guides.

- 22 • *FS – Refer to FSM 5160 for specific requirements.*

### 23 **Type 1 and 2 National Interagency Support Caches**

24 There are fifteen National Interagency Support Caches (NISCs); eleven are  
25 managed by the Forest Service, three are managed by the BLM, and one is  
26 managed by the State of Idaho. The fifteen national caches are part of the  
27 National Fire Equipment System (NFES). Each of these caches provides  
28 incident support in the form of equipment and supplies to units within their  
29 respective geographic areas. The NFES cache system may support other  
30 emergency, disaster, fire-related or land management activities, provided that  
31 such support is permitted by agency policies and does not adversely affect the  
32 primary mission. These national caches do not provide supplies and equipment  
33 to restock local caches for non-incident requests. Non-emergency (routine)  
34 orders should be directed to the source of supply; e.g., DLA or private vendors.

35 The Great Basin Area Incident Support Cache at NIFC provides publications  
36 management support to the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG).  
37 Reference the *NWCG NFES Catalog Part 2: Publications* at  
38 <http://www.nwcg.gov/publications/449-2> for more detailed information.

39 Forest Service National Symbols Program distribution is through the Eastern  
40 Area Incident Support Cache (NEK). This material is coordinated by the USDA

1 Forest Service, under advisement of the National Association of State Foresters'  
2 (NASF) Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Committee (CFFP). Materials  
3 include Smokey Bear /Junior Forest Ranger prevention items and Woodsy Owl  
4 environmental educational materials.

5 NEK also distributes DOI Fire Education materials. The website at  
6 <http://www.symbols.gov/> contains the catalog of these materials, information  
7 about these programs, and online ordering instructions.

### 8 **Type 3 Support Caches**

9 These caches directly support more than one agency and generally cover more  
10 than one administrative unit. They will maintain stocking levels to meet the  
11 identified needs of the multiple agencies for whom service is provided.

### 12 **Type 4 Local Caches**

13 Numerous caches of this level are maintained by each agency. These caches will  
14 establish and maintain stocking levels to meet the initial response needs of the  
15 local unit(s).

## 16 **Inventory Management**

### 17 **System Implementation**

18 Each fire cache, regardless of size, should initiate and maintain a cache  
19 inventory management system. Agency management systems provide a check  
20 out/return concept that incorporates a debit/crediting for all items leaving the  
21 cache. This system is strictly followed in the Type 1 and 2 NISC's. Inventory  
22 management processes should be implemented for all Type 3 Support and Type  
23 4 Local caches.

### 24 **Accountability**

25 Fire loss/use rate is defined as all property and supplies lost, damaged, or  
26 consumed on an incident. It is reported as a percentage that is calculated in  
27 dollars of items issued compared to items returned. Consumable items are not  
28 included in this total. All items stocked in agency fire caches will be categorized  
29 for return (loss tolerance/use rate) and accountability purposes.

### 30 **Trackable Items**

31 Trackable items include items that a cache may track due to dollar value,  
32 sensitive property classification, or limited quantities. Available items that are  
33 considered trackable are usually engraved or tagged with a cache trackable  
34 identification number. These items must be returned to the issuing cache at the  
35 end of the incident use, or documentation must be provided to the issuing cache  
36 as to why it was not returned. All trackable items are also considered durable.  
37 Accountability for trackable items is expected to be 100 percent.

**1 Durable Items**

2 Durable items include cache items considered to have a useful life expectancy  
3 greater than one incident. High percentages of return for these items are  
4 expected. These items are not specifically cache identified/tagged/engraved.  
5 Durable items include water handling accessories, helicopter accessories, tents  
6 and camp items such as heaters, lights, lanterns, tables, chairs, hose, tools,  
7 backpack pumps, sleeping bags, pads, cots, and personal protective equipment.  
8 A 90% level of return is the expected threshold for durable items.

**9 Consumable Items**

10 Consumable items include items normally expected to be consumed during  
11 incident use. Consumable items returned in unused condition are credited to the  
12 incident. Examples of consumable items are: batteries, plastic canteens,  
13 cubitainers, forms, MREs, fusees, hot food containers, petroleum products, and  
14 medical supplies.

**15 Incident Management and Environmental Sustainability**

16 Every incident should seek opportunities to reduce unnecessary waste and limit  
17 impacts associated with management actions. This may be accomplished, for  
18 example, by promoting recycling and encouraging the use of alternative energy  
19 sources as long as such efforts do not compromise operational or safety  
20 objectives.

**21 Incident-to-Incident Transfer of Supplies and Equipment**

22 Transfer of supplies and equipment between incidents is not encouraged, due to  
23 the increased possibility of accountability errors. In instances when it is  
24 determined to be economically feasible and operationally advantageous, the  
25 following must be accomplished by the Supply Unit Leader from the incident  
26 that is releasing the items.

27 Documentation will be completed on the *Interagency Incident Waybill* (NFES  
28 1472) and must include the following:

- 29 • NFES Number.
- 30 • Quantity.
- 31 • Unit of Issue.
- 32 • Description.
- 33 • Trackable ID number, if item is trackable.
- 34 • Receiving incident name, incident number, and resource request number.
- 35 • The Supply Unit Leader will send the waybill transfer information to the  
36 servicing NISC to maintain proper accountability recording.

37 Upon request, the servicing NISC can provide the Supply Unit Leader with an  
38 Outstanding Items Report or Incident Summary Report to facilitate accurate  
39 waybill documentation.

**1 Fire Loss Tolerance Reporting for Type 1 and 2 Incidents**

2 In order to help managers keep incident-related equipment and supply loss to a  
3 minimum, incident management teams (IMTs) are required to maintain  
4 accountability and tracking of these items. Guidelines and procedures to assist  
5 with this accountability are provided in Chapter 30 of the *Interagency Incident*  
6 *Business Management Handbook*. To further facilitate these procedures and  
7 provide oversight, a fire loss report has been developed that provides detailed  
8 information regarding used and trackable item use. This report has been  
9 accepted by NWCG for all wildland fire agencies and will be compiled for all  
10 Type 1 and Type 2 incidents. Investigations may be conducted in those cases  
11 where thresholds may have been exceeded.

12 These reports are compiled by the NISC servicing the particular incident.  
13 Reports will then be forwarded to the responsible local office, with a copy to the  
14 state/regional FMO. The following steps must be followed to insure accurate  
15 reports:

- 16 • At the close of each incident, all property must be returned to the servicing  
17 NFES cache;
- 18 • If accountable/trackable property has been destroyed or lost, appropriate  
19 documentation must be provided to the cache for replacement and updating  
20 property records;
- 21 • All property purchased with emergency fire funds for an incident must be  
22 returned to the NFES cache system;
- 23 • All unused consumable and/or durable NFES items must be returned to the  
24 servicing NFES cache within 30 days of control of the incident; and
- 25 • Agency Administrators/fire management officers must review the fire loss  
26 report and recommend appropriate follow-up action if losses are excessive.  
27 Those actions and recommendations should be documented and filed in the  
28 final incident records.

**29 Incident Supply and Equipment Return Procedures**

30 Supplies and equipment ordered with suppression funds will be returned to the  
31 ordering unit at the close of the incident and dispersed in one of three ways:

- 32 • Items meeting NFES standards will be returned to the NISC for reuse  
33 within the fire supply system;
- 34 • Items not meeting the prescribed NFES standards will be purchased with  
35 program funds by the local unit if the items are needed for program use; or
- 36 • Items will be delivered to the unit's excess property program for disposal.

**37 Cache Returns and Restock Procedures**

38 All returns for credit and restock of caches to specific incident charges should be  
39 made within 30 days after the close of the incident. If that timeframe cannot be  
40 met, it is required that returns and restock be made during the same calendar  
41 year as items were issued. All returns should be tagged with appropriate incident  
42 number, accompanied by an interagency waybill identifying the appropriate

1 incident number, or accompanied by issue documents to ensure proper account  
2 credit is given. Any items returned after the calendar year of issue will be  
3 returned to multiple-fire charges, unless specific incident charge documentation  
4 (issues) can be provided with the return.

5 **Incident Replacement of Government Property**

6 Refer to the *IIBMH*, Chapter 30 for procedures governing property management  
7 relating to incident activities. The Agency Administrator is responsible for  
8 providing agency property management guidelines and/or procedures to incident  
9 personnel.

10 Damage or Loss for assigned property is addressed under *IIBMH* Chapter 30.  
11 Specialty or non-cache items originally provided by the home unit through the  
12 use of preparedness funds will be replaced by home unit funds if the loss is due  
13 to normal wear and tear. If the government property is damaged on the incident  
14 due to a specific event, e.g., wind event damages tent, the incident may, upon  
15 receipt of required documentation and proof of damage, authorize replacement  
16 using the *Incident Replacement Requisition (OF-315)*. Cache items will be  
17 replaced at the incident if available. Cache items that are not available at the  
18 incident may be authorized for restocking at the home unit via an authorized  
19 *Incident Replacement Requisition*.

20 For replacement of NFES items not carried by the National Incident Supply  
21 Cache responsible for supporting the incident (i.e., Wildland Firefighter's Pants,  
22 Type II), replacement must be authorized using the *Incident Replacement*  
23 *Requisition (OF-315)*, and should be accomplished by ordering the item from  
24 Defense Logistics Agency (DLA).