



National Interagency Fire Center

3833 S. Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

July 2, 2013

To: Geographic Area Coordination Centers
From: National Multi Agency Coordinating Group
Subject: July 3, 2013 Operational Pause in Remembrance

The wildland fire community, and the nation, deeply mourns the loss of nineteen firefighters from Prescott Fire Department's Granite Mountain Interagency Hotshot Crew. Even as we mourn this tragic loss we must also remember and honor the other firefighters who have perished in the line of duty on other wildland fires this year.

The 2013 fire season is well underway and is likely to continue at a high intensity level for several more months. With that in mind, **NMAC requests that all wildland fire personnel in the United States observe an Operational Pause in Remembrance on the morning of Wednesday, July 3.**

As we remember our fallen, we must also consider those who survive and the challenges they face in dealing with the magnitude of such a loss. Agency leaders must make available the kinds of counseling and peer support that can help employees work through their emotions. The goal is to reduce the potential long-term impacts that are sometimes a consequence of normal human reactions to tragedy. Some wounds cut deeper, and take longer to heal, than others.

An operational pause is also a time for thoughtful reflection about risk (see "Resources" below). It is a time-out from daily operations – even while committed to an incident. It is a time to focus exclusively on the kind of work we do, our operational environment and the hazards we encounter there, how we assess risk, and the risk mitigations that can be employed to reduce risk to acceptable levels. It is a time to recognize the implications of the fact that in the hazardous wildland fire environment, risk can never be reduced to zero even with the best mitigation measures in place. It is a time to reflect on the fact that we can always take an operational pause to consider these things, even during high-tempo operations.

We ask that all fire managers and fire personnel take the time to thoughtfully take an Operational Pause in Remembrance. And we thank all firefighters and support personnel for their efforts.

/s / John Segar
Chair, NMAC

Resources:

[Incident Response Pocket Guide \(IRPG\), Page 1](http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/pubs/nfes1077/nfes1077.pdf). <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/pubs/nfes1077/nfes1077.pdf>
[Redbook, Chapter 7 Safety](http://www.nifc.gov/PUBLICATIONS/redbook/2013/Chapter07.pdf). <http://www.nifc.gov/PUBLICATIONS/redbook/2013/Chapter07.pdf>