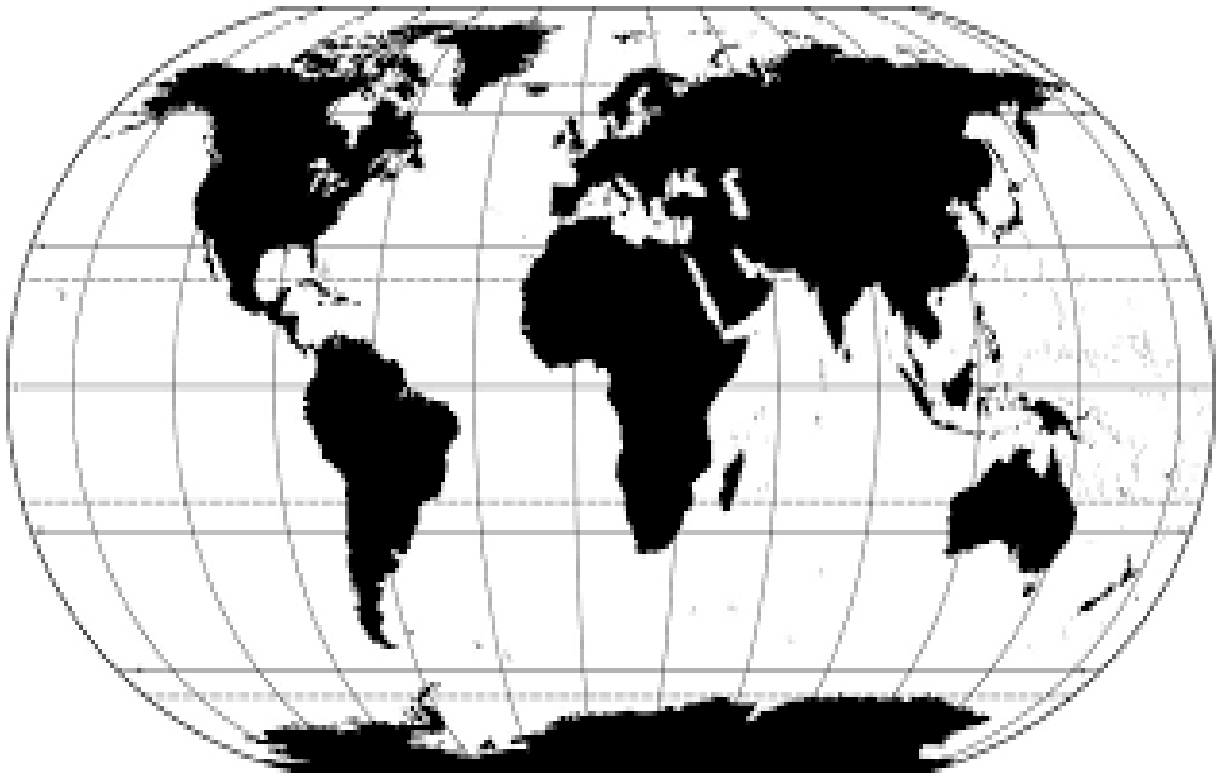


INTERNATIONAL MOBILIZATION GUIDE



June 2026



NATIONAL INTERAGENCY FIRE CENTER

3833 South Development Avenue Boise ID 83705



DATE: June 15, 2026
TO: Agency Personnel
FROM: National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group
SUBJECT: 2026 International Mobilization Guide



Attached is the 2026 International Mobilization Guide. These standards reflect the interagency needs of the user.

The International Mobilization Guide states, references or supplements policy for Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service and Bureau of Indian Affairs.



The signatory agencies have directed the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) with review and oversight from the National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC) to annually revise, publish and distribute the International Mobilization Guide by April 1, and issue errata to this document.



The International Mobilization Guide establishes the standards for international mobilization and demobilization of resources responding to foreign incidents in Canada, Australia and New Zealand; and foreign resources from Canada, Mexico, Australia and New Zealand in response to wildland fires located in the United States. The bilateral agreements between those countries and this document are the foundational documents instituting overarching processes for total mobility of resources.



Submit suggestions for modifying this publication at any time during the calendar year. Send suggestions to the NICC or through your agency's leadership channels to your agency's NMAC representative.





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CHAPTER 10

OBJECTIVES, POLICY AND SCOPE OF OPERATION

INTRODUCTION

The United States has a long history of international cooperation and involvement in wildland fire. This holds true for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the United States Department of the Interior (DOI).

Close associations with four countries—Canada, Mexico, Australia, and New Zealand—have led to maintained and expanded International Agreements or Arrangements to exchange fire management resources. These countries have well-established relationships developed through participation in the North American Forest Commission (NAFC) — Fire Management Working Group (FMWG) and the Australasian Forest Fire Management Group (FFMG).

Countries party to these bilateral agreements that exchange wildland fire resources are referred to as Partner Countries.

PURPOSE AND LIMITATIONS

This guide provides an overview of the mobilization process for sending federal resources from the United States to Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, and for receiving foreign resources in the United States from Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Mexico.

This guide outlines the requirements, practices, mechanisms, and processes for sending and receiving resources on a national scale. It follows and references federal government policy and procedures, but is not specific to the USDA, DOI, or their bureaus and agencies.

This guide also covers: compacts, initial attack, and border agreements; information specific to aviation assets; a position crosswalk for commonly used positions among the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Mexico; and all agreements and Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) in place for international mobilizations.

WHAT THIS GUIDE COVERS

This guide describes international ordering procedures and the mobilization process for federal resources responding to wildland fire incidents in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

This guide covers federal employees and aviation assets from two primary agencies: the USDA's U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), including its bureaus — the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and the National Park Service (NPS).

This guide also describes the ordering and mobilization process for resources from Canada, Mexico, Australia, and New Zealand responding to wildland fire incidents in the United States.

OBJECTIVES, POLICY AND SCOPE OF OPERATION- CHAPTER 10

These resources are identified in this guide as those requested by the National Multi-Agency Coordination Group (NMAC) through the Request for Assistance (RFA) process.

WHAT THIS GUIDE DOES NOT COVER

Other Federal Entities

This guide does not cover the mobilization process for federal employees outside the USDA or DOI.

State and Local Government

This guide does not cover the mobilization process for state and local government employees responding to wildland fire incidents in Canada, Australia, or New Zealand.

However, Chapter 40 provides an overview of compacts, initial attack agreements, and border agreements with Canada and Mexico.

Sending Resources to Countries other than Canada, Australia and New Zealand

This guide does not cover the mobilization and ordering process for foreign countries other than Canada, Mexico, Australia, and New Zealand.

Non-Emergency Support to Foreign Countries

Natural disasters and humanitarian needs are not a part of this guide. Training and instruction requests are also not part of this guide.

INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS AND ARRANGEMENTS

The United States government exchanges resources with international partners through bilateral agreements or arrangements that define authorities and types of assistance. Accompanying operating plans further describe how these countries exchange resources. The USDA and DOI have jointly entered into these agreements under the authority of the EMERGENCY WILDFIRE SUPPRESSION ACT AS AMENDED, US PUBLIC LAW 100-428, 42 USC, SECTION 1856M.

These bilateral agreements and arrangements are coordinated through the USDA Forest Service, All Hazard and International Fire Support Branch, Fire & Aviation Management Office, in cooperation with the Department of the Interior.

The National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) works with NMAC at the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) in Boise, Idaho, to manage resource requests, distribute assistance to fires in the United States, and mobilize resources to and from Partner Countries.

CHIEF OF MISSION AUTHORITY

All federal employees conducting official business in a foreign country fall under the Chief of Mission authority of the U.S. Department of State.

Chief of Mission (COM) is the principal officer in charge of each U.S. diplomatic mission to a foreign country, foreign territory, or international organization. This term typically refers to U.S. ambassadors leading embassies abroad but also applies to ambassadors in charge of other official U.S. missions or diplomatic personnel serving in the absence of an ambassador.

Each COM is appointed by the President and serves as the President's personal representative, leading diplomatic efforts for their assigned mission or country. By law, U.S. ambassadors and others exercising COM authority are the cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy coordination in their respective countries.

COM authority and responsibilities originate in the FOREIGN SERVICE ACT OF 1980, AS AMENDED (FSA 1980; P.L. 96-465), which grants COMs “full responsibility for the direction, coordination, and supervision of all government executive branch employees in that country,” with some exceptions, and requires them to stay “fully and currently informed” about all government activities and operations within that country.

The U.S. Ambassador to each partner country signs the bilateral arrangements for the exchange of fire management resources on behalf of the United States.

OFFICIAL CHANNELS

U.S. Department of State

U.S. Embassy and Consulate staff play an integral role in responding to requests for assistance in foreign countries. They hold oversight and authority consistent with the Chief of Mission authority described above.

National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group

The National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC) holds delegated authority to provide strategic coordination and ensure firefighting resources are managed efficiently, appropriately, and cost-effectively at the national level.

Their mission is to provide national wildland fire operations management, set priorities, and allocate resources through multi-agency coordination. Membership includes leadership from:

- United States Forest Service
- United States Wildland Fire Service
- United States Fire Administration
- National Association of State Foresters

NMAC manages all international resource requests from Partner Countries and requests assistance from Partner Countries for wildland fires in the United States. NMAC members representing the Department of the Interior, United States Forest Service (USFS), United States Fire Administration (USFA), and the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) are authorized to oversee all federal resources requested to support firefighting activities in Partner Countries.

NMAC sets priorities and allocates resources based on preparedness levels. NMAC considers the following when making resource allocation decisions that involve mobilizing federal resources to Partner Countries:

- Level of Wildfire Suppression in the United States
- Emergency Support Function (ESF) / National Response Framework
- Agency Prescribed Fire Operations
- International Cooperation

For further information regarding NMAC, go to: <https://www.nifc.gov/nicc/nmac>

National Interagency Coordination Center

The National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) leads cost-effective and timely coordination of land management agency emergency response to wildland fire.

The NICC coordinates resource mobilization internationally with Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Mexico.

US Forest Service All Hazard and International Fire Support

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) All Hazard and International Fire Support Branch, located at the Forest Service Headquarters in Washington, D.C. and at NIFC in Boise ID, negotiates and maintains international agreements and arrangements in cooperation with the Department of Interior.

The USFS All Hazard and International Fire Support Branch ensures that Department of State officials and appropriate embassies and consulates stay informed during international mobilizations to and from the United States.

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE PROCESS

The Request for Assistance (RFA) is the formal process used to order wildland fire resources between the U.S. and Partner Countries. The RFA is an official form signed by the U.S. and Partner Country coordinating authorities. The RFA includes details such as date and time needed, reporting locations, resource types and numbers, work shifts and duty hours, etc.

The U.S. and Partner Countries have peer to peer conversations throughout the year that discuss incident status, predicted activity, resource drawdown, and other factors affecting incident response.

NMAC approves sending all resource requests to a Partner Country. *Please see Chapter 20 for further information.*

NMAC requests resources from a Partner Country and identifies geographic area allocation. *Please see Chapter 30 for further information.*

SYSTEMS AND QUALIFICATIONS

To exchange resources for fire suppression under the international agreements and arrangements, Partner Countries must demonstrate an established national system for coordination, incident command and control, and qualifications. These systems differ from U.S. but share similar concepts and principles. Qualification matrices and standards undergo continuous evaluation and require discussion and agreement before mobilizing requested positions. *Please see Chapter 60 – Qualification Positions Crosswalk*

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES

The following positions are part of the internal command structure established in the United States to support international mobilizations for sending and receiving resources. These positions are not

part of the ordering system and are pre-established as part of one's position responsibilities. *Please see Appendix A for sample organizational charts.*

NMAC Members

NMAC holds national-level authority to direct and control firefighting resource allocations between Geographic Areas and takes appropriate action to implement its decisions. This authority applies equally when NMAC evaluates international requests for assistance, whether sending or receiving.

Responsibilities

- Decide on all RFAs to and from Partner Countries.
- Coordinate with Geographic Area Coordinating Groups and Geographic Coordination Centers on resource allocation decisions.

NMAC Chair (Or Vice Chair)

The NMAC Chair represents the U.S. Government for wildland fire resources part of an international mobilization and leads the response when requesting assistance for both sending and receiving resources. The Vice Chair serves in the Chair's absence.

Responsibilities

- Represent all U.S. wildland fire leadership for ordering and mobilization.
- Address resource delegations from Partner Countries upon arrival.
- Organize and lead After Action Reviews for foreign resource deployments.

NMAC Coordinator

The NMAC Coordinator maintains contact with their peer positions at the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC), and the Australasian Fire Authorities Council. This position serves as the primary point of contact when a request for assistance is generated for both sending and receiving resources.

Responsibilities

- Facilitate all NMAC meetings and facilitate decision making.
- Evaluate pending RFAs before bringing to NMAC for decision.
- Supervise support positions activated by NMAC at the NICC for international deployments when sending and receiving resources.
- Work directly with Partner Country leadership through regular information sharing and meetings.
- Maintain the Operating Plans for all international arrangements referenced in this guide.

NMAC International Liaison

The NMAC International Liaison (NILO) is requested by NMAC and activated by the NMAC Coordinator when receiving Partner Country resources. The NILO builds a team primarily staffed to lead mobilization center, briefing, and training activities. The NILO serves as NMAC's primary point of contact during a mobilization inside the U.S.

Responsibilities

- Attend NMAC meetings and report out on all preparatory and on-going actions for receiving resources.

- Keep the Embassy Liaison informed of all approved RFAs, the number and positions of personnel and equipment being deployed, dates of mobilization and anticipated demobilization, and other relevant information for any international deployment, both sending and receiving.
- Collaborate and manage with staff.
- Serves as the primary point of contact until received resources arrive at their designated assignment.
- Coordinates closeout activities. Reassembles staff as needed for After Action Reviews (AARs), demobilization, and related activities.

International Coordinator on Duty (COD)

The International COD serves as the primary point of contact for all international mobilizations. Depending on the size of the RFA or mobilization, the International COD may establish an International Expanded Dispatch to facilitate the ordering process. When sending resources, the International COD ensures all applicable paperwork and authorizations are complete and accurate before resources travel.

When receiving resources, the International COD works with NMAC to allocate incoming resources and verify resources meet the qualifications identified in the RFA.

Responsibilities

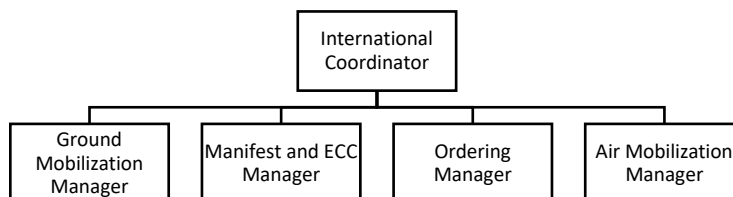
- Assemble an International Expanded Dispatch.
- Coordinate with incoming International Liaisons (INLO) from Partner Countries at NIFC.
- Ensure entry requirements are completed for all resources.
- Serve as the primary point of contact until resources arrive in a Partner Country.
- Track resources for the duration of the RFA.

International Expanded Dispatch

The International Expanded Dispatch operates under the International COD at the NICC. Functional areas are unique and do not mimic traditional expanded roles. Positions may include: Manifest and Electronic Country Clearance (ECC) Manager, Ground Mobilization Manager, Air Mobilization Manager, Aviation Resource Manager, and Agency Travel Specialist.

Responsibilities

- Process all resource requests.
- Act as the requesting country in the Interagency Resource Ordering Capability (IROC) system.
- Coordinate ground and air travel to ensure resources arrive as requested.
- Provide process feedback to the International COD.



Embassy Liaison

The Embassy Liaison's primary responsibility is to communicate with the embassy and/or consulate(s), as well as interface with leaders from the sending country's agencies and associated international groups and committees. This role ensures countries comply with the Arrangement and Operating Plan.

Responsibilities

- Communicate with the embassy and/or consulate(s) regularly and respond to their needs and requests.
- Facilitate country clearance and prepare documentation for entry requirements.
- Assist the International COD as needed.
- Mobilize to the Partner Country with the International Liaison Officer (INLO) before other resources mobilize to facilitate resource negotiations.
- Coordinate with the sending country's leadership to facilitate and escort official visits.
- Coordinate with the USDA USFS and DOI Fire Public Affairs Officers (PAOs) to keep department officials informed.
- Advise PAOs and other senior officials.

NIFC External Affairs Coordinator

The NIFC External Affairs (EA) Coordinator disseminates information to senior leadership and agency headquarters. The EA Coordinator develops national messaging regarding international mobilization for internal audiences, media outlets, and the public.

Responsibilities

- Develop the initial public announcement regarding international mobilizations and post to the National Fire News page on the NIFC.gov website.
- Establish a communications link with the receiving unit/fire public information officer for coordination (i.e. media inquiries, social media, VIP visits, etc.).
- Work with the Embassy Liaison and International Liaison Officer to create national talking points when deploying or receiving resources.
- Support communications regarding a serious accident or fatality, in coordination with appropriate agency leadership and external affairs.

International Mobilization Center Manager

The International Mobilization Center Manager ensures the logistical needs of incoming resources are in place before they arrive. This position reports to the NILO and works with the International COD for the duration of the activation.

Responsibilities

- Assemble and supervise staff to operate the International Mobilization Center.
- Provide logistical support for Partner Country resources.
- Provide feedback and reports to the NILO.

International Orientation Coordinator

The International Orientation Coordinator prepares and validates all information and materials used to brief and train incoming resources from a Partner Country. This position ensures training materials concerning predictive services, defensive driving, wildland fire terminology, safety, and related topics are complete, up to date, and organized appropriately across multiple training

sessions. The Orientation Coordinator reports to the NILO and works with the International COD for the duration of the activation.

Responsibilities

- Ensure training information is tailored to the location that Partner Country resources will be assigned.
- Validate and update briefing materials before Partner Country resources arrive.
- Establish a timeline and schedule for completing required training for Partner Country resources.

SPECIALIZED SUPPORT POSITIONS

The following positions form the established command structure for international operations, agreed upon by the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The U.S. staffs these positions in foreign countries, and Partner Countries staff equivalent positions in the U.S.

For U.S. operations, these positions are ordered through the IROC system and inserted on RFAs at the request of the sending country. These specialized positions play a critical role during a coordinated international response. They support resources from Partner Countries and serve as a backstop for any specific needs that resources may have while deployed in a foreign country.

International Liaison Officer (INLO)

The International Liaison Officer (INLO) serves as the in-country point of contact for both sending and receiving countries and may also be referred to as an International Resource Representative. The INLO mediates resource inquiries and requests between coordinating authorities, ensures adherence to the Arrangement and Operating Plan, fosters positive relationships with the host country and other international partners, supports and ensures the safety of deployed resources, and resolves unexpected situations such as border security issues, urgent demobilizations, and critical or significant incidents. INLOs operate out the following locations:

- At NICC located in Boise, Idaho in the United States.
- At CIFFC in Winnipeg, Manitoba in Canada.
- At NRCS in East Melbourne, Victoria in Australia.

Responsibilities

- Arrive in-country before resources are mobilized to negotiate with the receiving country on the type and number of resources required.
- Communicate with the receiving country regarding policy, administrative, legislative, and operational requirements for the sending country's resources.
- Make initial notifications and liaise with appropriate peer personnel and may be re-tasked within an Incident within an Incident (IWI). See the appendix for further information.
- Provide the receiving country with updates on availability, qualifications, and skill sets of the sending country's resources.
- Collaborate with the receiving country and organize the tour of duty for resources, including arrival, orientation, deployment, and demobilization.
- Attend briefings, meetings, conference calls, and provide activity updates to the NICC either daily, weekly, or as needed.
- Establish a support network and communications plan for the NICC, Senior Representatives (SREP), Field Representatives (FREP), and team leaders.

- Monitor the wellbeing and performance of all in-country personnel.
- Check-in/Check-out on a regular basis with the receiving country's point of contact.
- Monitor resource activities through the SREP or FREP, and manage deployment variation protocols with the receiving country.
- Oversee tracking of the sending country's resources and maintain an overview of all resource locations.
- Transition with the replacement INLO and provide after action items to the host country before demobilizing.

Senior Representative (SREP)

The (SREP) serves as the point of contact for resources and Field Representatives (FREP) in a specified area and provides logistical support and safety oversight. The SREP builds positive relationships with the receiving country's jurisdictional offices and international partners, communicates with the INLO to coordinate mobilization and demobilization of resources, and handles unexpected situations under the INLO's direction. In the United States this position is hosted at a Geographic Area Coordination Center (GACC), at a provincial fire center in Canada, and at a state-based fire center in Australia.

Responsibilities

- Communicate with the receiving country regarding policy, administrative, legislative, and operational requirements.
- Collaborate with the INLO and the receiving country to organize the tour of duty for the sending country's resources, including arrival, orientation, deployment, after action review, and demobilization.
- Make initial notifications and liaises with appropriate peer personnel and may be re-tasked within an Incident within an Incident (IWI). See the appendix for further information.
- Attend briefings and provide activity updates to the INLO.
- Monitor the health, safety and performance of resources. Identify and manage any protocol variations between the sending and receiving countries.
- Develop and maintain resource tracking reports for the specified area and notify the INLO daily of any personnel location changes.
- Coordinate with the INLO and FREPs regarding any critical or significant incident.
- Ensure any injury receives appropriate treatment, is reported to the INLO, and is documented adequately (medical certificates, etc.) to support workers' compensation claims if necessary.
- Provide logistical support for resources and coordinates with the receiving country's jurisdictional point of contact for re-deployment or movement of resources.
- Receive, transfer, and facilitate resource movement at the receiving country's international airport. Communicate with airport security, the embassy, and air carriers to ensure timely and accurate logistical needs are met.
- Provide 'After Action' items to the International Liaison Officer and the jurisdictional point of contact or designee before demobilizing.

Field Representative (FREP)

The Field Representative (FREP) coordinates the mobilization of the country's field resources assigned to incidents and ensures their wellbeing. When resources are not engaged on an incident,

the FREP provides oversight, reports to the Senior Representative (SREP) or directly to the INLO and deploys on the same schedule as the resources they support.

Responsibilities

- Monitor the health and safety of assigned resources, including preventing and managing fatigue, stress, and accidents.
- Ensure injuries receive appropriate treatment and reported to the Medical Unit, Incident Management Team (IMT), SREP, and INLO. Secure adequate documentation (medical certificates, etc.) to support workers' compensation claims as necessary.
- Make initial notifications and liaise with appropriate peer personnel, and may be tasked in an IWI role. See the appendix for further information.
- Act as a hospital liaison for any critical or significant incident, such as an injury to a sending country resource, stabilizing the situation and managing the welfare of the injured person and other sending country resources.
- Provide appropriate information to the SREP and INLO.
- Facilitate logistical needs of assigned resources.
- Provide regular reports and updates to the INLO that include the who, what, where, when, and why resources are assigned.
- Coordinate the return of resources to the home agency.

INCIDENT BUSINESS, BUDGET AND FINANCE

The operating plans under the international agreements and arrangements address all reimbursable costs. The requesting country reimburses the assisting country for salary, travel, lodging, meals, and other expenses.

HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS (ER)

Workplace Harassment

The U.S. and Partner Countries maintain a workplace environment free from harassment. All appropriate officials will be notified when harassment occurs and have the opportunity to correct it promptly.

All personnel must follow their agency policy on workplace harassment and reporting, whether on assignment in a Partner Country or assigned with Partner Country resources in the U.S.

Hospitalization and Medical Care

The receiving Partner Country must ensure that immediate medical services are available to any member of the sending Partner Country personnel, regardless of the medical aid required.

Before deploying, the sending Partner Country must confirm that its workers' compensation arrangements cover liability for personal injury, compensation, and death for resources responding to the receiving Partner Country's request for wildland fire management assistance.

The receiving Partner Country is not liable for any workers' compensation or other insurance costs except as agreed in advance between the participants.

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS), U.S. Wildland Fire Service (USWFS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and the

National Park Service (NPS) each have unique processes for medical care and hospitalizations. Each agency provides a process for medical compensation and claims, points of contact, and payment of medical services while operating in a Partner Country in support of wildland fire operations.

Accidents and Investigations

If an accident or incident involves sending Partner Country personnel, the sending Partner Country's agency representative must be included in the investigation team and process — whether the incident occurs in a Partner Country or in the United States. See Chapter 90 for more information.

Line of Duty Death

If a Line of Duty Death involves sending Partner Country personnel, the sending Partner Country's agency representative must be included in the repatriation process — whether the incident occurs in a Partner Country or in the United States. *See Chapter 90 for more information.*

AFTER ACTION REVIEWS (AAR)

The NMAC Chair schedules and facilitates all AARs for both sending and receiving mobilizations. The International COD (located at NICC), INLOs, SREPs, and FREPs/IARRs collect all relevant after-action items.

CHAPTER 20

SENDING RESOURCES

OVERVIEW

This chapter outlines the ordering and mobilization process for sending resources to Canada, Mexico, Australia, and New Zealand.

ORDERING PROCESS/REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE (RFA)

When wildland fire operations exceed domestic capabilities, one Partner Country generates a formal Request for Assistance (RFA) to the other. Partner Countries monitor each other's preparedness levels. As preparedness levels elevate, calls are established to maintain situational awareness. Several conversations between the officials designated in the agreement/arrangement occur before receiving a resource request. Collaboration on types and kinds of resources to be requested is worked out well in advance of placing an RFA.

When anticipating a resource exchange, countries may send an INLO to one another's National Coordinating Authority to provide direct in-person communication and facilitate the request and mobilization process. For the United States, the NICC coordinates the resource request with the requesting country's coordinating authority.

PROCESSES FOR INTERNATIONAL MOBILIZATION

The NICC is the sole entity responsible for processing international resource requests. Once the NICC receives a formal RFA, it presents the RFA to NMAC for consideration and decision. Further negotiations may occur to ensure the U.S. can meet domestic priorities while supporting Partner Countries. Once NMAC approves the RFA, the International Coordinator on Duty (COD) at the NICC begins the ordering process utilizing the national coordination system.

The following occurs once a resource accepts an assignment:

- Resource Order with special instructions from the RFA
- Travel Authorization / Manifest / Government Furnished Equipment
- Country Clearance
- Mobilize / Port of Entry / In-Country Briefing

Responsibilities of the NICC

Once a Partner Country submits an approved RFA, the International COD activates the International Expanded Dispatch support function and coordinates with peer positions within the international mobilization structure.

The International Expanded Dispatch builds requests in IROC under the appropriate country's IROC instance.

Note: Partner Countries DO NOT use IROC. The NICC is the only entity that has access to, and acts as, a Partner Country in IROC. All communications regarding international resource orders

will go through the International Expanded Dispatch, regardless of what the resource order shows as the host unit.

Dispatch Procedures for International Mobilization

The NICC exclusively manages all international mobilizations to Partner Countries. The NICC International Expanded Dispatch operates the same as a local-level expanded dispatch. Local dispatch centers fill international orders and responders filling those orders can contact the NICC International Expanded Dispatch directly for any questions or assistance needed.

The resource must complete several critical steps before mobilization. Failure to adhere to the process outlined below will result in the resource's order being canceled. Not all international mobilizations will require all the steps below.

Once the resource order is filled, the resource must review all special instructions, complete all required documentation, and submit it to the NICC no later than 72 hours before the date and time needed on the resource order. Failure to meet this deadline will result in order cancellation.

Complete and obtain the following:

- International Manifest (resource specific) with complete vehicle information (if applicable)
- Copy of the responder's passport biographical page
- Approved Travel Authorization
- Airline itinerary (if applicable)
- FS-6500-1/DI-1175 when available
- Send all documents encrypted to nicc.international@firenet.gov
 - A separate email with the password will be required.

The NICC will notify resources and host dispatch centers that travel is approved once the NICC confirms agency clearance and State Department Electronic Country Clearance (eCC) approval.

Resources must not travel until the NICC provides the above confirmations. Any travel taken before NICC authorization will result in order being canceled.

Prerequisites for Personnel

All resources must carry a valid U.S. passport to mobilize to Partner Countries.

Entry requirements differ for each country covered under these agreements. Host countries have the sole authority to set and change these requirements. A felony or criminal conviction may prohibit entry. Other requirements, such as vaccination verification, may also apply. The NICC identifies these restrictions and filters resources accordingly before mobilizing.

Further information can be found at: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel.html>

Resources should expect a personal cargo weight limit of 29.5 kg (65 lbs.), which includes personal items and fire line gear when flying by contract aircraft. There may be exceptions when traveling on commercial airlines.

REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERNATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

Departments and agencies have specific guidance, forms, and processes that generally take up to six weeks to complete. Much of the preparation for an international assignment can begin well before a resource request, and agencies can expedite portions of the process for emergency travel. This section outlines various requirements and does not replace agency-specific policy or guidance. Additional policy and guidance for all federal agencies can be found in the Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) at <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-41/subtitle-F> and on the Department of State website at <https://www.state.gov/>. The following summarizes international travel requirements for federal employees, each discussed in further detail below.

- Country Requirements
- Approved Travel Authorization
- Approved Electronic Country Clearance
- Passport- valid for at least 6 months
- Counter Threat Awareness Training or Foreign Affairs Counter Threat Training- if required
- Approved Government Furnished Equipment (i.e., laptops, cell phones and tablets)

EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Your decision and contribution of support to our Partner Country is duly recognized. To leave your home and travel to a foreign country is not easy, especially when the purpose is for fighting wildland fire. As a United States firefighter in a foreign country, you represent not only your agency, but the United States wildland fire community. You are therefore asked to employ our Leading in the Wildland Fire Service principles and concepts. During your assignment you are expected to:

- Adhere to our wildland fire leadership values and principles:
 - Duty
 - Respect
 - Integrity
- Participate to the best of your ability in the level of leadership you have been asked to perform:
 - Follower
 - Leaders of people
 - Leader of leaders
 - Leaders of organizations
- Be proficient in your job.
- Make sound and timely decisions.
- Ensure tasks are understood, supervised and accomplished.
- Develop people for the future.
- Work hard and lead by example.

COUNTRY ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Entry requirements differ for each country covered under these agreements. Partner Countries have the sole authority to set and change these requirements. A felony or criminal conviction may prohibit entry. Other requirements, such as vaccination verification, may also apply.

Country Entry Requirements are non-negotiable, the NICC does not have any control or decision space to alter or amend said requirements.

The NICC identifies these restrictions and filters resources accordingly before mobilizing. Further information may be found at: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel.html>

TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION

Agencies require a travel authorization for all international assignments. Foreign travel involves additional steps and typically takes more time to complete than domestic travel. Agencies generally collect supplemental information including the urgency of the request, length of stay, purpose, mode of travel, lodging location, in-country and emergency contacts, security clearance, and embassy or transportation escort needs for each country. Agencies use this information to identify passport and visa requirements, determine any training needs, and notify the embassy through the Electronic Country Clearance (eCC) process.

International travel authorizations typically require approval above an employee's immediate supervisor. Additional forms and processes outside the agency's travel platform may be required to keep leadership informed and involved in the decision.

COUNTRY CLEARANCE

Country clearance is permission from the U.S. Ambassador to perform work for the U.S. government in a foreign country. The NICC International Expanded Dispatch obtains this clearance through the Electronic Country Clearance (eCC) system.

The eCC notifies Department of State officials in Washington, D.C., embassies, and overseas post offices of an official traveler's request to travel in a foreign country. Department of State policy requires all employees on official government business abroad to submit an eCC request to the embassy for permission to travel in the specified country. The embassy must approve the request before the employee may travel.

PASSPORTS AND VISAS

All federal employees traveling internationally must carry an Official Government Passport. Due to the emergency nature of international mobilizations official passports are not required, and personal passports are permitted to mobilize to a Partner Country.

All passports must have at least 6 months of remaining validity for official travel on a mobilization order.

If a visa is required, the Resource Order Form will include specific instructions.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Most agencies restrict government-owned electronic devices, known as Government Furnished Equipment (GFE), for foreign travel and may require additional training or authorization to take them to another country.

Information regarding GFE and what is authorized (i.e. 2 laptops per 20-person crew) will be included on the Resource Order Form.

Utilizing GFE in foreign locations can introduce additional risks to information and information systems and carry additional security requirements. This includes laptops, desktops, tablets, smartphones, and other devices that can access official networks and systems on unknown networks.

GFE is typically reimaged or wiped clean upon return to the United States. Loaner devices may be available, though the method and timeframe differ by agency. If you travel without GFE, ensure your supervisor and leadership are prepared to support you with the reporting and system access requirements for situation updates, time and attendance, email, corporate files, electronic forms, and other agency-specific needs.

CELLPHONES AND MOBILE DEVICES

Different mobile providers offer varying degrees of coverage in different countries. It is important to determine whether your current plan and device will be compatible with the network in a Partner Country.

Personal or government phones may have restrictions, or inherent capability for foreign use. Consider what mobile applications you may need to install and the amount of internet you will need.

Government Mobile Phones

Strict guidelines govern the international use of government cell phones. Like other GFE, they require online training and prior approval. Government cell phones typically operate on domestic rate plans, and international use can be very expensive. Use of data and calling may be limited. When anticipating international travel, check with your agency cellular program coordinator to determine options.

Government Devices (Tablets and Hotspots)

The Resource Order Form will identify if a GFE device is needed or required. **Note:** There are currently no international data plans to support these devices. Refer to specific agency policy and rules before use in a Partner Country.

Personal Mobile Phones

Speak to personal cellular service providers about the best way to handle international travel.

International call and data plans are offered by most providers at an additional cost. Rates vary depending on the amount of data, call time and the duration needed. Compare rates to determine

the most effective plan for the length of travel. Any domestic changes need to occur before traveling to a Partner Country.

Many travelers choose to use a subscriber identity module (SIM) for their personal cell phone, which provides compatibility software on a chip roughly the size of a microSD card. Once in-country, local telecom stores (the equivalent to Verizon or AT&T, or other) sell SIM cards with various capabilities and plans, often designed for temporary travelers. Electronic SIM (eSIM) cards are also becoming more available and are often already installed on modern high-end phones. SIM cards may come with a new phone number, and if this is your situation, make sure you share your new number with the people you want to be able to reach you.

CUSTOMS AND BORDER CROSSINGS

The International Coordinator on Duty (COD) communicates with the Partner Country's Coordinating Authorities on all border crossing points of entry and crossing times, for both air and ground. Ground border crossings require a vehicle inventory in advance. Government aircraft border crossings require an aircraft inventory of cargo and supplies in advance.

All responders must have a passport on their person when crossing the border.

ADMINISTRATIVELY DETERMINED (AD) EMPLOYEE REQUIREMENTS

AD Employees are allowed to participate in Partner Country's RFAs. Refer to your sponsoring agency's specific policy regarding international travel requirements.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

All resources responding to an international assignment are expected to mobilize with the following PPE:

- Fireline workwear
- Good quality work boots with 8-inch uppers
- Helmets (including flight helmets)
- Gloves
- Eye protection
- Hearing protection
- Individual tents (with proper fly for each tent)
- Sleeping bags/pads
- Rain suits jacket/pants
- Warm clothing, jacket, hat
- Day pack
- Personal toiletries and towel
- Fire Shelter

Fire Shelters

U.S. Resources **will** carry a fire shelter as part of their PPE when working on the fire line, regardless of a Partner Country's PPE requirements.

Specialty PPE

Each Partner Country may have specific requirements for hardhats, sawyer boots, saw chaps, fire line boots, etc. that differ from the U.S. These will be provided upon arrival or the NICC will provide instructions on how to acquire those items before mobilization.

DRIVING

A driving orientation will be part of the initial in-country briefing.

A valid U.S. driving license is required when driving in a foreign country. Responders should familiarize themselves with the differences between the U.S. and the Partner Countries rules of the road before mobilization. **Some key differences are listed below.**

Canada:

- Uses the metric system for speed limits and distances. Speed limits will be posted in kilometers per hour (km/h).
- Has two types of green light: a solid green light, and a flashing green light. A solid green light means the same thing as in the U.S. The flashing green light means the driver has the right of way to make a left hand turn.

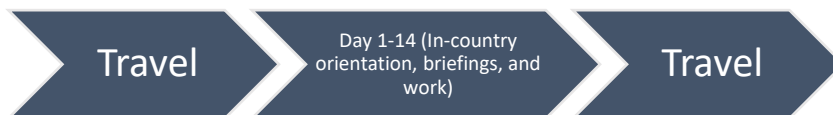
Australia/New Zealand:

- Uses the metric system for speed limits and distances. Speed limits will be posted in kilometers per hour (km/h).
- Drive on the left side of the road.

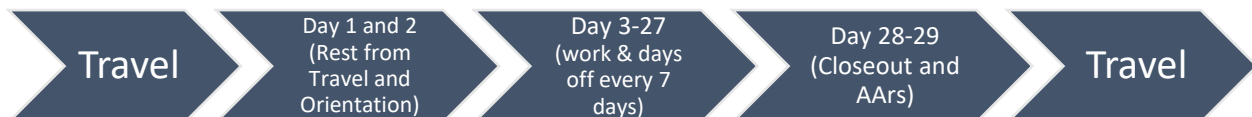
LENGTH OF ASSIGNMENT

All international Requests for Assistance include an identified length of assignment. Typically for responses to Canada this will be 14 days, while responses to Australia and New Zealand will be 28-30 days.

14-day Scenario for Canada



30-day Scenario for Australia and New Zealand



When traveling to AUS/NZ responders will receive an acclimation day upon arrival.

EMPLOYEE TRAVEL

Mobilizing to an international fire assignment differs significantly from a domestic assignment. Several steps must be completed in a specific order to secure all approvals at the appropriate levels before traveling.

IMPORTANT!!! Do not mobilize before approval from the International COD.

Once a responder receives a filled resource order for an international assignment, the travel authorization process begins. This process differs between the USDA and DOI, but in all cases the first step is to create a travel authorization and book airline travel. Do not book a roundtrip flight unless directed by the NICC.

DOI Personnel:

A copy of the Resource Order Form, Travel Authorization, Airline Itinerary and completed International Manifest must be submitted to the International COD no less than 72 hours before expected departure.

The International COD forwards the information through the appropriate agency channels to initiate the DI-1177 form and country clearance.

DOI responders must work through their local IT support to obtain approval for government-owned equipment.

USDA Personnel:

A copy of the Resource Order Form, Travel Authorization, Airline Itinerary and completed International Manifest must be submitted to the International COD no less than 72 hours before expected departure.

The International COD forwards the information through the appropriate agency channels to initiate the FS-6500-1 form and country clearance.

USDA responders submit the GFE information form along with their other travel documents to the NICC.

SPECIALIZED RESOURCES

Incident Management Teams (IMTs)

Requests for Incident Management Teams (IMTs) specify the number of personnel and positions requested. The Partner Country identifies these requests in the RFA and are non-negotiable.

A typical RFA from Canada will be for 12-14 personnel with the specific positions identified in each RFA. For Australia/New Zealand it is typically command and general staff only.

Refer to the ICS Position Crosswalk in Chapter 60 for further information on IMT positions and Partner Countries differences.

Interagency Hotshot Crews (IHCs)

Interagency Hotshot Crews (IHCs) are authorized to mobilize with up to 25 individuals and are encouraged to travel with four flight helmets per crew. The Resource Order Form will have specific instructions for boot requirements, chainsaw usage and training, and specialized tools and equipment (including UTVs).

Rappel and Exclusive Use (EU) Helicopter/Helitack Modules

Helitack, Rappel crews, and Exclusive Use helicopters are pre-identified by the USFS and BLM National Rotor-wing Program Managers. *Please see Chapter 50 regarding Exclusive Use helicopters.*

Smokejumpers

Smokejumpers and Smokejumper aircraft are pre-identified by the USFS and DOI Smokejumper Program Managers. *Please see Chapter 50 regarding Smokejumper aircraft.*

Wildland Fire Engines

Wildland fire engines (Types 3, 4, and 6) are only mobilized to Canada. Engines assembled as a Strike Team, with a Strike Team Leader, will cross the border as a unit. The Resource Order Form will provide specific instructions for the Strike Team. A full vehicle inventory is required for each wildland fire engine.

INTERNATIONAL COORDINATOR (AND INTERNATIONAL EXPANDED)

The International Coordinator on Duty (COD) and International Expanded Dispatch are the primary points of contact for all resources traveling to a Partner Country. Their primary responsibility is to ensure all resources have met agency policies and clearances prior to traveling and remain the point of contact until resources arrive in the Partner Country.

Refer to Chapter 10 for specific roles and responsibilities of the International COD and the International Expanded Dispatch.

IN-COUNTRY SUPPORT ORGANIZATION

The in-country support organization scales up or down as needed based on the size and number of personnel deployed. The in-country support network will consist of key personnel located at the Partner Country's national coordination center along with Senior Representatives at the regional/state level and Field Representatives at the local level.

In-country support personnel roles and responsibilities are outlined in Chapter 10 of this guide.

INTERNATIONAL BRIEFING STANDARDS

A series of briefing standards support information sharing before and during deployment to a Partner Country. These standards ensure the right information is delivered at the right time and prevent duplication. The five distinct information briefing opportunities are:

1. Pre-departure Information: Collection of information that deploying personnel need to know before departing their home base.

2. Departure Briefing: In-person or virtual briefing, outlining both sending Partner Country and receiving Partner Country information.
3. Arrival Briefing: In-person briefing providing specific details on the agency/organization and fire operations.
4. Operational Briefing: In-person operational briefing specific to the incident.
5. Deployment Debriefing: In-person debriefing hosted by the receiving Partner Country before demobilizing Partner Country personnel.

These briefings provide the opportunity for a positive and productive experience while working in Partner Countries wildland fire operations.

IN-COUNTRY ORIENTATION/ OPERATIONAL BRIEFING

Responders will receive two briefings at a minimum: an in-country orientation briefing and an incident specific operational briefing.

Work/Rest Guidelines

The RFA and the in-country orientation briefing contains details pertaining to duty hours and operational fire line shifts.

Partner Countries generally have a more restrictive work/rest policy. U.S. resources follow the host agency's work/rest policies when supporting Partner Countries, as seen in the excerpt below.

“Personnel will be provided a minimum of 10 hours free from duty within every 24 consecutive hour period. This allows the opportunity for 8 hours prone rest as well as time for nutrition, personal hygiene and general recovery. All work will occur within a 14-hour duty day which includes a maximum of 12 hours of direct fireline work, a mid-shift nutrition break, any pre or post shift briefings as well as travel to and from the fireline.”

Emergency Care and Medical Care

The in-country orientation briefing and specific incident operational briefings cover emergency and medical care in detail.

Communications

The in-country orientation briefing and specific incident operational briefing cover communications in detail.

INCIDENT OPERATIONAL BRIEFING

Ensure a NWCG Incident Response Pocket Guide (IRPG) Briefing Checklist is available when receiving an incident operational briefing. The NWCG IRPG Briefing Checklist will ensure an incident briefing meets U.S. responder standards. Applying the Briefing Checklist for all incident briefings will ensure consistency and assist with a smooth transition of U.S. resources into our Partner Countries active wildland fire operations.

CHAPTER 30

RECEIVING RESOURCES

OVERVIEW

This chapter outlines the ordering and mobilization process for receiving resources from Canada, Mexico, Australia, and New Zealand.

The United States will generate a formal Request for Assistance (RFA) to a Partner Country when wildland fire operations exceed domestic capabilities. Partner Countries monitor each other's preparedness levels. As preparedness levels elevate, calls are established to maintain situational awareness. Several conversations between the officials designated in the agreement/arrangement occur before receiving a resource request. Collaboration on types and kinds of resources to be requested are worked out well in advance of placing an RFA

When anticipating a resource exchange, Partner Countries may send an INLO to one another's National Coordinating Authority to provide direct in-person communication and facilitate the request and mobilization process. For the United States, the NICC coordinates the resource request with the requesting country's respective coordinating authority.

Resources received from Partner Countries are typically brought into Boise, Idaho, and hosted at NIFC. The process for briefing and orienting these incoming resources is outlined in the following sections.

NMAC ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

NMAC members work with the Geographic Area Coordinating Groups (GACGs) they represent to identify incidents within a geographic area that may receive international support.

The NMAC Chair works with the NICC Center Manager and the Partner Country's INLO to finalize the RFA for resource support. NMAC approves final resource allocation to hosting Geographic Area(s).

The NMAC Chair attends all international briefings and orientations.

INTERNATIONAL LIAISON OFFICER (INLO)

The INLO works with NMAC and the receiving Geographic Area(s) to identify and order the appropriate level of oversight, training, and support for incoming international resources.

NICC ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The NICC is the sole entity responsible for processing international resource requests. The International COD activates the International Expanded Dispatch support function once the NICC sends an approved RFA to a Partner Country.

The International COD will work with the USFS All Hazard and International Fire Support Branch, the INLO, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to establish and facilitate clearance procedures for receiving resources from Partner Countries.

Dispatch Procedures for International Mobilization

After receiving approved resource allocations, the NICC International Expanded Dispatch will work with Geographic Area Coordination Centers (GACCs) to create resource requests for incoming international resources.

The International Expanded Dispatch fills requests in IROC under the appropriate country's IROC instance.

Note: The NICC is the only entity that has access to, and acts as, a Partner Country in IROC. All communications regarding international resource orders will go through the International Expanded Dispatch, regardless of what the resource order shows as the host unit.

Partner Countries DO NOT use IROC. All resource order questions/issues must go through the International COD at the NICC.

IN-COUNTRY SUPPORT ORGANIZATION

As outlined in Chapter 10, specialized support positions form the command structure for receiving international resources. These positions are ordered through IROC and inserted on RFAs at the request of the sending country. These positions play a critical role outside the Incident Command System (ICS), providing support and guidance for the mobilization of international resources into the United States.

The sending country's INLO, Senior Representative(s) and Field Representatives foster positive working relationships and communication with their hosts, provide support and safety to their respective resources on deployment, and effectively handle any unexpected situations that may develop. Detailed responsibilities are further outlined in Chapter 10. Most importantly, these individuals play a critical role in the smooth transition of their resources into U.S. wildland fire operations.

INTERNATIONAL BRIEFING STANDARDS

A series of briefing standards supports information sharing before and during deployment in the United States. Following these standards ensures the right information is delivered at the right time and prevents duplication. The five distinct information briefing opportunities are:

1. Pre-departure Information: Collection of information that deploying personnel need to know before they depart their home base.
2. Departure Briefing: In-person or virtual briefing outlining both Sending Participant and Receiving Participant information.
3. Arrival Briefing: In-person briefing providing specific details on the agency/organization and fire operations.
4. Operational Briefing: In-person operational briefing specific to the incident.

5. **Deployment Debriefing:** In-person debriefing hosted by the Receiving Participant before Sending Participant staff return home.

These briefings provide the opportunity for a positive and productive experience while working in U.S. wildland fire operations.

IN-COUNTRY ORIENTATION BRIEFING

Overview

All international resources receive a thorough arrival and orientation briefing before deployment to a host Geographic Area and wildland fire incident. This includes all topics outlined in the *International Briefing Guidelines* (see Appendix B).

The International Orientation Coordinator and representatives from the sending country’s support organization will typically facilitate this in-country orientation briefing on the NIFC campus. See Chapter 10 for more detailed responsibilities. Subject matter experts, key interagency management officials, and NMAC representatives help deliver critical information and answer questions from the international resources.

Needed resources, such as the IRPG, are provided during this orientation.

This orientation establishes a foundation for a safe, productive, and positive experience while giving the sending country’s resources time to adjust to cultural and time differences.

Sample Orientation Briefing and Schedule

See Appendix C for sample orientation briefing schedules and checklists.

Work/Rest Guidelines

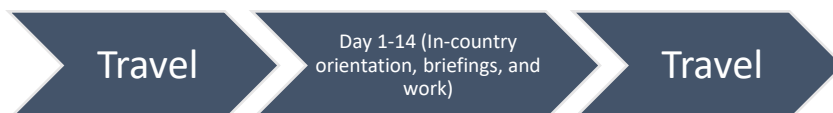
While operating in the United States, all Partner Country resources adhere to the work/rest guidelines as outlined in *National Interagency Standards for Resource Mobilization*.

To mitigate fatigue, agency administrators, fire managers, supervisors, incident commanders (ICs), and individual firefighters must plan for and ensure that all personnel receive a minimum 2:1 work/rest ratio (1 hour of sleep and/or rest for every 2 hours of work or travel). Work shifts exceeding 16 hours or consecutive days that fail to meet the 2:1 ratio should be the exception.

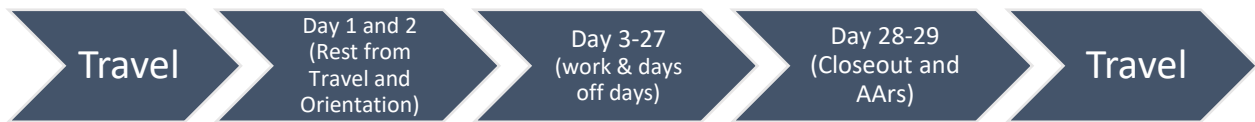
Length of Assignment

Because of travel and initial orientation requirements, Partner Country resources should not be expected to complete a full 14-day assignment at the incident. Their assignment begins when they arrive in Boise for orientation.

14-day Scenario for Canadian Resources



30-day Scenario for Australia and New Zealand Resources



Canadian resources follow the same length of assignment rules as the U.S. and return home after completing a 14-day assignment. AUS/NZ will R&R at a predetermined location and return to the same incident or be reassigned to a different incident as needed.

Emergency Care and Medical Care

All Partner Country resources receive needed emergency or medical care consistent with policy outlined in the *Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations*.

The Partner Country's SREP and/or FREP are involved in all aspects of emergency and medical care. This coordination ensures injured or sick personnel receive prompt and effective care.

Please see Hospitalization and Medical Care in Chapter 10 for further information.

Communications

Communication is essential for safe and effective wildland fire operations. International resources receive radios as needed. The arrival briefing and orientation cover radio communication. Additional training and guidance is available during incident deployment. Host wildland fire personnel must ensure international resources can use radio equipment and communicate safely on the fire line.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Partner Country resources receive a briefing on U.S. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) standards during the pre-departure briefing and before leaving their country. Most Partner Countries follow similar PPE standards. The INLO works with their U.S. counterpart to ensure incoming resources understand and meet PPE requirements. If needed, the initial orientation provides PPE to Partner Country resources. All Partner Country resources must meet U.S. wildland fire PPE requirements.

INCIDENT BRIEFING

All incident briefings are completed using the NWCG IRPG Briefing Checklist. The importance of the incident briefing is discussed during the initial orientation/arrival briefing. Application of the Briefing Checklist for all incident briefings ensures consistency and assist with a smooth transition of international resources into active wildland fire operations.

ACCIDENTS AND INVESTIGATIONS

Each agency must follow its own accident investigation reporting requirements when an accident occurs. Most responses and subsequent investigations involve multi-agency cooperation. The jurisdictional agency leads the response. Partner Country representatives work alongside the lead agency while fulfilling their own reporting requirements.

LINE OF DUTY DEATH

Every Line of Duty Death (LODD) presents a unique set of challenges and has a profound, lasting impact. Any potential Partner Country LODD is coordinated at the highest levels and treated the same as a U.S. wildland firefighter LODD. Appropriate individuals are activated and can include a Hospital and/or Family Liaison, Critical Incident Stress Management Coordinator, and other personnel. The Partner Country's INLO and other representatives participate in every step of the process while fulfilling their own agency and national policies and procedures.

Participant agencies follow existing agency procedures when responding to a critical or significant incident. To the greatest extent possible, U.S. participant agencies coordinate all interaction with incident-involved personnel among Critical Incident Peer Support (CIPS), Human Resources Management (HRM), the investigation team, host country law enforcement, public information and press releases, local units, and other relevant parties.

The operating principle is that participant agencies bear non-delegable responsibility for their human resources and must manage any critical incident involving their overseas personnel with the same care as incidents on their home jurisdiction.

Participant agencies assign Interagency Resource Representatives (IARRs) in-country to provide immediate support and manage the critical incident in its initial stages. Participant agencies must be prepared to deploy management and support staff to the location of a critical incident without delay, if required.

The receiving Partner Country activates local arrangements covering incident and accident management and investigation, immediate medical services, media liaison and management, and local welfare and critical incident support. As soon as practicable, the receiving Partner Country transfers responsibilities to the sending Participant Agency's INLO or representatives.

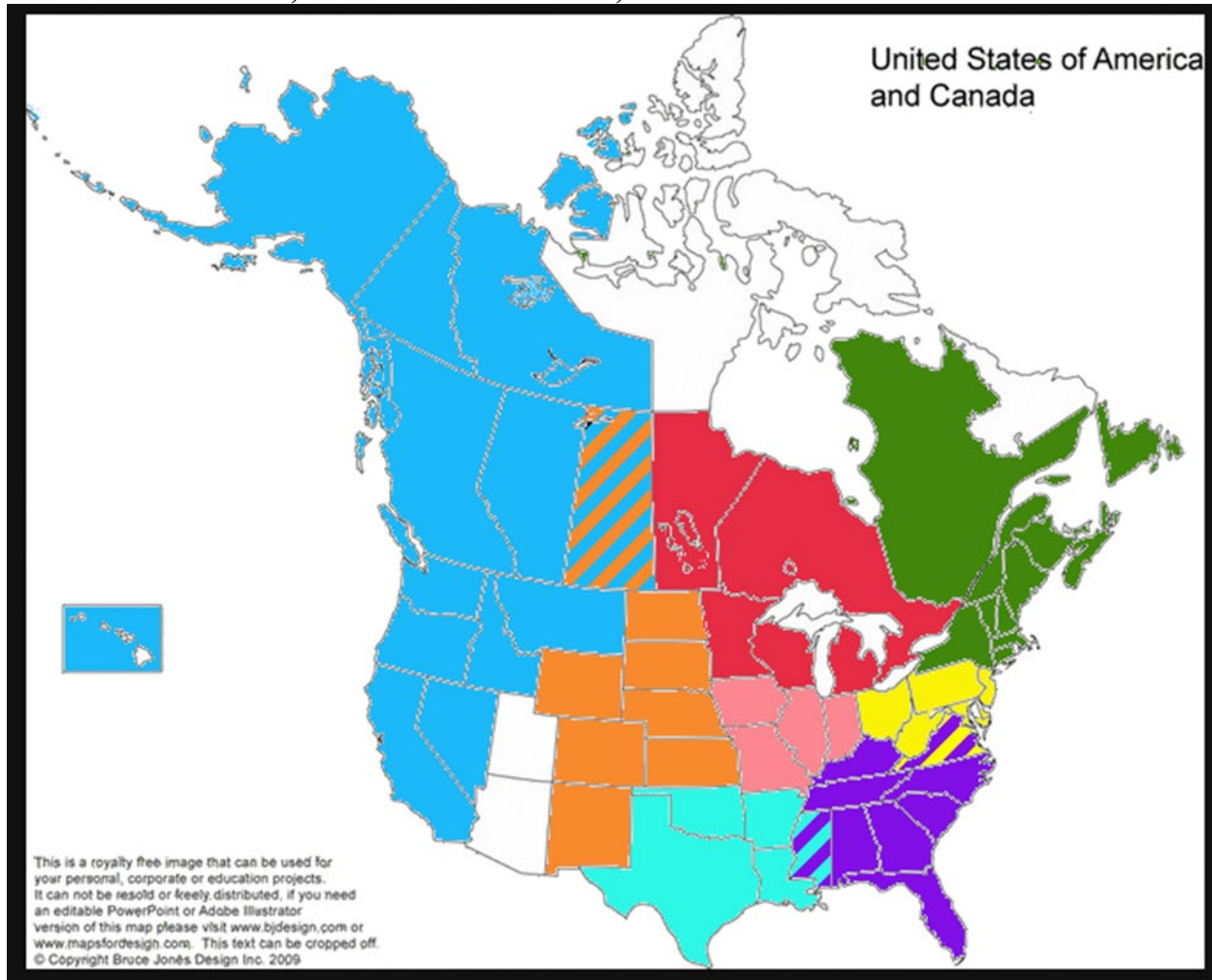
MEXICO PROCESS AND CONSIDERATIONS

Receiving Resources from Mexico is unique and differs from Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The USFS International Program, Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) Team will be involved throughout the process. The LAC Team will provide translators, fireline supervisors, and management structure. The orientation training is the same as the in-country orientation and briefings outlined throughout this guide.

These resources typically go into a single geographic area for orientation and closeout. The NICC International COD will be involved in the ordering process working with Customs and Border Patrol along with arranging transportation to and from Mexico.

CHAPTER 40

COMPACTS, INITIAL ATTACK, AND BORDER AGREEMENTS



OVERVIEW

The Weeks Act of 1911 authorized states to enter into compacts for the protection of forests and watersheds. Today there are eight Forest Fire Compacts in the United States and Canada representing almost all U.S. states and Canadian provinces/territories.

The purpose of forest fire compacts is to facilitate the sharing and coordination of resources, information, prevention efforts, training, fire management knowledge, and lessons learned. Compacts allow for the exchange of resources between states, provinces and territories by using established procedures incorporating agency specific standards and terms.

INTERSTATE COMPACTS OVERVIEW

Forest fire compacts facilitate State-to-State and State-to-Province assistance with prevention, pre-suppression, suppression, prescribed fire, training, mitigation, and recovery activities. Compact members determine the times, methods, practices, circumstances, and conditions for coordinating and rendering aid. They develop cooperative operating plans that define terms, fiscal procedures, personnel contacts, resource availability, and standards applicable to the agreement.

State and federal agencies use the national interagency mobilization system, as authorized in master cooperative wildland fire agreements, to process resource requests. Forest fire compact requests may also be processed in the national interagency mobilization system under compact authorities.

The following scenarios illustrate normal or standard operating procedures for ordering and mobilizing resources via Compacts:

State-to-State Assistance within a Compact

Resource ordering is coordinated using methods identified in the operating plan. The national interagency mobilization system may be used to facilitate these requests. Each agency is responsible for their individual Cooperative Agreements and billing/reimbursement processes. A federal fire code is not issued for resource ordering within Compacts. Billing and reimbursements are not processed through the federal financial system.

State-to-Province/Province-to-State-assistance within a Compact

Compact resources ordered to assist Canadian Provinces/States are coordinated as State-to-State ordering. The national interagency mobilization system may be used to facilitate these requests. Each agency is responsible for their individual Cooperative Agreements and billing/reimbursement processes. A federal fire code is not issued for resource ordering within Compacts. Billing and reimbursements are not processed through the federal financial system.

Compact-to-Compact Assistance

Resource ordering and mobilization between compacts is considered the same as State-to-State assistance. The national interagency mobilization system is used to facilitate these requests. Each agency is responsible for their individual Cooperative Agreements and billing/reimbursement processes. A federal fire code is not issued for resource ordering amongst the Compacts. Billing and reimbursements are not processed through the federal financial system.

All resources mobilized under compact authorities remain under compact control for the duration of their assignment and are separate from national interagency mobilizations. The two systems sometimes overlap, and understanding compact mobilizations is an important part of dispatching.

US INTERSTATE COMPACTS

Northeast Forest Fire Protection Commission:

Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, Rhode Island, Québec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island

Great Lakes Forest Fire Compact:

Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Manitoba, Ontario

Big Rivers Compact:

Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana

Mid-Atlantic Forest Fire Compact:

Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia

Southeast Forest Fire Compact:

Kentucky, Tennessee, West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi

South Central Forest Fire Compact:

Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi

Great Plains Forest Fire Compact:

Saskatchewan, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico

Northwest Forest Fire Compact:

Alaska, Yukon, Northwest Territory, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Montana, Idaho, Oregon, Washington, Hawaii, California, Nevada

***Unaffiliated States and Provinces:**

Arizona, Utah, Nunavut

Recognition of the need for consistency and continuity across the compacts has led to the development of the Alliance of Forest Fire Compacts. The Alliance includes all eight forest fire compacts in the U.S. and Canada.

WILDFIRE RESPONSE BORDER AGREEMENTS

The purpose of these agreements is to provide the framework under which wildfire management activities, identification, initial response, mutual aid and planning allows for cooperative pre-suppression and wildfire protection along the United States and the impacted U.S. States' portion of the International Border.

Signatory Agencies to these agreements reflect that these mutually beneficial partnerships enhance each agency's wildfire management capabilities for the control and extinguishment of wildfires within the 'Common Zone' generally understood to exist for approximately 10 miles (16 km) on either side of the international boundary. Agencies develop cooperative operating guidelines for the safe and effective mutual response of firefighting resources to manage border wildland fires. Operating guidelines identify strategic conditions for implementing initial attack, extended attack and large fire attack procedures and establishing the command structures to be used, depending on the circumstances associated with each wildland fire. The agreements define terms, fiscal procedures, personnel contacts, resources available and standards applicable to the agreement. Signatories recognize the importance of collaboratively working together to ensure timely, effective, and efficient wildfire response along the international border by collectively identifying and addressing any border and customs/immigration needs and requirements well in advance.

The agreements constitute a reaffirmation of the importance of engaging in cooperative fire management activities. The arrangements are intended to encourage and strengthen other cooperative fire management activities, through the sharing among the participants of personnel, fire management techniques, skills and innovations. The objective of these activities is to improve the firefighting capabilities and knowledge resulting in the provision of more effective firefighting assistance to one another when necessary.

CHAPTER 50 AVIATION

MOBILIZATION

With the exception of cross-border agreements, all international aircraft and personnel orders are coordinated through the NICC. Special needs, threats or specific reporting instructions are critical for the proper and timely processing of each request.

The following language cites both the Department of Agriculture and Department of Interior policy for aviation operations in foreign countries. While the language does give latitude, it is expected that all federal firefighters contributing to international response use all resources available to stay within the sending agencies skills and abilities. The sending agency, host unit, and employee share responsibility for ensuring each resource has the appropriate PPE and experience needed to succeed.

INTERNATIONAL AVIATION POLICY

“USFS personnel involved in international operations should follow aviation policy to the extent practicable when assigned to international operations. In those circumstances where an employee is unable to follow policy they must apply risk management principles to reduce their exposure, or use turn-down procedures.”

Reference 5730.72 USFS POLICY: - FLIGHT ON FOREIGN AIRCRAFT ON OFFICIAL DUTY for further information.

DOI DEPARTMENTAL MANUAL 350 1.2 states that: “The DM350-354 series does not apply to international DOI operations.”

However, DOI employees involved in international operations should follow bureau policy to the degree practicable when assigned to international operations. In those circumstances where an employee is unable to follow policy, they should apply risk management principles, good judgement, and common sense to reduce their exposure.

SENDING AGENCY/UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES

Before mobilization, the sending agency or unit conducts a briefing.

Briefing USFS resources must be documented and must include names and signatures of those who delivered and received the following information specific to the international request. Completion memos must be filed in each individual's training file.

1. Provide appropriate PPE for predicted aviation operations i.e. Flight Helmet, Flight Gloves, Headset (FW ops), etc. Personnel are expected to travel with this equipment and use it during foreign operations.
2. For further reference to agency aviation PPE standards please reference assisting policy documents such as Departmental Manuals, the National Standards for Helicopter Operations (NSHO), Aviation Life Support Equipment (ALSE), etc.

3. Review the applicable Risk Assessment tools.
4. Agency Flight Risk Assessment Tool (FRAT) or General Assessment of Risk (GAR).
5. Provide a list of agency POC's/Liaison's and contact information associated with the incident.
6. Provide agency guides, policy and operating plans associated with aviation operations to be used in the absence of foreign policy or direction.
7. In the absence of foreign policy or direction, the following Interagency standards documents may be used as best practices while conducting aviation operations in foreign countries.
 - *NWCG Incident Response Pocket Guide (IRPG)*
 - *NWCG Standards for Aerial Supervision*
 - *NWCG Standards for Airtanker Base Operations*
 - *NWCG Standards for Helicopter Operations*
 - *NWCG Standards for Aerial Ignition*
 - *NWCG Standards for Aviation Transport of Hazardous Materials*
 - *NWCG Standards for Fire unmanned Aircraft Systems Operations*
 - *NWCG Standards for Water Scooping Operations*
 - *Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations (NFES 2724)*

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

IMT and/or CIMT Aviation Position Requirements

- International Aviation Liaison
- Air Operations Branch Director
- Air Support Group Supervisor (Recommended)
- Air Tactical Group Supervisor (Recommended)
- Helibase Manager (Recommended)

Interagency Hotshot and Type 2 Crew Aviation Position Requirements

- A minimum of two qualified Helicopter Crewmembers

Helitack Crew Aviation Position Requirements

- Helitack organizations shall meet the NWCG Standards for Helicopter Operations.
- When available, send Exclusive Use crews or agency aviation staff before considering CWN or AD personnel/resources.

Aviation Resources

- As deemed necessary, when multiple aviation resources (more than one aircraft or crew) such as Aerial Supervision Modules (ASM), Helitack Crews, Rappel Crews, Smokejumpers or Short-haul, etc., are dispatched internationally an agency specific International Aviation Liaison will be assigned.

International Aviation Liaison

The International Aviation Liaison serves as the conduit between foreign aviation operations and U.S. aviation regulations and agency aviation policy. The ability to communicate, coordinate, and

negotiate toward reasonable solutions is essential to the position and to safe, efficient foreign fire suppression operations.

To best assist both the sending and receiving agencies consideration of the following factors to consider when filling the position::

- What agency is filling the request? NPS, BLM, or USFS?
- What aviation resources are being sent? Fixed Wing, Rotor, or UAS?
- What specific role will these resources fill i.e. Aerial Supervision, Aerial Delivery of Firefighters, Recon, etc.

The following agency positions should be considered when filling the International Aviation Liaison role:

- Fixed Wing Program Manager (Regional or National)
- Fixed Wing Operations Specialist (Regional or National)
- Helicopter Program Manager (Regional or National)
- Helicopter Operations Specialist (Regional or National)
- UAS Program Manager (Regional or National)
- UAS Operations Specialist (Regional or National)
- UAS Coordinator (Regional or National)
- Unit, Zone or Forest Aviation Officer
- State Aviation Manager
- Airbase Manager (Smokejumper or Helicopter)

Responding Resource In-Brief

Upon arrival, all aviation personnel must receive an incident briefing covering at minimum the following topics:

- Aviation Unit Structure
- Position duties and responsibilities
- Aviation Base Locations
- Aviation Dispatch procedures
- Flight Following procedures
- Aviation Hazards and Maps if available
- Incident Maps
- Communication Plan
 - Personnel Contact Information
- Use of Retardant's, Foam or Gels
- Aviation User Guides (If available)
 - Aviation Mishap Guide
 - Communication protocols in the event of aircraft maintenance
 - Aviation Operating Guides
 - Aircraft Performance Planning
- Emergency Response resources i.e. Medevac resources
 - Emergency Response dispatch procedures
- Environmental Considerations

FLIGHT FOLLOWING MANAGEMENT

The following is a list of flight following tools that may be used while conducting aviation operations in a foreign country:

- Foreign country aviation authority flight following procedure (FAA flight plan).
- Foreign Fire authority agency flight plan.
- Aviation computer tracking system similar to Automated Flight Following (AFF).
- Radio Check-In.

INTERNATIONAL PILOT DUTY LIMITATIONS

Pilot duty limitations vary by country and may differ significantly from U.S. standards. In some instances, flight time and duty day limitations far exceed those established by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). When this occurs, communicate the situation through the appropriate chain of command.

If operating under a foreign Incident Management Team, notify the Aviation Liaison for consideration and potential negotiation. Requested missions may continue during negotiation; however, the primary agency representative engaged in aviation operations (e.g., Crew Boss, Helicopter Manager) must conduct routine risk assessments and retains the authority to decline an assignment. U.S. federally contracted pilots must adhere to the host agency's policy and contract requirements for duty day limitations.

INTERNATIONAL AIRCRAFT PERFORMANCE PLANNING

Aircraft performance limitations vary by country. In the United States, crews use performance planning tools such as the Helicopter Load Calculation daily. Many foreign countries do not use the Helicopter Load Calculation and instead rely on the pilot's expertise and training for performance planning. Responding resources should familiarize themselves with these planning differences upon arrival and during the in-brief.

Responding resources are encouraged to collaborate on performance planning tools they bring with any tools already in use in the host country. As with pilot duty limitations, communicate any differences to Incident Management Team (IMT) leadership and the Aviation Liaison. The responding resource retains the authority to decline an assignment. U.S. federally contracted aircraft must adhere to the host agency's policy and contract requirements for performance planning.

Airworthiness

Foreign aircraft airworthiness documentation must align with the host agency's standard operating procedures. These procedures are covered during the responding resource's in-brief. Depending on the position, the foreign country's aviation management may request communication involving aircraft status.

Responding resources must understand the host agency's airworthiness procedures before leaving the in-brief. Familiarity with these procedures is essential for positions such as Air Operations Branch Director (AOBD), Air Support Group Supervisor (ASGS), Helicopter Manager (HMGB),

and Air Tactical Group Supervisor (ATGS), particularly during aircraft maintenance and return-to-use processes.

Operations of United States Aircraft in a Foreign Country

- USFS Reference: 5700 30.75b
- DOI Reference: 351 DM

Unfamiliar Operations Outside the Knowledge and Skills of the Responder

All responders must stay within their knowledge, skills, and abilities when participating in foreign firefighting operations. If a circumstance or request arises that falls outside your abilities, complete a risk assessment before proceeding.

If the risk assessment and associated mitigations do not adequately address gaps in information, process, procedure, or equipment needed to support the mission, communicate the decision to decline the assignment. The Incident Response Pocket Guide (IRPG) turndown protocol is a helpful tool in these situations.

Position Crosswalk Aid: *Reference International Mobilization Guide Chapter 60*

CHAPTER 60 QUALIFICATIONS AND CROSSWALK

OVERVIEW

All Partner Countries use a version of the Incident Command System used in the United States. This chapter provides a high-level overview of the most commonly ordered positions and the differences between each country’s Incident Command System (ICS).

Systems and Qualifications

To exchange resources for fire suppression under the international agreements and arrangements, Partner Countries must demonstrate an established national system for coordination, incident command and control, and qualifications. These systems differ from U.S. systems but share similar concepts and principles. Qualification matrices and standards undergo continuous evaluation and require discussion and agreement before mobilizing requested positions.

COMMAND

USA – NIMS	Canada - ICS	AUS/NZ – AIIMS/CIMS
Incident Commander - Complex	Incident Commander - T1	Incident Controller – Level 3
Incident Commander - T3	Incident Commander – T2	Incident Controller – Level 2
Incident Commander - T4	Incident Commander – T3	Incident Controller – Level 1
Safety Officer - Complex	Safety Officer – T1 (w/Stop Work Authority)	Safety Advisor (Only the IC has Stop Work Authority) ¹
Safety Officer - Line	Safety Officer – T2 (w/Stop Work Authority)	
Public Information Officer – Complex ²	Information Officer – T1	Information Officer (Reports to Planning Section)
Public Information Officer – T3	Information Officer – T3	
Liaison Officer	Liaison Officer	Field Liaison ³

¹Safety Advisor:

- **AUS/NZ:** The Incident Controller is the only one with authority to stop work.

² Information and Public Information Officer:

- **U.S.:** Reliant on external information distributed via Public Information Officers, through community-facing activities and social media lines.
- **CAN:** Dependent on internal information distribution from the Information Officer.
- **AUS/NZ:** Utilize community-facing methods and social media channels.

³ Liaison Officer and Field Liaison:

- **AUS/NZ:** Field Liaison is an all-encompassing position that may act as an agency representative, resource representative, or international liaison.

OPERATIONS

USA – NIMS	Canada - ICS	AUS/NZ – AIIMS/CIMS
Operations Section Chief – Complex ¹	Operations Section Chief – T1	Operations Officer – Level 3

Operations Section Chief - T3	Operations Section Chief – T2	Operations Officer – Level 2
Operations Branch Director	Operations Branch Director	Divisional Commander
Division Supervisor	Division Supervisor	Sector Commander
Task Force Leader	Task Force Leader	Task Force Leader
Strike Team Leader	Strike Team Leader	Strike Team Leader
Staging Area Manager	Staging Area Manager	Staging Area Manager
	Heavy Equipment Branch Director ²	Plant Manager ³
Heavy Equipment Boss	Heavy Equipment Boss	Plant Supervisor

¹. Operations Section Chief:

- **U.S.:** A Section Chief works with the IMT at the ICP, and a Branch Director focuses on large scale tactics, are involved in this role
- **CAN:** Operation Section Chiefs work in the field and are like a Divisional Commander/Deputy Operations Officer in AUS/NZ.
- **AUS/NZ:** The Operations Officer is the equivalent and delineates between tactical and strategic.

². Heavy Equipment Branch Director:

- **CAN:** Exists as a field role that’s infrequently mobilized, Heavy Equipment Branch Director (HEBD). Note: for a single piece of Equipment HEQB Heavy Equipment Boss.

³. Plant Manager:

- **AUS/NZ:** Position may vary by state and is most like a Contracting Officer, Engineer, Equipment Time Recorder, and Heavy Equipment Branch Director as a single position.

AVIATION

USA – NIMS	Canada - ICS	AUS/NZ – AIIMS/CIMS
Air Operations Branch Director	Air Operations Branch Director ¹	Air Operations Manager
Air Support Group Supervisor	Air Support Group Supervisor	Support Group – Aircraft Officer ²
Air Tactical Group Supervisor	Air Tactical Group Supervisor ³	
Air Tactical Supervisor		Tactical Group – Air Attack Supervisor
Helibase Manager	Helibase Manager	Helibase Manager
Helicopter Coordinator	Helicopter Coordinator	Tactical Group – Air Attack Supervisor
Helicopter Manager ⁴		

Firing Boss	Ignition Specialist ⁵	Burn Officer in Charge
Aviation Base Radio Operator	Radio Operator ⁶ *may tactically direct aircraft on the incident	

1. Air Ops Branch Director (Air Ops Manager in Australia):

- **CAN:** Role is field based as opposed to working at ICP.

2. Air Support Group Supervisors:

- Focused on Air Operations support components.
- Will oversee multiple airbases, rotary and fixed wing. Request must identify which kind of airbase a resource is ordered for.

3. Air Tactical Group Supervisor:

- **U.S.:** Can operate in a rotary or fixed wing aircraft and direct aircraft. They cannot function as an Air Tactical Supervisor (AITS) on a lead plane and create an aerial supervision module due to additional training needs. Only a small number of personnel are qualified at AITS.
- **CAN:** Air Attack Officers and birddog aircraft are all lead plane qualified, so they will lead air tankers on a regular basis.
- **AUS/NZ:** Anything within the tanker space is beyond the scope of most NZ personnel. Anything within rotary is manageable, but tankers go beyond domestic capability.

4. Helicopter manager:

- **U.S.:** Works directly with the pilot and understands contractual responsibilities, timekeeping practices, performance evaluation, and additional identification/sign-off roles. May fly/identify loading zones.
- **CAN:** Engages personnel with relevant skillsets and is not necessarily an identical qualification.
- **AUS/NZ:** Challenging role to fill. Air Base Managers may not have the skillset to achieve the above. While an individual may possess the requisite, they may lack certain technical capabilities. Air Attack Supervisors are similar in practical terms but may not have the contract management skills needed.

5. Ignition Specialist:

- **U.S.:** Firing Boss (FIRB) may not have the expected aerial ignition skillset when filling the role as an Ignition Specialist.
 - Previous requests have been filled with a team approach of one FIRB and one Plastic Sphere Dispenser Operator (PLDO).
- **CAN:** Responsible for directing/supervising ignition and tactical ignition operations.
 - Specify incendiary machine or aerial drip torch operator to ensure appropriate skill set.

6. Radio Operator:

- **CAN:** More of a general position than in the U.S. Actual role will vary by province. An Aviation Base Radio Operator (ABRO) would be the minimum equivalent based on feedback from previous deployments.
 - For Alberta:
 - An Aircraft Dispatcher (ACDP) should also be considered when filling Radio Operator (RADO) orders.

PLANNING

USA – NIMS	Canada - ICS	AUS/NZ – AIIMS/CIMS
Planning Section Chief – Complex ¹	Planning Section Chief – T1	Plans Officer - Level 3
Planning Section Chief – T3	Planning Section Chief – T2	Plans Officer - Level 2
Resource Unit Leader	Resource Unit Leader	Resources Officer - Level 3
Situation Unit Leader	Situation Unit Leader	Situation Officer - Level 3
Documentation Unit Leader	Documentation Unit Leader	Management Support - Level 1
Demobilization Unit Leader ²	Demobilization Unit Leader	Not Used- function of the RESL
		Intelligence Officer ³
Long Term Fire Analyst	Long Term Fire Analyst	Long Term Fire Analyst
Fire Behavior Analyst	Fire Behavior Analyst	Fire Behavior Analyst

1. Planning:

- **AUS/NZ:** The U.S. and Canada have identified that personnel deploying as a Planning Officer need to be capable of performing a Planning Operations role when deploying to Australia.
 - This may involve having Planning Section Chief responders also qualified as Ops, IC. Suggest the minimum certification may be at the DIVS or ICT3.

2. Demobilization Unit Leader:

- **AUS/NZ:** Included in the Resource Unit Leaders responsibilities.

3. Intelligence Officer:

- **AUS/NZ:** This position typically sits within Planning. Depending on the size of the incident, it may function as its own Command and General Staff position.
 - NZ will often send an experienced Situation Unit Leader (SITL) when asked for Intelligence Officers.

LOGISTICS

USA – NIMS	Canada - ICS	AUS/NZ – AIIMS/CIMS
Logistics Section Chief – Complex ¹	Logistics Section Chief – T1	Logistics Support Officer - Level 3

Logistics Section Chief – T3	Logistics Section Chief – T2	Logistics Officer - Level 2
Not Used	Support Branch Director	Not Used
Not Used	Service Branch Director	Not Used
Communication Unit Leader	Communication Unit Leader	Communications Planning
Medical Unit Leader	Medical Unit Leader	Medical Services
Food Unit Leader	Food Unit Leader	Catering
Supply Unit Leader	Supply Unit Leader	Supply
Facilities Unit Leader	Facilities Unit Leader	Facilities
Ground Support Unit Leader	Ground Support Unit Leader	Ground Support

¹ Logistics Section Chief:

- **U.S.:** Logistics personnel do not incorporate finance, that is managed by the finance section.
- **CAN:** Logistics personnel do not incorporate finance, that is managed by their finance section.
- **AUS/NZ:** Will often request both Logistics Section Chief and a Logistics Support Officer.
 - When deploying to Australia, a Logistics Support Officer should have a finance background or support (such as a finance qualified logs Support person).
 - If North America is seeking finance personnel, Australia may not be the best option to support that requirement.

FINANCE

USA – NIMS	Canada - ICS	AUS/NZ – AIIMS/CIMS
Finance Section Chief – Complex ¹	Finance Section Chief – T1	Finance Officer
Finance Section Chief – T3	Finance Section Chief – T2	
Time Unit Leader	Time Unit Leader	Not Defined as Units in AIIMS/CIMS. Functions are assigned As needed by the Finance Officer
Cost Unit Leader	Cost Unit Leader	
Procurement Unit Leader	Procurement Unit Leader	
Comp/Claims Unit Leader	Comp/Claims Unit Leader	
Equipment Time Recorder		Responsibility of the Plant Manager

¹ Finance Section Chief:

- **U.S.:** Very rarely seek financial support externally.
- **CAN:** Finance requirements vary by state/province.

- **AUS/NZ:** Very rarely seek financial support externally.

CHAPTER 70

AGREEMENTS, MOUS, AND AOPS

OVERVIEW

The United States exchanges resources with international partners through bilateral agreements or arrangements that define the authorities and types of assistance to be provided. Accompanying operating plans further describe how these countries exchange resources. The USDA and the DOI jointly enter into these agreements under the authority of the Emergency Wildfire Suppression Act as Amended, U.S. Public Law 100-428, 42 USC, Section 1856m.

These bilateral agreements and arrangements are coordinated through the USDA Forest Service, All Hazard and International Fire Support Branch, Fire & Aviation Management Office, in cooperation with the DOI Office of Wildland Fire. The NICC works with NMAC at the NIFC in Boise, Idaho, to manage resource requests, distribute assistance to fires in the United States, mobilize resources to support firefighting activities in Partner Countries, and request resources to respond to fires in the U.S.

The operating plans under the international agreements and arrangements address all reimbursable costs. The requesting country reimburses the assisting country for salary, travel, lodging, meals, and other expenses.

Arrangement with Australia:

<https://www.nifc.gov/sites/default/files/document-media/Australia%20Support.pdf>

Arrangement with New Zealand:

<https://www.nifc.gov/sites/default/files/document-media/New%20Zealand%20Support.pdf>

Agreement with Mexico:

<https://www.nifc.gov/sites/default/files/document-media/Mexico%20Support.pdf>

Arrangement with Canada:

https://www.nifc.gov/sites/default/files/NICC/CAN_US_Ops_Plan_2024.pdf

CHAPTER 80

WEBSITES FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

AFAC National Council for Fire and Emergency Services

<https://www.afac.com.au/>

Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre

<https://www.cifffc.ca/>

Fire and Emergency New Zealand

<https://www.fireandemergency.nz/>

Comisión Nacional Forestal

<https://www.gob.mx/conafor/en>

U.S. Department of State – International Travel

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel.html>

Canada Entry Requirements

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/visit-canada/entry-requirements-country.html#us-citizens>

CHAPTER 90

CRISIS RESPONSE COORDINATION

MEDICAL INJURY AND ILLNESS

The primary objective when responding to any medical injury or illness during international operations is to care for the patient, facilitate timely and accurate notifications, and support the individual's safe return to their crew or to the United States as quickly as possible while maintaining continuity of care. Effective coordination between field personnel, host-country partners, and U.S. agency representatives enables a unified response that prioritizes patient well-being, operational clarity, and seamless transition between in-country and U.S.-based medical systems.

Notification Process

When an injury or illness occurs during an international assignment, notification begins at the field level and moves through established U.S. and host-country coordination channels. Field personnel notify their chain of command and relay to the International Liaison Officer (INLO). The INLO will immediately notify the host country, NICC, embassy liaisons, and the International Crisis Response Coordinator (ICRC). The ICRC will notify the appropriate U.S. agency fire director and safety/risk manager to ensure a scalable response consistent with agency policies and procedures. This notification process occurs seamlessly, in near real-time, and does not delay care for the affected individual.

Upon notification, the ICRC coordinates U.S. personnel needs, including situational tracking, logistical support, and integration with agency resources. The ICRC serves as a liaison between all interested parties that includes, but is not limited to, the INLO, NICC, host-country leadership, and embassy or consular liaisons, as applicable, to maintain situational awareness and ensure continuity of care.

This notification process ensures accurate information flow, clear accountability, and timely engagement of both U.S. agency and host-country resources to support affected personnel from initial response through final disposition.

In addition to dispatch and mobilization channels, safety/risk managers will also conduct notifications through their respective agency chains, consistent with standard practices. This dual-notification approach supports timely information flow and ensures all required agency stakeholders are appropriately informed.

OWCP Process

At the start of an international wildland fire response, the DOI and USFS identify primary Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) points of contact to support international operations. When an injury or illness occurs, the NICC notifies these points of contact (POCs) to facilitate coordination with the Department of Labor (DOL). OWCP representatives then take action consistent with established policies and procedures to support claims processing, documentation, and benefit authorization, including the preparation of agency correspondence describing the international context, with the intent of preventing delays in medical care, claim adjudication, or benefit authorization.

Before clinical discharge from an international medical facility, U.S. personnel should make a reasonable effort to obtain all medical documentation necessary to support continuity of care in the U.S. This includes, but is not limited to, provider clinical notes, radiology reports, and laboratory results, as permitted by local medical processes and applicable privacy requirements.

U.S. personnel should be aware that obtaining medical records after leaving the medical facility may be more difficult due to host-country processes, which could result in delays to continuity of care and OWCP claims processing.

For injuries or illnesses sustained in the performance of official duties, the injured employee's home agency initiates the appropriate DOL workers' compensation form (e.g., CA-1). Employees will continue to follow their respective agency OWCP processes to obtain authorization for ongoing medical care following repatriation.

Hospital Liaison

For international incidents involving employee injury or illness, a Hospital Liaison (HLIA) may be designated to support affected personnel and facilitate coordination between medical providers, incident leadership, and agency stakeholders. The level and duration of liaison support will depend on the severity of the injury or illness, anticipated length of treatment, and in-country capabilities.

As needed, the ICRC may coordinate with U.S. agency crisis response (e.g. CARES, USWFS) coordinators to identify a qualified liaison who can provide remote support from the employee's home unit, ensuring required documentation is completed and appropriate follow through is maintained.

International Local Resources

At the onset of an international response, U.S. and partner country representatives identify available local medical resources to support U.S. personnel operating in-country. This includes hospitals, specialty treatment facilities, and accredited burn centers within reasonable proximity to deployed resources, as well as established points of contact at the local, regional, and national levels.

Document information regarding access to medical services, procedures for obtaining medical records, and known limitations or considerations within the host nation's healthcare system to support continuity of care and coordination with U.S.-based systems. Communicate relevant medical and situational information to the field through established channels, including FREPs, SREPs, and other appropriate incident or agency reporting mechanisms, to ensure shared situational awareness and informed decision-making throughout the response.

U.S. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Qualified Providers

During international wildland fire assignments, all U.S. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) providers, regardless of operating under the Department of the Interior's Operational Medical Support Program (OMSP) or the U.S. Forest Service EMS program, must practice under the medical direction and authorization protocols established by their respective national medical directors while adhering to the scope of practice permitted in the host country. Providers should ensure they are fully credentialed and carry proof of their authorization to practice, follow their agency protocols at the level for which they are approved, and understand that medical care is limited to supporting U.S. personnel except in emergency situations. Given international legal and logistical constraints, including restrictions on controlled substances and advanced life support (ALS) capabilities, providers should operate at the level permitted by host country systems and defer care to local medical resources as soon as they are available. Any challenges encountered with local personnel, procedures, or medical processes should be promptly communicated through agency medical oversight channels to support resolution and ensure safe, coordinated patient care throughout the assignment.

Minor Injury or Illness

For minor injuries or illnesses requiring short-term evaluation or treatment, the ICRC, in coordination with incident leadership, will ensure the affected employee is supported by a U.S. representative assigned in-country. When a qualified hospital liaison (HLIA) is not immediately available, a U.S. representative (e.g. SREP, FREP, ICRC, CIMT member) may serve in a limited liaison or escort capacity and coordinate with an identified qualified HLIA remotely, as available.

In these situations, the U.S. hospital liaison will:

- Provide situational awareness and basic support to the employee during evaluation or treatment.
- Serve as a point of contact between hospital staff, the employee, and the ICRC.
- Assist with information gathering related to diagnosis, treatment plans, and clinical discharge status, as appropriate and permitted.
- Support coordination of release, return-to-work considerations, or transition of care until the employee is discharged or until a designated HLIA can assume responsibilities.

Major Injury, Serious Illness. Or Extended Hospitalization

For serious injuries, complex medical conditions, or anticipated extended hospital or treatment stays, agencies issue a Resource Order (RO) for a Hospital Liaison to deploy to the location of care. The Hospital Liaison will report directly to the ICRC and operate in coordination with incident leadership and agency officials.

In these circumstances, the Hospital Liaison will:

- Act as the primary liaison between hospital staff, the injured or ill employee, and the ICRC.
- Attempt to gather timely, accurate, and relevant medical and situational information to support coordination and decision-making.
- Facilitate communication regarding treatment plans, anticipated timelines, transfer or evacuation considerations, and continuity of care.
- Provide support to the employee by assisting with navigation of the local medical system, addressing logistical needs, and ensuring clear communication, within appropriate boundaries.
- Coordinate with the ICRC to support additional agency requirements, including family notifications, leadership updates, and transition planning as the situation evolves.

The Hospital Liaison does not direct medical care but serves in a coordination and communication role to support the employee, enhance situational awareness, and ensure alignment between medical providers, the ICRC, and agency leadership throughout the course of care while in host country.

LINE OF DUTY DEATH (LODD) OR SERIOUS INJURY

US CRISIS CARE TEAM -CISM/CRISIS SUPPORT

CISM Coordination

Upon identification of a critical incident or emerging stress-related need, the ICRC will assess the scope, severity, and potential impacts to personnel in coordination with the INLO, Field or Senior Representatives, host-country leadership, and the NICC, as appropriate. Initial actions focus on stabilization, situational awareness, and ensuring affected personnel have access to timely support while maintaining clear and disciplined communication pathways.

When feasible and appropriate, the ICRC will prioritize the use of host-country clinical resources, including licensed mental health professionals, to provide immediate in-country support. Concurrently, reasonable efforts will be made to identify and engage qualified crisis response (e.g. CIPS) trained personnel within the deployed contingent to assist with peer-based stabilization activities, consistent with scope of practice and under appropriate clinical oversight. Peer support serves as a short-term stabilization measure and does not replace professional clinical care.

If conditions warrant demobilization of affected personnel, the ICRC will participate in coordination calls to ensure all relevant parties are informed and will provide timely status updates to NICC.

Throughout the response, the ICRC supports integration of crisis response efforts within the broader U.S. agency framework, ensuring actions are respectful, proportionate, culturally appropriate, and focused on employee well-being, operational integrity, and orderly transition to longer-term support mechanisms when required.

HONOR GUARD DEPLOYMENT

In the event of a LODD during international operations, the establishment of an Honor Watch is a longstanding tradition ensuring that the fallen firefighter is not left unattended until they are returned home and laid to rest. When an incident occurs, on-scene U.S. wildland firefighters or host-country personnel may provide initial Honor Watch duties until U.S. Honor Guard resources can be mobilized.

Requests for Honor Guard support will be coordinated in alignment with the home agency's policies and procedures, to an extent practicable. Implement in coordination with the partner country, the U.S. firefighting delegation in-country, and the NICC to ensure compliance with host-country requirements and sensitivities. The ICRC assists with coordination to ensure a respectful and appropriately integrated approach across all parties involved.

SERIOUS ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION

Policies for all U.S. wildland firefighting agencies require a review in case of a serious accident or fatality. There may also be incidents not meeting the threshold of a serious accident that are determined to be worthy of a review due to the nature of the incident or the possibility that sharing details around the incident could reduce the probability of incidents of that nature happening again.

Working through the INLO and the Agency MAC representative (or designee), the affected employee's agency should ensure that any investigation or review by the host country will meet the agency's policy requirements. In the case of an incident not meeting the U.S. or host country's definition of a Serious Accident, the INLO should work with the host country to determine the

appropriate response commensurate with the nature of the incident and the likelihood that sharing incident information can reduce the probability of incidents of that nature happening again.

Operational Safety and Reporting

U.S. personnel are expected to identify and report safety concerns encountered during field operations through established supervision and coordination channels. If conditions present a credible or imminent risk to personnel, pause operations until the hazard is assessed and appropriately mitigated. Communicate all such actions immediately through the chain of command, with notification to the INLO to coordinate with host-country leadership and determine appropriate next steps.

Clear communication and coordination are essential to ensure alignment with host-country operations, minimize disruption, and address any operational or administrative impacts associated with pausing work.

Investigators Travelling to Host Country

Following a LODD or serious accident requiring investigation, U.S. agencies coordinate involvement with the host country in accordance with applicable international agreements and protocols. U.S. personnel may be identified to participate, as appropriate, to support information exchange and ensure alignment with agency policies. These individuals will not assume control of the investigation but will serve as U.S. points of contact, facilitating coordination, situational awareness, and communication between the host country and U.S. agencies.

APPENDIX A

INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT EMERGENCY PLAN

PURPOSE

This Incident Emergency Plan (IEP) establishes guidance for managing, caring for, and supporting agency personnel who are seriously injured or deceased while supporting international fire response operations. This plan is intended to ensure critical incidents are managed in a professional, coordinated, and compassionate manner. Its primary objectives are to prioritize medical treatment and care, facilitate timely and appropriate family notification, maintain clear and consistent communication, and support the expeditious return of injured personnel to their crew or the United States, as appropriate. In the event of a Line of Duty Death (LODD), this includes coordination and support for the dignified and timely repatriation of the deceased in accordance with agency and interagency protocols.

For all incidents involving medical emergencies—regardless of severity—affecting USDA and DOI personnel assigned to international response, an agency representative (Hospital Liaison) will be designated to provide coordination and support.

At the onset of an incident, this role may be filled by the Field Representative (FREP), Senior Representative (SREP), International Crisis Response Coordinator (ICRC), or International Liaison Officer (INLO). Individuals serving in these roles are expected to be familiar with available resources, processes, and tools to effectively support incident response and coordination.

LEADERS INTENT

The intent of this plan is to provide a communication framework to guide personnel in responding to an IWI, along with a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities before, during, and after a critical incident occurring during an international wildfire response.

RESPONSIBILITY

A Crisis Response Team (CRT) is the preferred structure for managing IWI events and is aligned with a medical care team approach, focused on coordination, support, and continuity of care during a critical incident. The CRT ensures care for injured personnel, facilitates required notifications, maintains clear lines of communication, and coordinates key response activities. The team is composed of subject matter experts who provide leadership, direction, and oversight throughout the incident.

U.S. agencies will follow established agency procedures to manage critical incidents. Initial incident coordination and support will be led by the International Crisis Response Coordinator (ICRC), who serves as the primary point of contact and coordinator of the IST. The ICRC is responsible for gathering, validating, and consolidating incident information and ensuring timely and accurate reporting back to U.S. agencies. Other in-country U.S. personnel (e.g., INLO, SREP, FREP) will support the ICRC in executing CRT functions. The USDA and DOI will assign additional management and support personnel, as needed, to augment the response.

The host country, in coordination with the ICRC, will initiate local protocols for incident management, including emergency medical services, investigations, media coordination, and personnel support. As conditions allow responsibility for incident coordination will transition, to the extent possible, to U.S. agency representatives operating under the direction of the ICRC as the CRT.

In-country Crisis Response Team (CRT) – Complex: yellow, red, or fatality

The ICRC serves as the CRT Lead and is responsible for establishing an appropriately staffed team to support international coordination between the U.S. agencies and the partner country.

- Serves as a high-level coordination group responsible for ensuring the timely and dignified repatriation of injured or deceased U.S. personnel, in accordance with applicable laws, policies, and protocols.
- Maintains a lean structure, limited to personnel essential to the repatriation and coordination process; additional coordination with support personnel will occur outside of core CRT activities.
- Operates as a short-duration team, typically remaining active through the completion of repatriation to the United States.
- Develops and maintains an international contact list and ensures it is shared with the U.S.-based coordination lead.

U.S. Crisis Response Team (CRT) – Complex: Yellow, Red, or Fatality

The U.S. CRT Lead (typically at the agency level) will be from the injured or deceased employee's home agency (USDA or DOI) and is responsible for coordinating all U.S.-based support and follow-on actions.

- Establishes and leads the U.S. CRT, ensuring appropriate representation, to include (as needed) liaisons, Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM), Human Resources (HR), benefits specialists, administrative support, Public Affairs (PAO), and investigations/review personnel.
- Conducts regular U.S. CRT coordination calls and communicates all relevant updates to the International CRT, serving as the single point of contact for all U.S.-based activities during international coordination calls.
- Develops and maintains a U.S. contact roster and shares it with the International CRT Lead.
- Assumes full responsibility for ongoing U.S.-based coordination once repatriation is complete. At that point, international coordination calls will typically conclude, while the U.S. CRT continues to manage long-term care, benefits (e.g., OWCP), memorial activities, and other follow-on actions.
- Notifies the International CRT Lead if additional international coordination or support is required after repatriation.
- Ensures the affected employee and their family receive timely, coordinated, and dignified care, support, and access to entitled benefits.

In-country Incident Support Team (CRT) – Green or Moderate complexity yellow

The In-country CRT is composed of key personnel currently located in the host country who provide immediate, in-country support for injured personnel and serve as the primary communication link during the incident. This structure is less formal and typically includes FREP, SREP, ICRC, and INLO. The ICRC is the lead CRT for the incident to provide coordination as required for the incident.

- Ensures injured personnel receive appropriate medical care and support until they are either returned to duty or released to their home unit.
- Maintains situational awareness and provides timely, accurate updates to the NICC and supporting U.S. agencies through established communication channels.

- Ensures familiarity with host country emergency response systems, medical protocols, and required documentation processes.
- Coordinates required notifications and ensures compliance with both host country and U.S. agency injury reporting requirements.

ROLES AND DEFINITIONS OF CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM (CRT) PERSONNEL

Crisis Response Teams (CRT) are established to centralize coordination and support during IWI events. The CRT manages communication flow, coordinates tasks, and tracks action items. CRTs are composed of subject matter experts (SME) and function similarly to the Command and General Staff structure of an Incident Management Team.

Depending on the complexity and needs of the incident, the following roles may be activated as part of the CRT or included in coordination and communication processes to maintain situational awareness, support decision-making, and ensure continuity of operations and care.

Agency Administrator (AA)

A designated agency official, typically at the National or Regional level, with delegated authority to approve resources and personnel in accordance with law and agency policy. The National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) retains final authority for mobilizing additional resources to international assignments at the suggestion of the AA.

International Crisis Response Coordinator (ICRC)

Serves as the primary point of contact and IST Lead for international incidents. The ICRC is responsible for initial notifications, determining incident scope, identifying jurisdictions, and coordinating response actions. The ICRC gathers, validates, and consolidates incident information and ensures timely reporting to U.S. agencies.

International Liaison Officer (INLO)

Serves as the in-country coordination point between sending and receiving nations. The INLO supports deployed personnel, addresses emergent issues (e.g., border, demobilization, critical incidents), and maintains direct communication with NICC. The INLO typically operates from the host country's national coordination center, for example:

- United States (Boise, ID): National Interagency Coordinating Center (NICC)
- Canada (Winnipeg, Manitoba): Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Center (CIFFC)
- Australia (East Melbourne, Victoria): National Resource Sharing Center (NRSC)

In-country Representative

Assigned personnel who provide initial and direct support and act as a liaison between the affected unit and the family of injured, missing, or deceased employees. Coordinates closely with HR specialists to ensure timely completion and processing of benefits and workers' compensation documentation. May include INLO, ICRC, SREP, FREP, IMT members, or designated hospital/family liaisons.

Embassy Liaison

Coordinates with U.S. embassies or consulates and interfaces with host country officials and international partners. Facilitates entry requirements, diplomatic clearances, and official visits as needed.

IN-COUNTRY CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM

An in-country Crisis Response Team (CRT) is a temporary coordination group established in the host country following an IWI. The CRT is composed of in-country U.S. personnel and host-country representatives who provide coordinated support, communication, and incident management assistance during the event. The team facilitates information sharing, supports care and repatriation efforts, coordinates with U.S. agencies and host-country officials, and helps ensure timely decision-making and continuity of support for affected personnel. The CRT remains active for the duration of the incident and is demobilized upon completion and closeout of the IWI response.

Crisis Response Team Lead (ICRC)

ICRC serves as the overall coordinator and lead for CRT operations. The CRT Lead is an SME policy, procedures, and resources, responsible for directing activities, assigning tasks, maintaining communication, and ensuring accountability for action items. The CRT Lead supports the affected unit and family and serves as an advisor to Agency Administrators.

In-country Hospital Liaison

The in-country Hospital Liaison supports injured personnel receiving medical care within the host country and serves as a communication link between medical providers, the CRT, agency and representatives. Responsibilities may include coordinating medical updates, assisting with documentation and logistical needs, and supporting continuity of care and repatriation efforts.

Liaisons may be qualified personnel already assigned in-country, deployed as part of the initial response team, assigned virtually, or mobilized specifically for the incident. Personnel traveling to the host country must meet all applicable embassy, host country, and agency entry requirements.

Host Country Safety and Risk Manager

Coordinates safety-related activities with agency leadership, law enforcement, investigations, and CISM. Works with local authorities to support investigations, reviews, and risk management processes.

Host Country Public Affairs Officer (PAO)

Manages incident communications within the host country. Coordinates with family members regarding information release, responds to media inquiries, and ensures accurate, timely, and respectful communication.

U.S. BASED INCIDENT SUPPORT TEAM

Crisis Response Team Lead (Should be Agency or Regional level)

Leads all U.S.-based coordination and operations related to repatriation and follow-on actions. Serves as the single point of contact for communication with the in-country CRT Lead and ensures alignment of U.S. agency actions.

Hospital or Family Liaison(s)

Serve as the primary point of contact between the agency and the family. Provide support and coordination, including working with HR specialists to ensure timely processing of benefits and workers' compensation documentation. Provide subject matter expertise to those serving as the in-country hospital/family liaison and/or provide virtual support for the during of the employees medical care.

Human Resources (HR) – Compensation/Benefits Specialists

Provide subject matter expertise to employees and families regarding benefits and claims. Coordinate directly with the Department of Labor on OWCP claims and ensure proper documentation and processing.

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Peer Support Coordinator

Coordinates peer support services for affected personnel. Ensures trained personnel provide emotional and practical support following critical incidents in accordance with established care standards. Coordinates support services to employees based in the U.S. after assessing the situation and determining the needs after repatriation.

Honor Guard and Memorial Liaison (HG)

Coordinates honors and memorial activities for deceased personnel, including dignified transfer, funeral or memorial services, and family support, in accordance with agency protocols.

Public Affairs Officer (PAO)

Leads U.S.-based communications. Coordinates messaging with family preferences, responds to media inquiries, and ensures accurate, timely, and respectful dissemination of information.

Safety and Risk Managers

Coordinate safety oversight with agency leadership, investigations, and partner organizations. Support investigation readiness and learning review processes.

Investigations and Review Team Leader (SAI, CRP, NTSB, OSHA, etc.)

Provides oversight and coordination of all investigative and review activities, including law enforcement and external agencies.

Law Enforcement & Investigations (LE&I)

Coordinates all law enforcement-related activities associated with the incident, as required.

INTERNATIONAL NOTIFICATION PROCESS

When an injury or illness occurs during an international assignment, notification is initiated at the field level and progresses through established U.S. and host country coordination channels without delaying care.

- Field personnel initiate notification through their chain of command to the INLO, who immediately coordinates notification with the host country, the NICC, and the ICRC.
- The ICRC serves as the central coordination point, ensuring timely notification to appropriate U.S. agency leadership, including safety and risk management personnel, and validating incident information for accuracy and completeness.
- The ICRC maintains situational awareness and facilitates communication among all parties, including the INLO, NICC, host-country officials, and Embassy Liaison, as applicable.
- Notifications are conducted in near real-time and are scalable based on incident complexity, ensuring appropriate resource mobilization and adherence to agency policy.
- In parallel, agency safety and risk management personnel may conduct notifications through their respective agency chains. This dual-notification approach ensures all required stakeholders are informed and supports timely coordination.

This process ensures clear communication, defined accountability, and coordinated engagement of U.S. and host country resources from initial response through final disposition.

INVESTIGATION AND REVIEWS

Serious accidents, fatalities, and other significant incidents involving U.S. personnel on international assignments will be reviewed in accordance with applicable U.S. agency policies and host country requirements.

- The host country retains primary responsibility for incident investigation within its jurisdiction. U.S. agency involvement will be coordinated through the NICC, INLO, Embassy Liaison, and ICRC to ensure alignment with international agreements, host country processes, and agency policy requirements.
- For serious accidents or fatalities, the affected employee's agency will coordinate with the host country to ensure investigations or reviews meet agency standards. For incidents not meeting formal serious accident thresholds, the INLO and host country will determine an appropriate level of review based on complexity, risk, and potential for shared learning.
- U.S. personnel may be assigned to participate in investigations or reviews, as appropriate. These individuals serve as agency representatives and points of contact to support coordination, information exchange, and situational awareness; they do not assume control of host country investigations.
- Safety concerns identified during operations will be reported through established supervision channels. If conditions present an imminent risk, operations may be paused until hazards are assessed and mitigated. The INLO will coordinate with host-country leadership to determine appropriate actions and ensure alignment.
- U.S. Safety and Risk Managers, in coordination with investigation and review leads, will support preparation, documentation, and any follow-on learning reviews or corrective actions.

These processes ensure investigations are coordinated, policy compliant, and focused on accountability, learning, and risk reduction while respecting host country authority.

INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACTION PLAN

Pre-Incident Task or Action (1-3 days within arrival to host country)	Who
Pre-incident awareness, planning, and training. Included as part of the in-briefing packet from NICC for all (FREP, SREP, INLO, ICRC)	INLO, Embassy Liaison, ICRC, SREP, FREP
Upon arrival develop specific international processes for identified locations of U.S. personnel.	INLO
Develop and update key contact for possible injury/illness sustained by personnel upon arrival. Include hospital locations, burn centers, host country contacts.	ICRC, Embassy Liaison
Conduct an IWI tabletop exercise to evaluate the Incident Emergency Plan (IEP). It is best practice to review the response plan during each INLO transition and, whenever feasible, involve host country partners in the process.	ICRC, CRT (International/US)
Initial Response to Incident (0-4 hours)	Who
Obtain accurate information regarding involved employee(s)	FREP or SREP
Arrive/contact medical facility on behalf of the injured employee to obtain required medical forms following international policy/processes.	ICRC
Develop the appropriate Crisis Response Team (CRT), meeting schedule and communication links between NICC, the host country, and the U.S. Embassy	INLO, ICRC, Embassy Liaison
Alert the employee’s home unit to coordinate and support family notifications	NICC, ICRC
Continued Response and CRT Development (4-24 hours)	Who
Develop priorities and identify additional needed support	CRT
Ensure all affected personnel are provided with required resources, ranging from standdown periods to travel and lodging.	SREP
Assist in scheduling visitors, agency officials, VIP, or family.	CRT
Coordinate employee transfer of care and return to duty or develop a plan for demobilization/repatriation.	CRT
CRT Implementation, Ongoing Support, Follow-up (24 hours and beyond)	Who
Continue with established employee support, meeting schedule, communication sharing of facts, and follow-up action items.	CRT
Build and in-country support team of an additional liaison, INLO, ICRC, others to either manage the incident or day to today operations	INLO, ICRC,
Confirm that the employees’ departure arrangements and medical needs, such as prescriptions and necessary paperwork, have been fully addressed before discharge.	CRT
Post Transfer Activities (after employee’s return to U.S.)	
After Action Review of CRT response	CRT
Provide regular status updates to the host country once the employee is back in the U.S.	NICC, INLO

FIELD AND/ OR SENIOR REPRESENTATIVE – CHECKLIST

Phase 1 Initial Response to Incident (0-4 hours)
Immediately report critical incidents (Green, Yellow, Red, or Fatality) to the SREP, INLO, or ICRC. Provide comprehensive details, including the individual's name, hospital location, and the mechanism of injury, etc. (Utilize top section of the Medical Plan ICS 206 WF for reference)
Notify the local or zone fire management leadership within the host country.
Ensure a continuous flow of information to SREP, INLO, and ICRC. (Pro Tip: Establish a dedicated group text for real-time updates among core responders)
Phase 2 Continued Response and CRT Development (4-24 hours)
Provide the INLO and ICRC with further status updates as new information becomes available.
Assist with host country requirements as requested.
Confirm the patient has secured all necessary medical documentation and discharge paperwork before leaving the care facility.
Phase 3 CRT Implementation, Ongoing Support, Follow-up (24 hours and beyond)
Furnish additional information to relevant parties as requested.
Continually assess and address emerging support needs for the patient and involved personnel.

INTERNATIONAL LIAISON (INLO) AND CRISIS RESPONSE COORDINATOR (ICRC) - CHECKLIST

Phase 1 Initial Response to Incident (0-4 hours)
Establish immediate communication channels with FREP, SREP, NICC, Embassy Liaison, and host country partners.
Email a concise summary of factual incident details to the INLO, Embassy Liaison, and NICC.
Collaborate with host country leadership to determine the scope of the event and assist in forming an appropriate Crisis Response Team (CRT).
Formally identify the CRT Lead (usually will be the ICRC) and initiate a schedule for coordination calls.
Notify Agency OWCP
Phase 2 Continued Response and Care Team Development (4-24 hours)
Verify that the FREP or SREP possess all host country details regarding local medical care and procedures.
Evaluate the necessity of assigning a dedicated Hospital Liaison to the facility.
Assess the crew's need for peer support and facilitate the coordination of CISM resources, as requested.
Phase 3 Care Team Implementation, Ongoing Support, Follow-up (24 hours and beyond)
For severe incidents, recommend ordering additional support personnel to optimize response efforts.
Ensure the patient receives continuous, on-site assistance for the duration of their stay in the host country.
Support the injured employee and OWCP by ensuring all necessary medical and administrative documentation is obtained.

INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT TEAM CONTACTS

Assignment	Name	Contact Info: Cell Phone & Email Address
Field Rep (FREP)		
Senior Rep (SREP)		
International Liaison (INLO)		
International Crisis Response Coordinator (ICRC)		
Embassy Liaison		
Host Country Leadership POC		
Host Country Regional Leadership POC		
NICC Center Manager		
Employee's Agency Lead		
Host Country Safety Risk Manager*		
Host Country PAO*		
U.S. Incident Support Lead*		

INTERNATIONAL CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM (CRT) COORDINATION CALL TEMPLATE

Priority Focus: Care of personnel, timely notifications (family and need to know), clear communication, and coordinated support.

Leadership Intent: Maintain a respectful, disciplined, and fact-based operating environment.

Opening - International CRT Lead (ICRC)

- Welcome and acknowledgements (as appropriate)
- Establish objectives for the call
- Set expectations:
 - Maintain a fact-based operating picture (no speculation)
 - Control information flow and protect sensitive information
 - Use breakout coordination for sensitive or function specific discussions
 - Maintain focus on care, coordination, and safe, timely repatriation (if applicable)

Agency Administrators Intent– (NICC and host country coordination center rep)

- Provide leader’s intent, priorities, and constraints
- Confirm authorities, resource considerations, and coordination expectations.

Situation Update - International CRT Lead

- Current incident status (confirmed facts only)
- Significant updates since last briefing
- Review of open/rolled-over action items

Functional Reports (Round Robin)

Each representative provides **Current Actions/ Planned Actions/ Needs**

- Hospital or Family Liaison (in-country POC):
- Host Country Coordination Center:
- INLO/NICC:
- Embassy Liaison:
- Host Country Regional Leadership:
- Host Country Regional Safety and Risk:
- Host Country Regional Public Affairs:
- U.S. IST Lead:

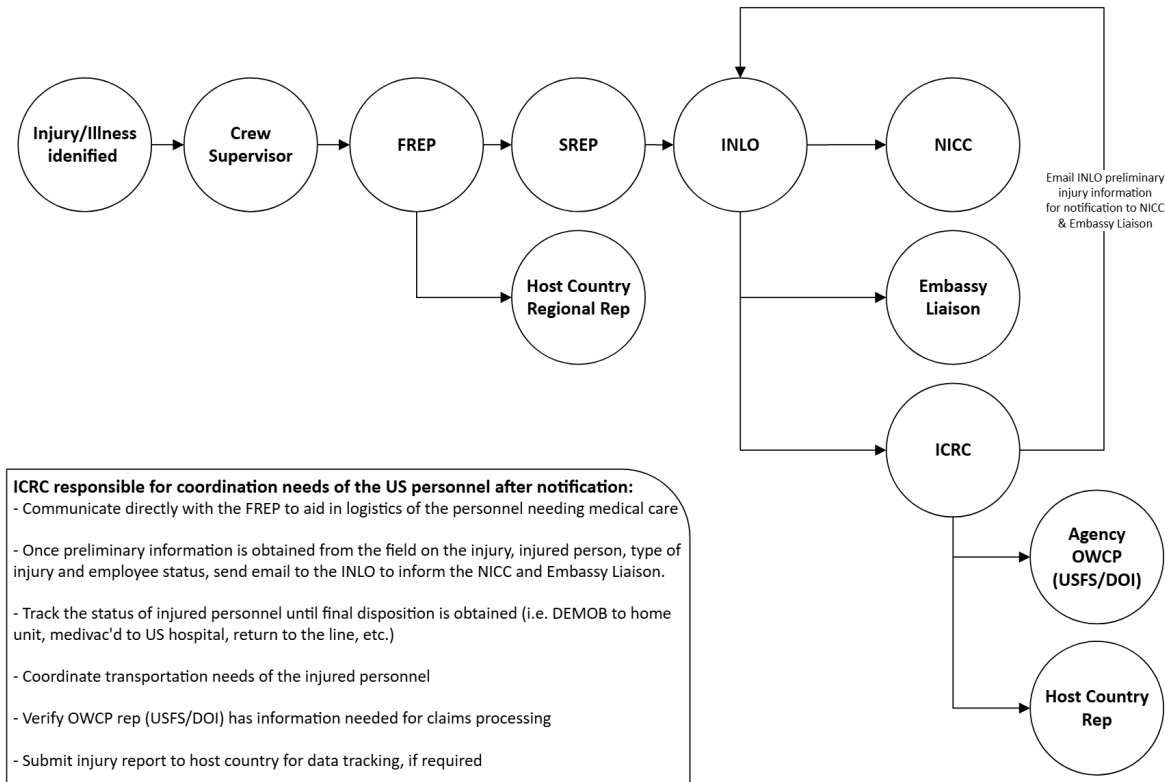
REMEMBER: Breathe, take care of yourself and others

Agency Administrator Closing Remarks (as needed)

Close International CRT Lead

- Summarize key decisions and action items
 - Confirm responsible parties and timelines
 - Establish next meeting time and objectives
- Communicate – Collaborate – Coordinate – Cooperate – Close Loops**

INTERNATIONAL INJURY & ILLNESS NOTIFICATION PROCESS



Revised 4/30/2026

CRITICAL INCIDENT SUPPORT AND AVAILABLE RESOURCES

The following resources are available to support crew leaders and personnel who have experienced or been involved in a critical incident. When applied appropriately, these tools can help bridge the gap between initial incident stabilization and the transition to additional or higher-level support, whether in-country or upon return to the United States.

Leaders at all levels are expected to remain engaged with their personnel throughout the assignment by maintaining regular check-ins, fostering open communication, and promoting a supportive environment. Recognize that individuals process critical incidents differently and on their own timelines. Support services should be offered and made readily available; however, they should never be imposed. The role of leadership is to create space for individuals to access support as needed while maintaining awareness of their well-being.

The included resources—along with the Stress First Aid model and Stress Continuum—are intended to provide practical guidance for recognizing stress responses and supporting personnel before, during, and after a critical incident. These tools are not a substitute for professional care but serve as an accessible framework to promote resilience, early intervention, and peer support.

Helpful Websites and Resources

NIFC Taking Care of Our Own

<https://www.nifc.gov/resources/taking-care-our-own>

NWCG Health & Wellness Subcommittee

<https://www.nwcg.gov/committee/mental-health-subcommittee>

Casualty Assistance Program

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/about-agency/contact-us/national-programs-offices/cap>

Casualty Assistance Field Guide

https://gacc.nifc.gov/sacc/resources/forms/CasualtyAssistanceFieldGuide_Final_110624_1.pdf

Wildland Fire Therapy Services

<https://health.nifc.gov/>

Wildland Firefighter Foundation

<https://wffoundation.org/mental-health>

Eric Marsh Foundation

<https://ericmarshfoundation.org/>

STRESS FIRST AID AND CORE CONCEPTS



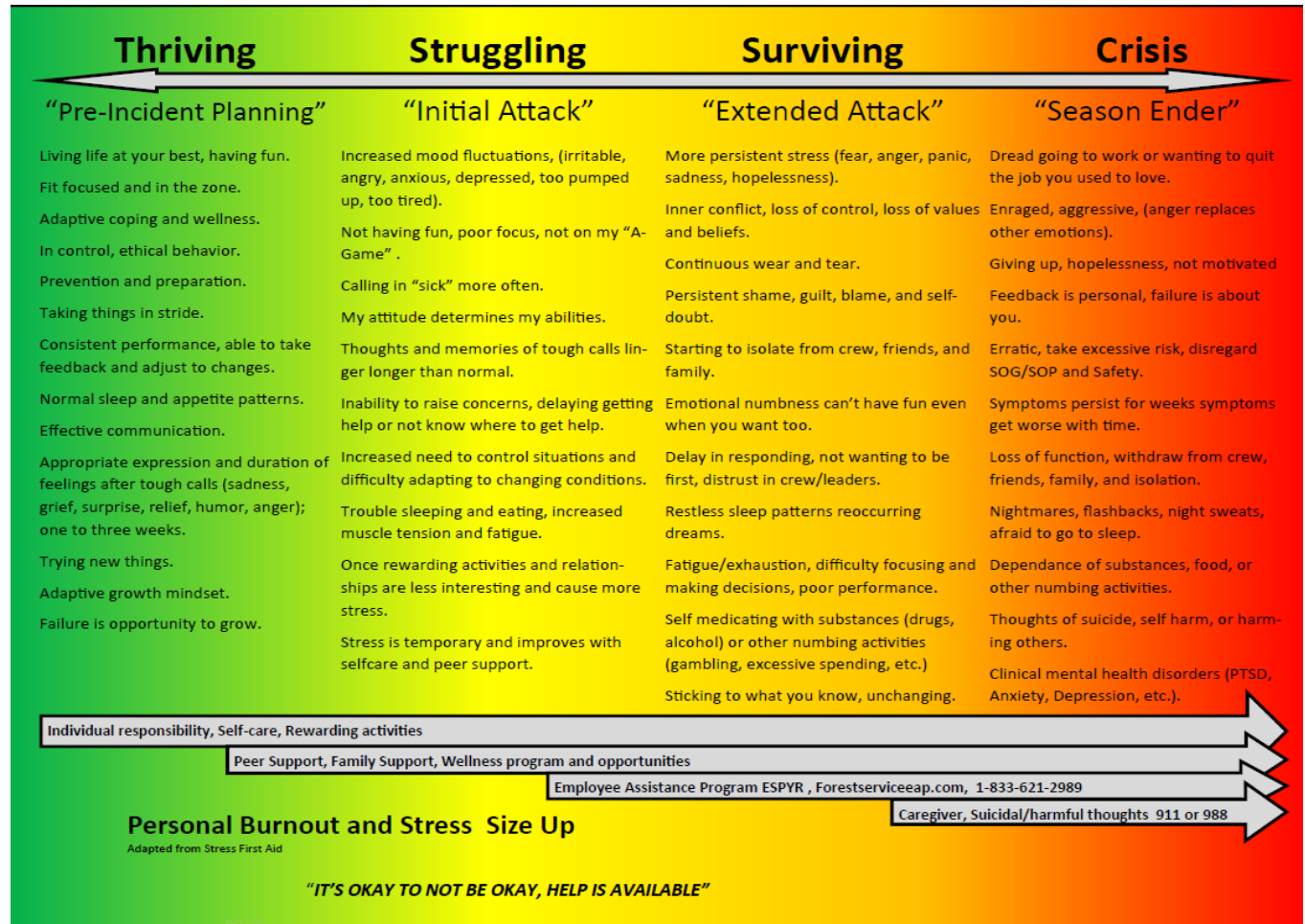
Seven Cs of Stress First Aid:

- 1. CHECK**
Assess: observe and listen
- 2. COORDINATE**
Get help, refer as needed
- 3. COVER**
Get to safety ASAP
- 4. CALM**
Relax, slow down, refocus
- 5. CONNECT**
Get support from others
- 6. COMPETENCE**
Restore effectiveness
- 7. CONFIDENCE**
Restore self-esteem and hope

William Nash, Richard Westphal, Patricia Watson, Brett Litz; 2009

Check (Assess)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate: Gauge current distress, functioning, and immediate risks. • Determine: Decide if the person needs higher-level clinical care. • Monitor: Reassess progress and safety continually.
Coordinate (Refer)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform: Notify necessary leadership or support personnel. • Refer: Connect the individual to professional evaluation if needed. • Facilitate: Streamline access to outside resources and care.
Cover (Protect)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure: Ensure immediate physical safety for the individual and the team. • Reassure: Foster psychological safety and a sense of security. • Shield: Protect the person from additional, unnecessary stressors
Calm (Stabilize)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soothe: Use breathing or relaxation to lower physiological arousal. • De-escalate: Reduce the intensity of fear, anger, or panic. • Listen: Provide an empathetic, non-judgmental ear.
Connect (Support)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link: Provide direct support or re-connect them with family and peers. • Bridge: Remove social obstacles and solve problems preventing connection. • Engage: Encourage positive social interactions and practical help.
Competence (Restore)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentor: Guide the individual back to their full operational role. • Train: Facilitate retraining or skill-building to handle stress reactions. • Re-expose: Gradually introduce the person back into their duties.
Confidence (Build)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebuild: Restore self-trust and faith in leadership or core values. • Reframing: Shift focus from guilt or anger to "lessons learned." • Meaning: Help the person find purpose or professional closure regarding the event.

STRESS CONTINUUM



The Stress Continuum is a practical tool used to recognize and respond to normal reactions to stress, ranging from Thriving (Green) to Struggling (Yellow), Surviving (Orange), and Crisis (Red). Movement along this continuum is expected, particularly during and after high-stress or critical incidents. Leaders and crew members should routinely assess themselves and others for changes in behavior, mood, or performance and apply appropriate support based on observed needs.

Early intervention is key:

Green: Reinforce routines and cohesion

Yellow: Increase check-ins and peer support

Orange: Prioritize rest and connect individuals to resources

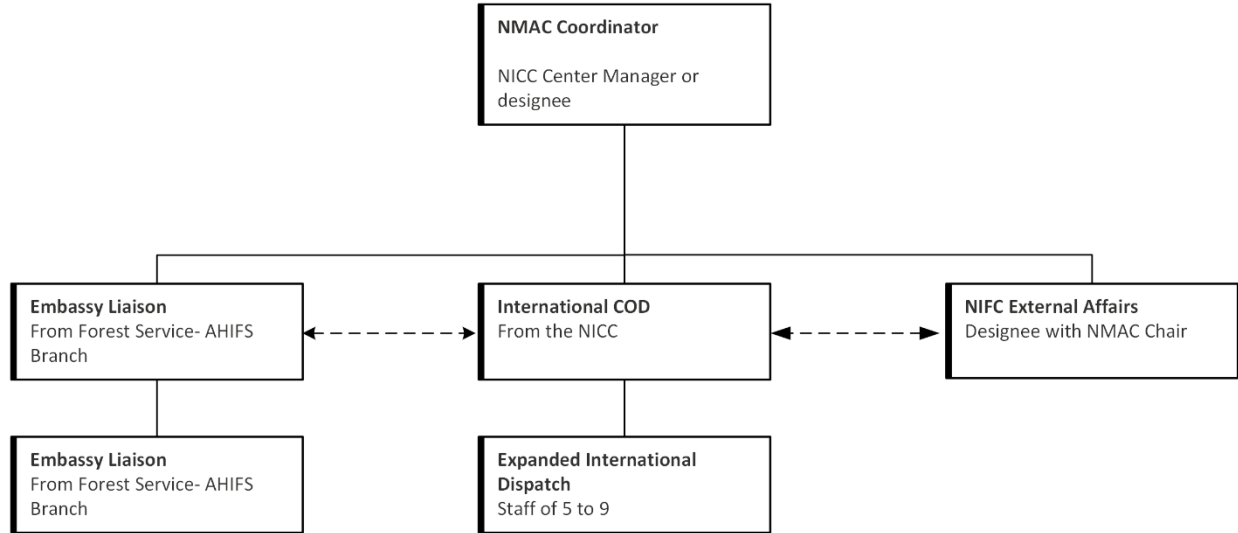
Red: Take immediate action to ensure safety and engage professional support

Individuals process stress differently and at their own pace; therefore, support should be offered and encouraged but not forced unless safety is at risk. Consistent awareness and timely action help maintain both individual well-being and operational effectiveness.

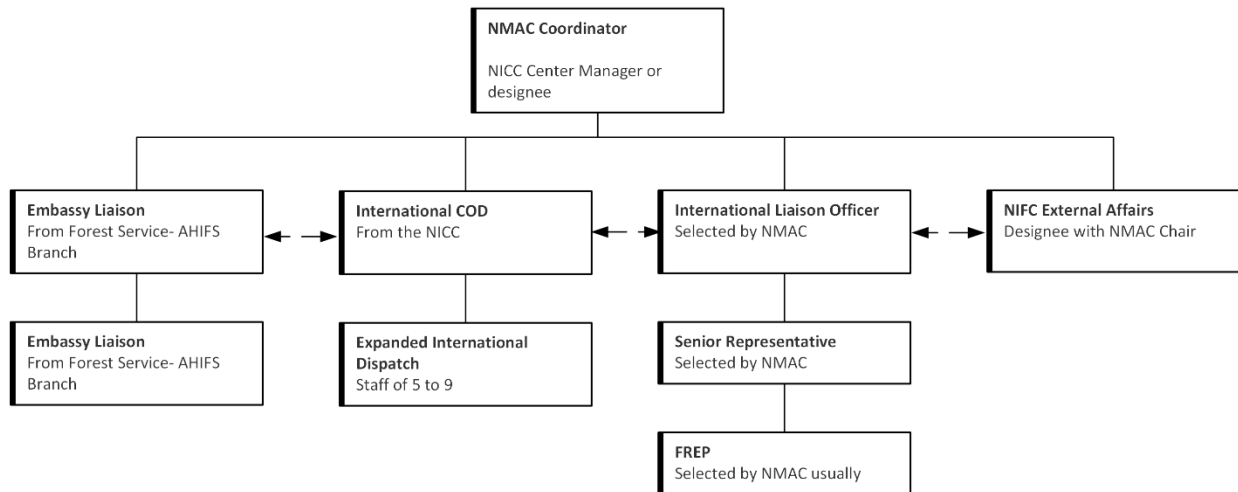
APPENDIX B SAMPLE ORGANIZATION CHARTS

INTERNATIONAL MOBILIZATION, SENDING RESOURCES

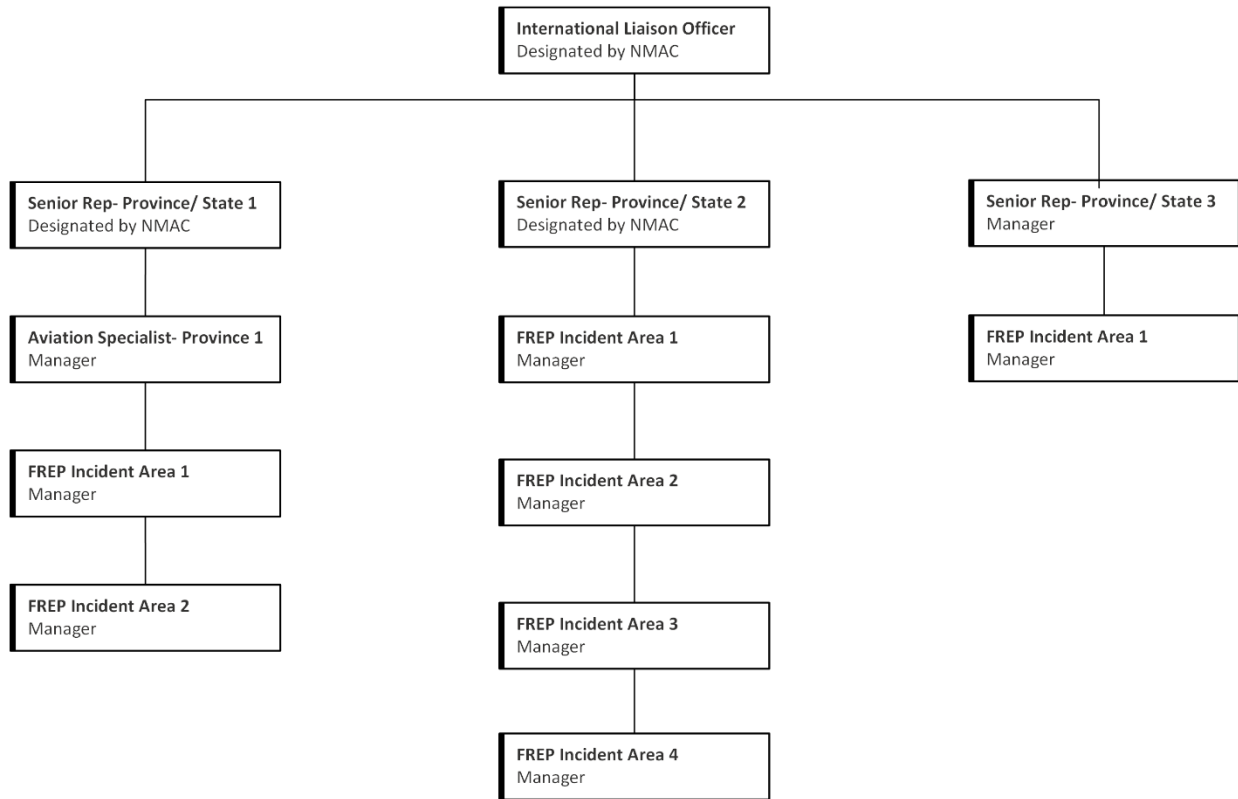
Basic Structure when an In-Country Organization IS NOT Deployed



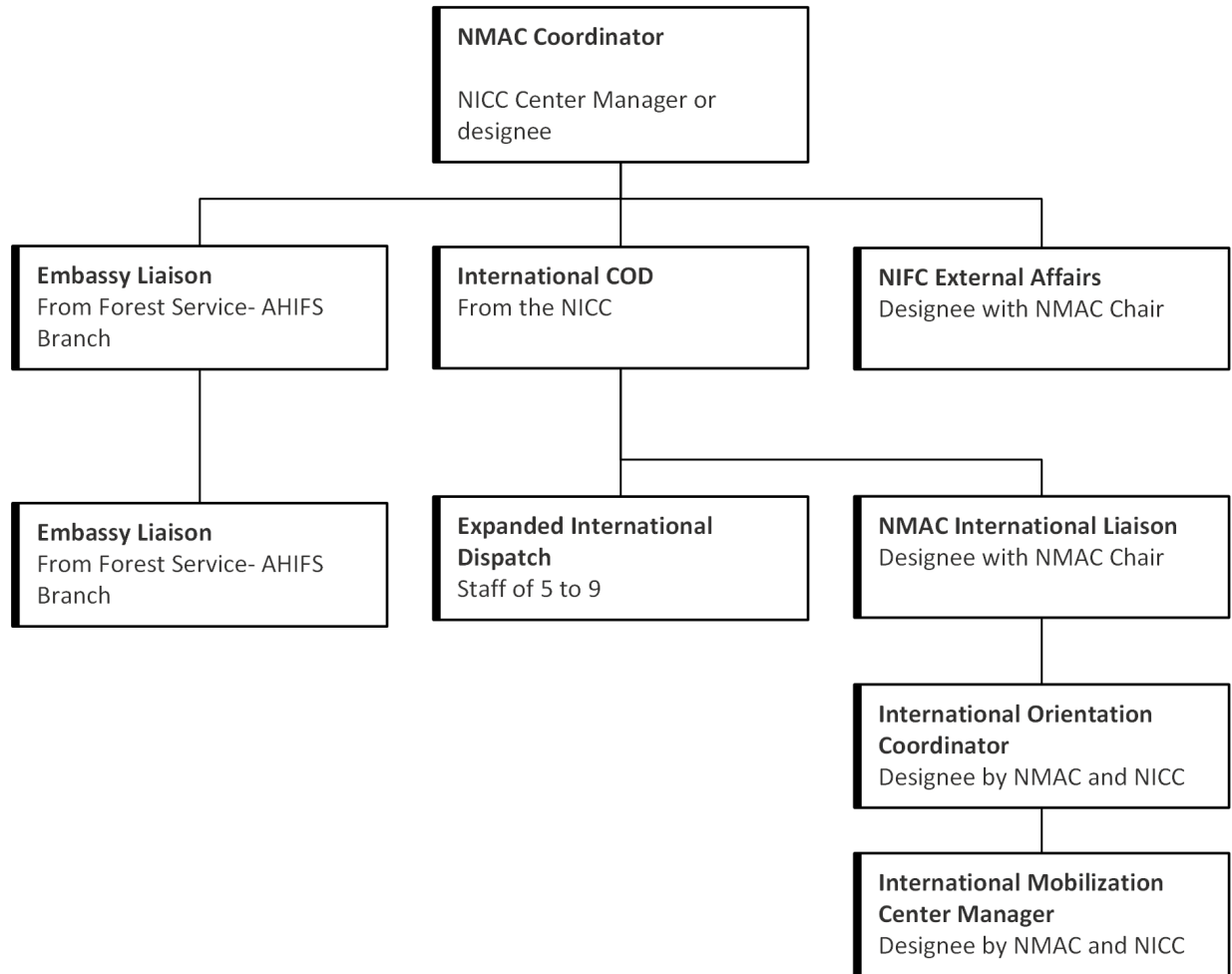
Basic Structure when an In-Country Organization IS Deployed



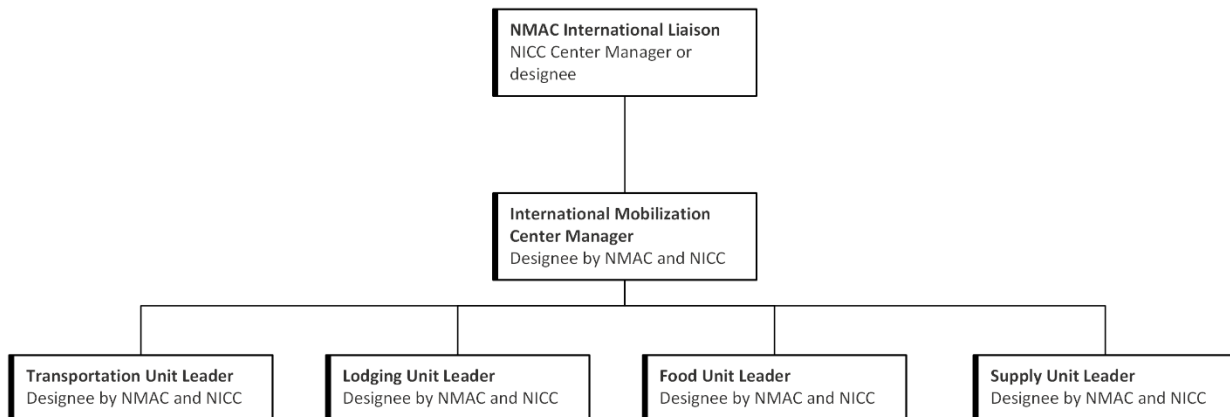
Sample Structure when a Large In-Country Organization IS Deployed



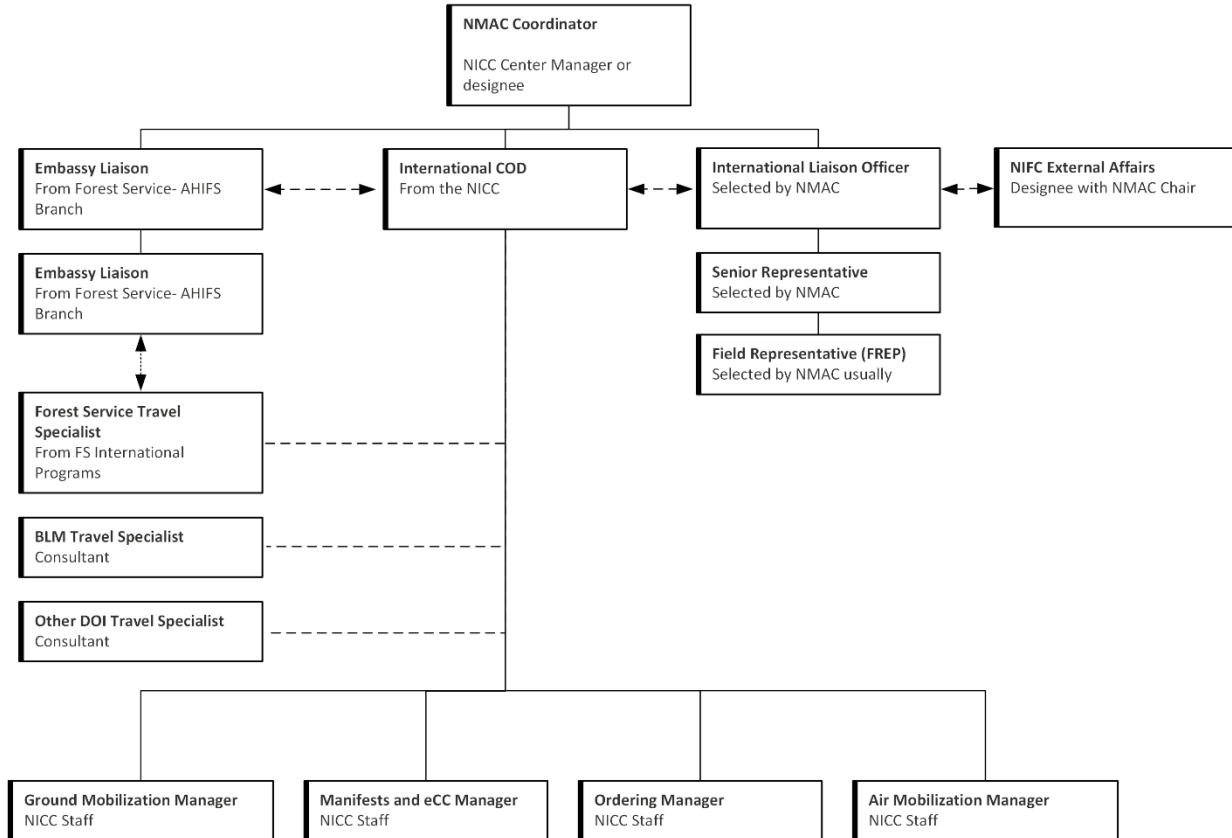
INTERNATIONAL MOBILIZATION, RECEIVING RESOURCES



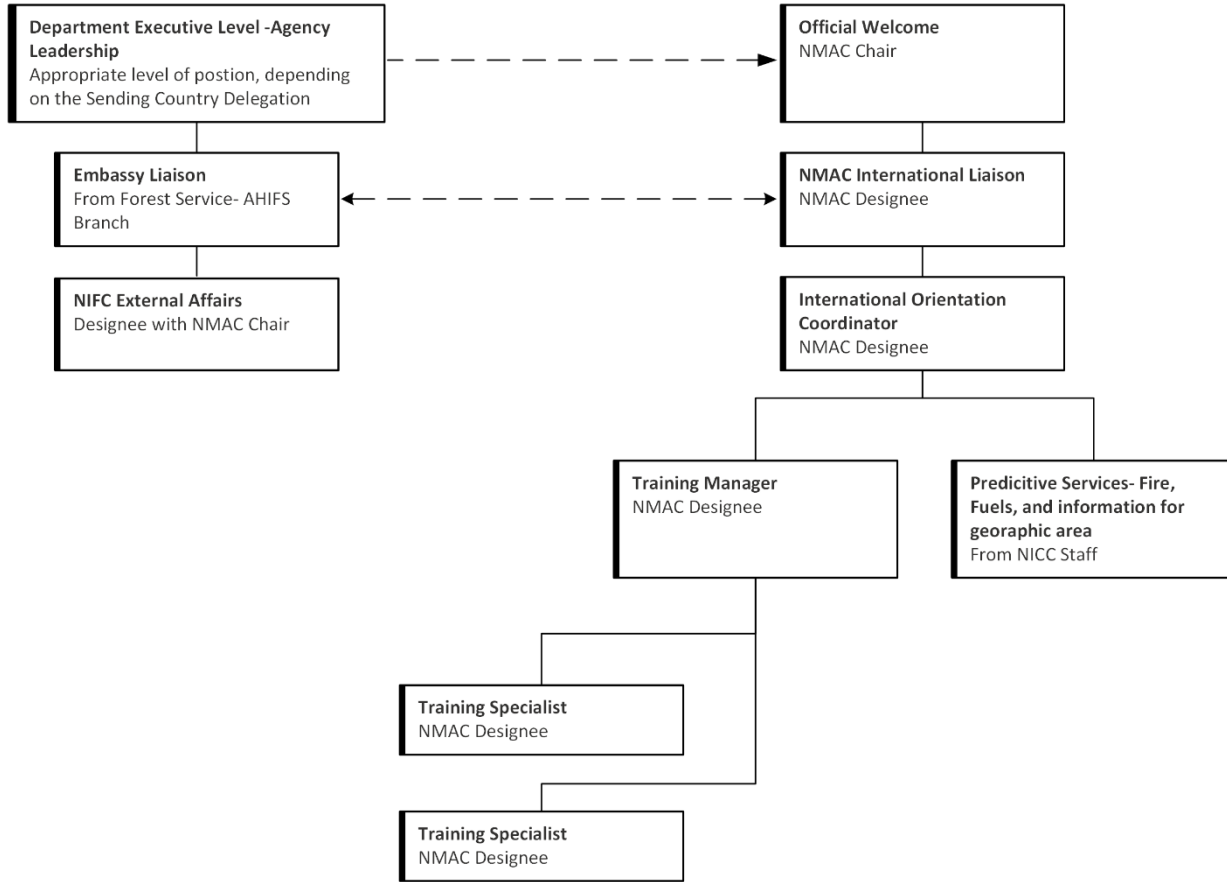
International Mobilization Center



International Expanded Dispatch

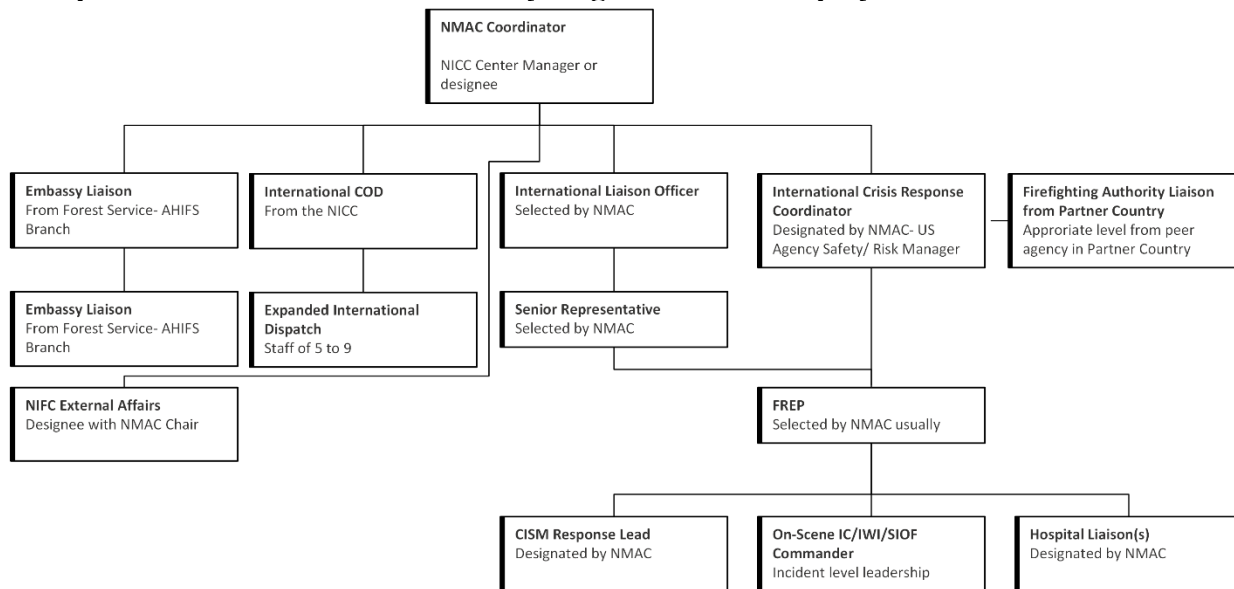


Official Welcome and Initial Briefing Organizational Structure

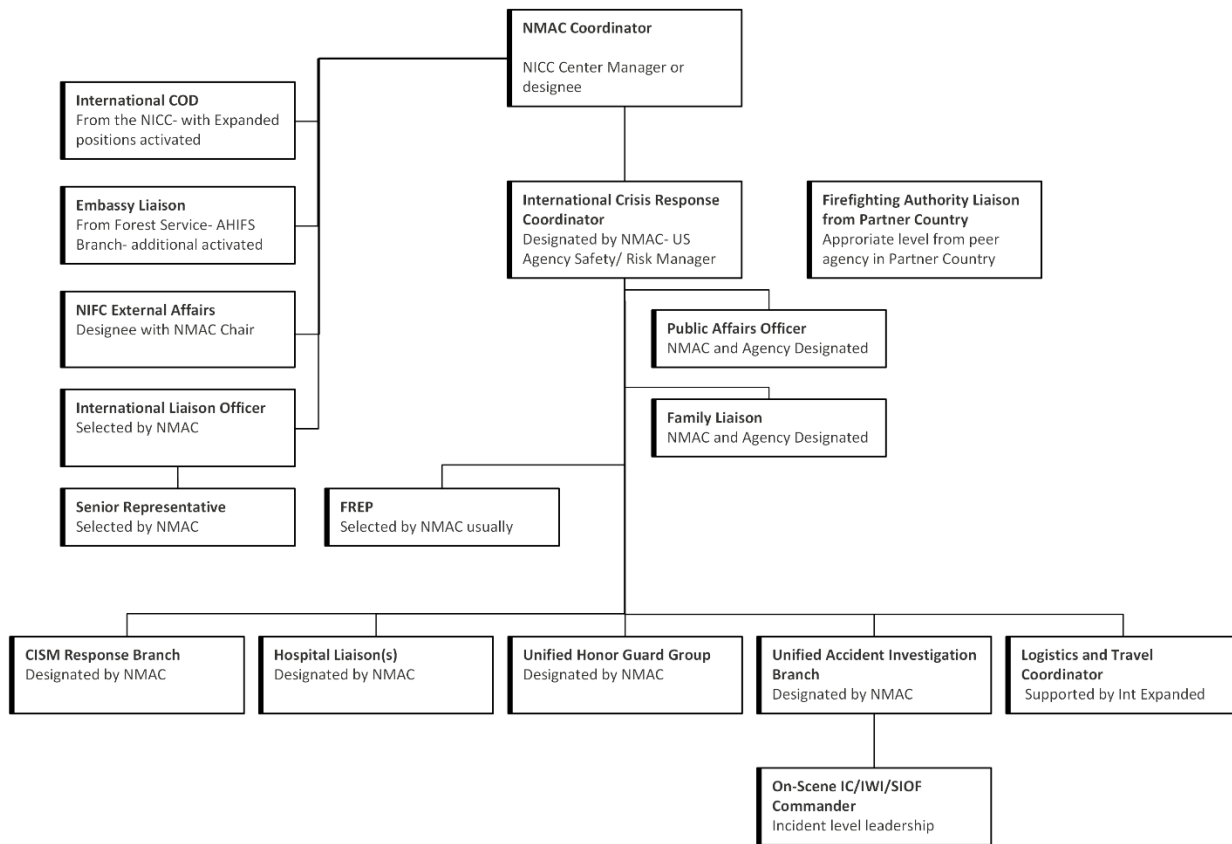


INTERNATIONAL MOBILIZATION SERIOUS ACCIDENT OR FATALITY

Sample Structure when an In-Country Organization IS Deployed



Sample Structure when an In-Country Organization IS Deployed



APPENDIX C

SAMPLE BRIEFING SCHEDULES

INTERNATIONAL ORIENTATION AND BRIEFING GUIDELINES

To improve information sharing before and during deployment, Partner Countries have established a series of briefing standards. Following these standards ensures the right information is delivered at the right time and prevents duplication.

Four distinct briefing opportunities support standardization:

- I. Pre-departure Information: Collection of information that deploying personnel need to know before they depart their home base.
- II. Departure Briefing: In-person or virtual briefing outlining both Sending Participant and Receiving Participant information.
- III. Arrival Briefing: In-person briefing providing specific details on the agency/organization and fire operations.
- IV. Operational Briefing: In-person operational briefing specific to the incident.

I. Pre-Departure Information

Before departing their home base, deploying personnel need to understand the environment they are entering, the role they will play, and what they need to bring. The Sending Participant compiles this information in a comprehensive pre-departure document, validated by both the Receiving and Sending Participants, and provides it to deploying personnel.

Receiving Participant Contribution

- Country and Agency Overview
- Political Landscape
- Entry and Exit Requirements - Visa or ETA, ESTA
- Cultural and Social Norms
- Imports and Exports (ex. tobacco import limits)
- Currency and Sales Taxes
- Tipping
- Safety and Security
- Driving License Requirements
- Driving Tips, Links
- Animal and Insect Precautions
- Weather
- Fire Behavior
- Expected Accommodations
- General Schedule (deployment length, work rest)
- Glossary

Sending Participant Contribution

- Personal Data Collection
- Assignment and Other Certifications - Crosswalk Roles
- Fitness Requirements
- Baggage Weight Limits

- Equipment Required (laptop, smart device, flight helmet)
- Smart Device Cost Recovery
- Code of Conduct
- Alcohol and Drugs (Deployment Policy)
- Expenses
- Time Records
- Medical Insurance
- Social Media Policy
- Contacts While Traveling to Muster Point

II. Departure Briefing

Receiving Participant Contribution

- What to Expect: The Receiving Participant provides a PowerPoint presentation or video at least 36 hours before flight departure. If in PowerPoint format, the Sending Participant delivers it.
- Overall Fire Situation in Province/State/Country/Region
- Assignment Locations (if known)
- General Fuels/Fire Behavior Expectations
- Arrival Day - Schedule
- Briefing /Training Day(s) Schedule
- Receiving Agency Points of Contact on Arrival

Sending Participant Contribution

- Key Sending Agency Definitions, Contacts, and Responsibilities (AREP, SREP, INLO)
- Media Guidelines and Contacts
- Confirm Expense and Time Records Processes
- Recoverable and Non-Recoverable Expenses
- Planned Work Schedule/Days of Rest
- Review Safety Plan
- Review Critical Incident Response Plan
- Medical Insurance and Process to Access
- Re-Tasking and Re-Assignment Process
- Code of Conduct Review
- Fit For Work Policy (Alcohol use)
- Respectful Workplace Policy
- Workplace Harassment and Discrimination Reporting Protocol

III. Arrival Briefing Receiving Participant

Introduction

- Overview (Organization mission, mandate, responsibilities)
- Boundaries (Area, map of the province/state/region, identification of province/state/regional fire center)
- Topography (General topography, particular area and special effect)
- Climate and weather (General climate and fire weather in the season, special effects in particular areas)

- Forest and fuel typing (Fuel map, general description, disturbance, nonstandard fuel and effect on fire behavior)
- Other considerations

Fire Management System

- Acts, legislation, and agreements (Brief listing and explanation of acts, legislation or agreements, background information that supports decisions)
- Line of authority (Structure, level of authority, organizational chart)
- Decision making process (Explain who and how decisions are made within the organization)
- Principles, strategy, Minimum Impact Suppression Tactics (MIST) and fire management directive and policies
- Civil protection and evacuation (Explanation of the process, relationship between partners in case of, responsibilities, etc.)
- Other considerations

Resources

- Personnel capacity (Overview, IMT, single resource, distribution, type 1, type 2, etc.)
- Aircraft capacity (Overview, rotary wing, fixed wing, airtankers, distribution, contract, etc.)
- Equipment capacity (Overview, special equipment, distribution, etc.)
- Contractors/Volunteers

Suppression

- General information
 - Fire numbering (How fires are identified and monitored)
 - Incident complexity classification (How incidents are classified and fire status identified)
 - Response and tactics (Explain general response and tactics used)
 - Operational period (Explain the way the operational period is managed, linked to the fire status, work/rest periods)
 - Mapping system (Tools, apps, system, software)
 - Radio frequencies (Policies, best practices, reporting, network map and chart frequencies)
 - Fire information: media, public and social media policies and relationships, agency policy, responsibilities, approach, publication
 - Lodging (Facilities, capacity, equipment, camp, distinct accommodation)
 - Personal equipment
- Level of preparedness
 - Codes/alerts
 - Preparedness Levels
 - Standby
 - Deployment (ground personnel and aircraft)
- Fire line activities (Specific information for each position)
 - IMT
 - Command/Control
 - Plans
 - Operations

- Air Operations Integration
- Finance and Administration
- Logistics

Safety

- Agency safety policies and procedures (Policies, responsibilities and procedures)
- Agency safety concerns (Special safety concerns specific to the agency or region, specific safety instructions)
- Incident reporting (Forms, how to report, process, etc.)
- Medical care procedures (From a minor injury to a serious one, Emergency response plan, etc.)

Human Resources Policies

- Discrimination and harassment
- Alcohol, cannabis, tobacco and drugs
- Diversity
- Reporting

Training Requirements

- Gaps identified through crosswalks
- Training Plan and delivery

Equipment Issuance

- Issue Equipment, identify return protocol

IV. Incident Briefings**Current Situation**

- Incident Type, Location, Other Incidents in the Area
- Topographic Influences
- Weather Factors (previous, current, forecast)

Forest/Wildland Fire

- Fuel Types and Conditions
- Fire Behavior (previous, current, and forecast)
- Fire Behaviour System Interpretation

Incident Command

- Incident Commander/Immediate Supervisor
- Incident Objectives/Specific Tactical
- Objectives/Priorities
- Incident Structure/Operational Map
- Contingency Plans
- Resource/Aircraft Committed
- Media Protocol

Communications Plan

- All Channels and Frequencies Identified
- Contact List

- After-Hours Emergency Contact Procedures

Logistics Support

- Supplies and Equipment Available
- Transportation
- Bases and Staging Areas
- Meals/Accommodations

Safety Considerations

- Hazards and Risks Identified (environmental, physical)
- Control Measures to Mitigate Hazards
- Safety Officer Role
- Medivac Procedures
- Safety Zones and Escape Routes
- Incident/Accident reporting

APPENDIX D

SAMPLE ORIENTATION BRIEFING TOPICS

SAMPLE SINGLE OR MULTI-DAY ORIENTATION

The following briefing topics cover what Partner Country responders receive upon arrival, before insertion on an incident.

- Welcome and Introductions
- Current Fire Situation and Activity Briefing
- Fireline Safety
- 10 Standard Firefighting Orders and 18 Watchout Situations
- LCES
- Fire Entrapment Avoidance
- Work/Rest Policy
- Medical Emergencies
- Aviation usage and aircraft overview
- Fire Weather and Fuels Analyst (Fuel Types and Expected Fire Behavior)
- Fire Shelter Training
- Reference Materials (IRPG) and Terminology
- Communications and Radio Usage
- Resource Typing
- Metric Conversions
- Chow line to the Fireline (Day in the life of a U.S. Firefighter and a Typical Operational Period for a Division Supervisor or a Crew Boss)
- Defensive Driving
- Issue of PPE, Equipment and Supplies

**SAMPLE AVIATION ORIENTATION BRIEFING – HELICOPTER SPECIFIC
(SINGLE DAY)**

The following briefing topics cover helicopter-specific content that Partner Country responders receive upon arrival, before insertion on an incident.

- Welcome and Introductions
- ICS Helibase Organization and Communication
- Aviation Policy
- Initial In-Brief at an Incident (Helibase) and Daily Briefings and Debriefings
- Helicopter Manager Daily Duties
- IHOG Overview
- Operational Responsibilities
 - Crew Supervision
 - Cargo
 - Passenger Brief and Manifest
 - Flight Following
 - Water Bucket
 - Initial Attack and Fire Size-up
 - Aerial Ignition
 - Medevac
 - Helispot Manager
 - Dipsite Manager
 - General Support of Helibase Operations
 - Crew Deconfliction
- Logistical Responsibilities
 - Contracting and Payment Overview
 - Pre-use Inspections
 - Load Calculations (Capabilities and Limitations)
 - Pilot Duty Day
 - Aviation Forms, Flight Use Reports, Daily Dairies and Time Keeping
 - Safecomms/Trends
 - Hazardous Material Guide/Exemption

APPENDIX E

TRAVEL TIPS

OVERVIEW

Knowing what to expect when you arrive helps you prepare. Follow agency policy and guidance to stay on track for work-related efforts, compensation, and reimbursement. Traveling to a foreign country without prior research on the people, culture, and local practices can be stressful. Taking time to read up on your destination makes for a more enjoyable experience with fewer surprises.

FINANCE

Having multiple ways to pay is the best approach for most travelers in a foreign country.

Check with your financial institution about notification requirements, limitations, and restrictions for credit and debit cards in foreign countries. Most institutions offer a seamless travel experience through personal notifications and alerts that validate your location and purchases. Make sure your institution has your current and preferred contact method.

Cash is preferred or necessary in many situations. Small businesses and marketplaces may not accept cards, and during a local incident or major emergency, card services may be unavailable due to infrastructure impacts. Review your account's credit limit, ATM limit, PIN, and password before you travel.

Most U.S. banks offer foreign currency exchange at little or no cost and will ship currency to a branch location of your choice within a few days. ATMs and other facilities provide cash access in-country, but exchange rates may be unfavorable and undisclosed fees may apply. Use only recommended, reliable sources to withdraw cash.

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides guidance for safe food and beverage consumption. Following a few basic principles reduces the risk of eating or drinking contaminated food (<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/food-water-safety>).

ATMs and other in-country facilities may offer unfavorable exchange rates and charge undisclosed fees. Use only recommended, reliable sources to withdraw cash.

Tipping practices vary by country. Australia and New Zealand generally do not expect tips, embracing a merit-based approach where exceptional service earns a reward. Tipping is expected in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Tipping where it is not expected can give the impression of being careless with money, while failing to tip where it is expected is considered an insult. Mainstream travel websites and blogs offer guidance, and consulting a trusted local citizen is always a good idea.

TRANSLATION AND LANGUAGE

If assigned in a country where English is not the primary language, an interpreter is usually provided. Your point of contact or foreign peers may also speak English in addition to their native language. In many non-English-speaking countries, English instruction in schools means younger generations can often understand and speak conversational English. Regardless, learning a few basic words and phrases—yes, no, thank you, and please—goes a long way toward cordial interaction.

Also consider country-specific terminology, slang, colloquialisms, and dialect. Use plain language and ask questions when unsure of meanings. Seeking clarification early prevents misunderstandings.

TRANSPORTATION

As a firefighter in a Partner Country, it is likely your transportation will be provided for your work related purposes. If you need a rental car, know that each rental company may have slightly different requirements regarding driver age and types of vehicles allowed. Generally, a full, unrestricted driver's license printed in English is required, and there may be requirements on the minimum time the license has been held. A passport may also be required. There may be surcharges for drivers under 25 and over 65. Even when paying cash, a major credit card may also be required to have on file in case additional charges or damage occurs. Be sure to check with your agency policy on rental cars and insurance.

Driving in another country can be challenging. Australia and New Zealand drive on the left side of the road, and signs in Mexico are in Spanish. All countries treat accidents seriously, and in some cases authorities may detain you pending an investigation.

If you drive for personal reasons during your official government travel, be sure to understand your agency's policies and guidance.

Taxi and ride share (Uber, Lyft, or others) are usually viable alternatives in cities and towns with the population to support them. Ride share companies are typically cashless and provide ride cost estimates before committing to the ride. They require a mobile application to manage and pay. Taxis may allow both cash and credit card, but typically a cost estimate is the driver's estimate. There are pros and cons to both methods. For example, some airports and hotels do not allow ride share services. Additionally, if all you have is cash, a taxi may be your only alternative.

Public transportation is unlikely to be used for work purposes, but it is generally an inexpensive option in most countries. Research specific routes and methods in advance to confirm they meet your needs and are safe and secure.

CLAIMING TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

Travel reimbursement regulations are governed by the Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) and agency-specific policy, guidance, and systems. The State Department establishes foreign lodging and per diem rates. Unlike domestic travel, foreign rates include laundry and hotel taxes, so these expenses are not separately reimbursable.

Below is a list of foreign travel-related expenses that are **reimbursable** in accordance with the FTR.

- Commissions on conversion of foreign currency.
- Passport and/or visa fees, including fees for a physical examination if one is required to obtain a passport and/or visa and such examination could not be obtained at a government facility. Reimbursement for such fees may include travel and transportation costs to the passport/visa issuing office if located outside the local commuting area of the employee's official station and the traveler's presence at that office is mandatory.
- Costs of photographs for passports and visas.
- Foreign country exit fees.
- Costs of birth, health, and identity certificates.
- Charges for inoculations that cannot be obtained through a federal dispensary

Below is a list of foreign travel-related expenses that are **non-reimbursable** in accordance with the FTR.

- Trip Insurance
- CTAT/FACT training
- Personal medical expenses
- Hotel taxes
- Laundry and dry-cleaning expenses

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Although not specifically endorsed by this guide, WhatsApp is widely used internationally for short message service (SMS), multimedia messaging service (MMS), and cross-platform text communication. Its end-to-end encryption supports secure messaging and voice over internet protocol (VoIP). Note that some agencies prohibit its installation on government-issued phones.

Internet integrity and availability varies widely based on the provider and location. If you're on public Wi-Fi, it's best not to access banking or other sensitive info without a virtual private network (VPN).

Mobile hotspots offer a reliable alternative for internet access. Hotspots create a wireless network between devices or provide connectivity through a cellular service. Many phones include this feature, or you can acquire a separate device. Capability varies by phone model and service plan.

IMMUNIZATIONS & MEDICATIONS

The Resource Order Form will include specific instructions if immunization requirements apply.

Some Partner Countries require foreign visitors to carry an International Certificate of Vaccination (also known as a Yellow Card) or other proof of inoculations or medical tests before entering or transiting the country. The State Department's Country Information website provides country specific and foreign embassy contact information.

Required vaccination costs may be reimbursable or covered by agency funds. Check with your international office for details.

The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) provide recommendations for vaccinations, malaria prevention, and other travel health precautions for travel abroad.

RESTRICTED ITEMS

Many countries, including the United States, have restrictions on what you can bring into that country. This may include items such as food, pets, animals and animal products, firearms and ammunition and medications. Even over-the-counter medications may be prohibited in some countries. Violations are taken seriously and can lead to fines or incarceration. Check the State Department's [International Travel Country Information page](#) for your destination to find contact information for its foreign embassy or consulate. Visit the website of the foreign embassy or consulate to find out what is prohibited.

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL AND SECURITY SERVICES

Several services provide global medical advice and travel security assistance to travelers. These are not insurance providers, but they track your location and offer 24-hour access to information such as vetted medical facilities. Some systems also track employees for their employers and send notifications about potential travel and security issues.

This service is available only when a travel authorization has been completed in your agency-approved travel management system. Travelers without a completed travel authorization are not covered, as enrollment is tied to that authorization.

For example, the Forest Service provides International SOS, a leading provider of global medical and travel security assistance services, to their staff and sponsored travelers on official international travel. International SOS has a global network of 11,000 employees, 5,200 medical professionals, and hundreds of fully vetted medical facilities. Travelers who need advice or have an emergency have access to International SOS 24-hour Assistance Centers, online country travel guides that include medical and safety information, a mobile app and international clinics and remote-site medical facilities across five continents.

The State Department provides the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) for all United States citizens. It is a free service that allows United States citizens traveling or living abroad to receive the latest security updates from the nearest United States embassy or consulate. It automatically sends updates to travel advisories and the latest safety and security information for your destination country, so you can make informed decisions about your travel. The information you provide enables the United States embassy or consulate to contact you and provide assistance in an emergency.

APPENDIX F ACRONYM GUIDE

The following acronyms are used throughout the National Interagency Standards for Resource Mobilization:

AFAC	Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs
BHA	Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CIFFC	Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre
CIMT	Complex Incident Management Team
COD	International Coordinator on Duty
CONAFOR	Comisión Nacional Forestal
COP	Chief-of-Party
CORD	Expanded Dispatch Coordinator
CRWB	Crew Boss
CREP	Crew Representative
DOI	Department of Interior
eCC	Electronic Country Clearance
FFMG	Forest Fire Management Group
FMO	Fire Management Officer
FMWG	Fire Management Working Group
FWS	Fish and Wildlife Service
GACC	Geographic Area Coordination Center
GACG	Geographic Area Coordinating Group
GMAC	Geographic Multi-Agency Coordinating Group
IARR	Interagency Resource Representative
IC	Incident Commander
ICS	Incident Command System
IHC	Interagency Hotshot Crew
IMSR	Incident Management Situation Report
IMT	Incident Management Team
INLO	International Liaison Officer

MAC	Multi-Agency Coordinating Group
NAFC	North American Forestry Commission
NAPM	National Aviation Program Manager
NASF	National Association of State Foresters
NFES	National Fire Equipment System
NFWC	National Fixed Wing Coordinator
NICC	National Interagency Coordination Center
NIFC	National Interagency Fire Center
NIROPS	National Infrared Operations
NISRM	National Interagency Standards for Resource Mobilization
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NPS	National Park Service
NRSC	National Resource Sharing Centre
NWCG	National Wildfire Coordinating Group
NWS	National Weather Service
OAS	Office of Aviation Services
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
POE	Point of Entry
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
RAO	Regional Aviation Officer
RAWS	Remote Automated Weather Station
RFA	Request for Assistance
SOR	System of Record
THSP	Technical Specialist
USA	United States of America
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFA	United States Fire Administration
USFS	United States Forest Service

APPENDIX G

LOGISTICS AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

PURPOSE & SCOPE

This appendix covers the mobilization of U.S. firefighting resources—personnel, vehicles, equipment, and supplies—northbound into Canada under bilateral wildfire agreements. The U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Customs and Border Protection (CBP), and the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC) coordinate this process.

Although the U.S. maintains bilateral agreements with Canada, Mexico, Australia, New Zealand, and Portugal, most cross-border resource movement occurs with Canada. This appendix focuses on that primary corridor.

KEY ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Role / Organization	Responsibility
NMAC Coordinator	Validates Requests for Assistance (RFAs).
USFS Fire & Aviation Management (FAM) — All Hazard & International Fire Support Branch	Coordinates international fire support; oversees mobilization authorization and documentation.
NICC / International Coordinator on Duty	Manages resource ordering, logistics coordination, staging, and cache support.
Customs and Border Protection (CBP)	Facilitates border crossings; coordinates advance notice; processes entry forms.
CIFFC / Canadian Counterparts	Serves as receiving agency; coordinates Canadian acceptance of U.S. resources.
Cache Managers	Inventories equipment and documents serial numbers and manifests before movement.
Contract Carriers	Transports equipment; handles customs brokerage when commercial carriers are engaged.

MOBILIZATION PROCESS — 7 STEPS

Follow these steps in sequence when moving firefighting resources from the United States to Canada.

STEP 1 — AUTHORIZATION & RESOURCE ORDER

Responsible party: NMAC Coordinator / NICC / International Coordinator on Duty (COD)

- Confirm a valid bilateral agreement and a formal request for assistance from the Canadian agency (e.g., CIFFC) before initiating any mobilization.

- Generate a Resource Order, which functions as the bill of lading, including origin and destination, communications information, assigned personnel names, and equipment descriptions and quantities.
- Coordinate with the NICC International COD and cache managers to verify that resources are available and ready.

STEP 2 — PRE-DEPARTURE DOCUMENTATION

Responsible party: NICC / International Coordinator on Duty

Prepare a complete documentation package before departure. CBP requires the following documents at the port of entry:

- Personnel Manifest — full names, passport numbers, and ID details for all traveling firefighters. All personnel must carry valid passports.
- Vehicle & Equipment Inventory — VINs, license plate numbers, and equipment serial numbers. Monetary values are not required.
- Resource Order (from Step 1) required at the port of entry to document the purpose of crossing.
- Document trackable durables and consumables through an ICLIP order or international manifest. Items destroyed during deployment do not require return documentation.
- The International Programs unit provides a liaison to the NISC to explain shipping requirements, including hazmat, weight, height, and marking requirements for the destination country.

STEP 3 — ADVANCE COORDINATION WITH CBP & CANADIAN COUNTERPARTS

Responsible party: USFS All Hazard & International Fire Support

Advance notice is critical. CBP has confirmed that prior coordination allows field offices to prepare and significantly eases border passage. Never arrive at a port of entry without advance notification.

- Notify CBP at least several days before movement. Use direct contacts only—do not use the OFO Field Liaison inbox:
 - Renee Archer-Balzer — CBP Seattle Field Office, Supervisor/Program Manager
 - Bradley L. Denson — CBP Seattle Field Office, Border Security Coordinator
- Provide CBP with the intended port of entry (see Step 4).
- Notify the Canadian receiving agency (e.g., CIFFC) of inbound resources, estimated arrival time, and the designated crossing location.
- Confirm that a designated Canadian contact is in place and ready to receive resources upon arrival.
- CBP can support emergency and weekend crossings—engage early for urgent mobilizations.

STEP 4 — PORT OF ENTRY SELECTION

Responsible party: Cache Managers

Select the appropriate U.S.-Canada port of entry based on resource origin and Canadian destination:

Port of Entry	U.S. Location	Canadian Corridor	Notes
Sweetgrass	Sweetgrass, MT	Calgary, AB	Primary port for Rocky Mountain / western resources.
Pigeon River	Grand Portage, MN	Thunder Bay, ON	Primary port for Midwest resources; prior friction resolved.
I-5 Corridor	Blaine, WA	British Columbia	Western coastal corridor.
Niagara	Niagara, NY	Quebec	Rare use; used in 2023 for eastern Quebec movement.

- Contact the National Cache System to confirm before using non-standard ports.
- Contract carrier routing may also influence port selection—coordinate with carriers in advance.

STEP 5 — STAGING AT U.S. ASSEMBLY AREA

Responsible party: NMAC Coordinator / NICC / International Coordinator on Duty / Chief of Party

Stage all resources at a pre-designated U.S.-side mobilization area before crossing, consistent with past strike team deployments.

- Assemble all personnel, vehicles, and equipment at the staging area.
- Verify all documentation: check the personnel manifest against passports, confirm the vehicle and equipment inventory, and review the resource order.
- Confirm the designated Canadian receiving contact is ready before crossing.
- All resources in the group must cross simultaneously—do not send partial convoys ahead.
- Confirm CBP coordination before departing the staging area.

STEP 6 — BORDER CROSSING

Responsible party: Chief of Party (designated on the resource order)

- Proceed to the designated U.S. port of entry and present all documentation to CBP officers, including the personnel manifest, vehicle and equipment inventory, and resource order.
- Cross into Canada and present the same documentation to Canadian border authorities.
- Contact the Canadian receiving agency representative immediately upon successful crossing.

STEP 7 — RETURN & DEMOBILIZATION

Responsible party: Chief of Party (designated on the resource order)

U.S. resources returning from Canada are treated as U.S. goods returned. Reentry is straightforward provided documentation is in order.

- Retain copies of all outbound documentation for use during reentry.
- Equipment destroyed during deployment does not require return documentation.
- Designate a point of contact (POC) for cache equipment and keep that person available throughout the deployment. Cache equipment typically returns later than personnel; the International Fire Support Program unit provides a liaison to assist with equipment return.
- The designated POC coordinates cache equipment shipping, return, and overall logistics.
- Notify NICC logistics upon successful return and debrief on any border crossing issues encountered.
- Report any friction or port-of-entry issues to the USFS CBP contacts for documentation in the International Mobilization Guide.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION SUMMARY

Document	Required?	Purpose	Notes
Personnel Manifest	Required	Lists all traveling personnel with passport/ID details.	All personnel must carry valid passports.
Vehicle & Equipment Inventory	Required	VINs, plate numbers, equipment serial numbers.	Monetary values are not required.
Resource Order	Required	Functions as bill of lading; documents origin, destination, and personnel.	Generated at order initiation (Step 1).
Customs Brokerage (Carrier)	If applicable	Required when commercial contract carriers are used.	Typically, within the carrier's scope of work.