

**National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group
Operating Plan
2026**

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Overview

The National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC) is comprised of members who have been delegated authority to provide an essential management mechanism for national level strategic interagency coordination to ensure wildfire suppression resources are efficiently and appropriately managed in a cost-effective manner while taking into consideration local, state, and federal agency interests.

Membership

Primary Members (Decision Authority – 4 total):

- National Association of State Foresters (NASF)
- U.S. Forest Service (USFS)
- U.S. Fire Administration (USFA)
- U.S. Wildland Fire Service (USWFS)

NMAC Primary Members Roles/Responsibilities:

- Establish national priorities among GAs.
- Determine national Preparedness Levels (PL).
- Direct, allocate, and distribute fire suppression resources among GAs to meet NMAC priorities.
- Ensure timely national-level incident and fire suppression resource status information.
- Establish and provide oversight of general business practices between NMAC and GA Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC) groups.
- Anticipate and identify future fire suppression resource requirements.
- Coordinate and resolve mobilization conflicts, resource discrepancies, and commitment needs.
- Evaluate and determine activation, coordination, and involvement of military resources.
- Coordinate with international partners and evaluate Requests for Assistance to and from those with which arrangements are held.
- Determine national fire suppression resource availability to mobilize for non-fire incidents supporting the National Response Framework during periods of simultaneous fire and non-fire incidents.
- Annually maintain and approve the National Interagency Standards for Resource Mobilization (NISRM).
- Annually update the NMAC Operations Plan.
- Annually develop a national operational strategy with a focus on efficiency as well as the existing political, social, and environmental conditions. The strategy's supporting documents will be updated as necessary to meet changing conditions.
- Ensure national fire information is coordinated internally and externally by implementing the [NMAC and External Affairs Structure and Duties](#).
- Provide an NMAC member as the media spokesperson assisting NIFC External Affairs for issues of national importance (as requested).
- **Primary NMAC member** provides strategic oversight and serves as an escalation contact (grouped assignments below).
 - Alaska – USWFS
 - California – USWFS
 - Eastern Area – USFS
 - Great Basin – USFA
- Northern Rockies – USFA
- Northwest – NASF
 - Rocky Mountain – USWFS

- Southern Area – NASF
- Southwest – USFS
- Ensure NMAC representation at key events such as military training sessions, international briefings/orientations, and other necessary functions.
- Host VIP briefings
- Charter, coordinate and provide liaison to:
 - Incident Commander Advisory Council (ICAC).
- Manage interagency Incident Management Team assignments as necessary.
- Determine timing and frequency of National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC)/National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) daily briefing.
- Host NMAC/GMAC coordination calls as needed.
- Approve assignment extensions for national resources. This may be delegated to the NICC.
- Primary members provide strategic oversight of Associate Members through grouped assignments (adjustable by consensus).

Associate Members (Non-Voting Geographic Area Advisors – 9 total):

One designated representative from each Geographic Area Coordinating Group:

- Alaska Area
- California Area
- Eastern Area
- Great Basin Area
- Northern Rockies Area
- Northwest Area
- Rocky Mountain Area
- Southern Area
- Southwest Area

Selection criteria: The most engaged individual who can appropriately represent **all** agencies within the GA. Membership should strive for balanced representation across the 9 GAs.

Associate Members Responsibilities:

- Serve as the primary advisors for their respective GAs.
- Provide two-way communication between NMAC and GA responders and partners.
- Escalate concerns, resource needs, and fire activity priorities to NMAC.
- Identify and elevate collective/interagency issues impacting GAs to NMAC, including recommended alternatives and actions.
- Provide real-time input, analysis, and advice on issues brought to them by NMAC and on GA-specific matters.
- Participate in strategic working teams and task groups as requested.
- Maintain official GA-level distribution lists and ensure timely dissemination of NMAC decisions, priorities, directives and correspondence to all agencies/parties within the GA
- Attend NMAC meetings/calls as non-voting advisors.

NMAC Secondary Members:

Each primary member designates a secondary representative (pre-season notification to the NMAC Chair). Secondaries receive all correspondence and invitations and may serve as actings. Each Associate Member may designate one acting per GA as needed.

Mission

National wildland fire, all hazard incident, and international wildland fire operations management, priority setting, and resource allocation through multi-agency coordination.

NMAC National Priority Setting:

The single, overriding priority in all actions is protecting human life – that of firefighters and the public. In setting national priorities and drawdown levels, the following criteria will be considered:

1. Protecting communities and community infrastructure, other property and improvements, and natural and cultural resources.
2. Maintaining initial attack capability.
3. Limiting costs without compromising safety.
4. Meeting agency suppression objectives.
5. Support to National Response Framework (NRF) taskings.
6. International assistance to participating countries for wildfire.
7. Prescribed fire initiatives.

NMAC will communicate priorities to agency, department, and executive level leadership and other stakeholders as needed.

NMAC Resource Allocation:

Resource allocation decisions are based on the following considerations:

1. Wildfire suppression
2. Emergency Support Function (ESF) / National Response Framework
3. Agency Prescribed Fire operations
4. International cooperation
5. Suppression repair

NMAC prioritizes national needs over individual agency or host unit ownership, ensuring that resources are deployed where they can have the greatest impact on protecting communities and natural resources.

NMAC Chair Rotation:

The NMAC Chair rotates on a two-year cycle starting January 1st. Rotation order:

- U.S. Wildland Fire Service (USWFS)
- U.S. Fire Administration (USFA)
- U.S. Forest Service (USFS)
- National Association of State Foresters (NASF)

If an agency cannot fill the Chair, the responsibility rotates to the next agency. The next agency in the rotation will assume the Vice Chair.

NMAC Chair Responsibilities:

- Represent and speak on behalf of NMAC as appropriate.
- Sign NMAC documents.
- Determine the need and schedule for NMAC meetings:
 - At least once daily weekdays during PL 4 and 5.
 - At least once per week during PL 3.
 - At least once monthly during PL 1 at 2.

- Work with NMAC Coordinator and members to develop meeting agendas.
- Facilitate and lead VIP briefings.
- Facilitate the consensus decision-making process within NMAC.
- Provide the primary NMAC representation for briefings, outside meetings, and coordination.
- Manage and monitor NMAC meeting attendance and participation.
- Determine the need for NMAC executive sessions.
- Lead NMAC annual after action review (AAR).
- Sign the annual delegation to the NICC Center Manager and the NICC.

When the Chair agency is represented by a secondary or acting, the Chair's responsibilities rotate to the Vice Chair or the next primary member.

NMAC Vice Chair

The NMAC Vice Chair will be held by the agency next in line to be NMAC Chair. If an agency cannot fill the Vice Chair, the responsibility rotates to the next agency.

NMAC Vice Chair Responsibilities:

- Serve as NMAC Chair in absence of designated NMAC Chair.
- Serve as NMAC Liaison to Incident Commander Advisory Council (ICAC).

NMAC Executive Secretary:

The NMAC Executive Secretary is designated by the NICC Center Manager. The Executive Secretary documents meeting notes and decisions and provides logistical coordination for NMAC, to include distributing meeting invitations, reserving locations for in-person meetings, and facilitating correspondence and records processes for NMAC.

NMAC Coordinator:

The NICC Center Manager or acting normally fills this role. At increased PLs, NMAC evaluates the need for a stand-alone NMAC Coordinator to reduce workload on NICC staff and provide developmental opportunities. When a stand-alone NMAC Coordinator is designated, the Coordinator will work closely with the NICC Center Manager to carry out responsibilities.

NMAC Coordinator Responsibilities:

- Coordinate with the NICC Intelligence staff, national resource specialists, and other subject matter experts (SMEs) to analyze and compile raw national data from multiple sources for presentation to NMAC.
- Facilitate NMAC meetings and calls.
- Assist NMAC in collective and timely decision making for:
 - Resource shortages.
 - Anticipated needs.
 - Allocation recommendations.
- Provide oversight and direction to NMAC Support Group.
- Ensure NMAC decisions are documented, communicated, and implemented.
- Distribute and archive NMAC:
 - Decisions.
 - Direction.
 - Best management practices.
- Arrange for and manage the facilities, equipment, and IT support necessary to carry out NMAC functions. This includes arranging meeting rooms for daily meetings and operational briefings.

NMAC Support Organization:

During high-tempo periods, an NMAC Support Group may be implemented. The complexity of the situation will guide the staffing utilized. The NMAC Support Group may consist of one or more of the following positions which report to the NMAC Coordinator:

- NMAC Operations:
 - Complex Incident Management Team (CIMT) Coordinator
 - Crew Coordinator
 - Smokejumper Coordinator
 - Rappel Coordinator
 - Fixed-Wing Coordinator
 - Rotor-Wing Coordinator
- NMAC Logistics:
 - Cache
 - Radio (Cache and Frequency Management)
- Other appropriate national resource leads/SMEs (international mobilization, incident business, information technology, airspace coordination, safety, etc.)

NMAC Support Organization Responsibilities:

At a minimum, the NMAC Coordinator will ensure there is adequate staffing to:

- Provide situational updates on incidents and resources.
- Provide a national incident overview for NMAC meetings.
- Capture NMAC decisions and implement as directed.
- Prepare the documentation package components for NMAC.

Template delegations, including roles and responsibilities, for some NMAC support functions are in Appendix 3 and should be revised to meet the current situational needs.

Process

NMAC Consensus Decision Process:

A quorum for conducting NMAC business shall be a minimum of three of the NMAC members. Decisions will be based on a consensus of those present or their designated acting. All decisions will be recorded.

The NMAC consensus process focuses on a cooperative dynamic. Only one proposal is considered at a time; NMAC works together to make the best possible decision for the group. Decisions are adopted when all NMAC members consent to the result of the discussion about the original proposal. NMAC members who disagree with a proposal are responsible for expressing their concerns. No decision is adopted until there is a resolution of every matter. When concerns remain after discussion, NMAC members can agree to disagree by acknowledging that they have unresolved concerns but consent to the proposal and allow it to be adopted. Therefore, reaching consensus does not assume that everyone must be in complete agreement.

NMAC Written Correspondence, Distribution, and Documentation:

Official NMAC correspondence will be in the form of Memoranda and Letters. Prior to correspondence distribution, the NMAC Executive Secretary will confirm concurrence from all members with the Chair.

- Member agencies will provide concurrence or amendments within established timeframes.
- Chair will document if member agency is unresponsive.
- See [Appendix 1](#) – NMAC Written Correspondence, Dissemination, and Documentation Procedures.

NMAC Communication:

NMAC communication via the 2026 NMAC Primary text messaging in Group Me may be either informational or decisional. Informational text messages such as accident notifications, significant fire activity, and GA PL changes do not require a reply or a copy by members.

Decisional text messages, such as approval for resource commitments, require a reply from each agency in the affirmative or negative for each instance. One response per agency is necessary. The NICC Manager or Deputies will, within reason, attempt to contact non-responsive agencies during the allocated amount of time of a decision. If there is no positive communication, that response will be deemed as approved to reach consensus.

NMAC Accident Notification:

See [Appendix 2](#) – 2026 NICC Accident/Serious Incident Notification Flow.

NMAC Briefing/Meeting Format/Outline:

The Chair determines frequency and timing for NMAC briefings and meetings, typically in consultation with NMAC members, NMAC Coordinator, and NICC Center Manager. Briefings may be held without conducting a follow-up NMAC meeting.

Regular NMAC general briefings are open for anyone in-person at NIFC. When visiting officials, groups or VIPs are present, seating may be reserved for them and limited in availability to others. General briefings are also open to online viewers.

General Briefing

Items covered during general briefing:

- Fire Situation Briefing (8 – 10 minutes): NICC Manager, acting, or designee
- Fire Weather/Fuels Briefing (8 – 10 minutes): Predictive Services

NMAC Group Meeting – Operations and Information

Immediately following the briefing, the NMAC group may convene and is limited to:

- NMAC primary, secondary, and associate members
- NMAC Executive Secretary
- NMAC Liaisons/SMEs – representatives for each functional area:
 - Aviation – 1 USWFS and 1 FS
 - Predictive Services – 3 (Meteorologist, Fire Analyst, Intel)
 - Military Liaison – 1
 - External Affairs – 1
 - National Interagency Incident Communications Division – 1
- International Liaison – 2
 - Cache Liaison – 1
 - Airspace Liaison – 1
- Safety/Risk Management Liaison – 1
 - Local government (IAFC) liaison – 1
- NMAC Support Organization
- NICC Deputy Manager – 1 USWFS and 1 FS
- Other SMEs may remain at the request of a NMAC primary member, NICC Manager, or NMAC Coordinator

Operations and Information Outline:

NMAC Coordinator and/or NICC Manager provides an overview of national resource shortages and capabilities, critical needs, and overall national assessment. Topics include:

- NMAC round table briefing: every NMAC member is allowed to address agency and GA issues. This should be brief and only cover information significant for the full NMAC group.
- Operations Coordinator
- Logistics Coordinator
- SMEs/Liaisons (as needed)

NMAC Administrative Business

NMAC SMEs and Liaisons are excused unless a specific representative is asked to stay. NMAC primary, secondary, and associate members; NMAC Coordinator; NICC Manager and Deputies; Meteorologist; Fire Analyst; and Executive Secretary remain in the meeting. Topics to be discussed include and are led by:

- Establish GA priorities – NMAC Group
- Establish national PL – NMAC Group
- Allocate resources based on NMAC priorities – NMAC Group
- Other NMAC issues identified, decisions, actions, business – NMAC Chair
- Review and confirm meeting decisions and actions – Executive Secretary
- Implement decisions through NICC Coordinator – NMAC Coordinator
- Address any other issues/Determine need to go into Executive Session – NMAC Chair

NMAC Executive Sessions:

NMAC members may request an executive session through the NMAC Chair. NMAC executive sessions will include the NMAC primary and secondary members, NICC Manager and Deputies, and the NMAC Coordinator. Subject matter experts and invited guests may be included in executive sessions upon request by NMAC members.

Appendix 1 – NMAC Written Correspondence, Dissemination, and Documentation Procedures

- There are two types of NMAC correspondence: Memoranda and Letters.
 - Memoranda contain direction to the field, request action by an NMAC subgroup or other standing group, or communicate essential information to maintain efficient and safe operations or support functions. Memoranda are typically addressed to groups, including NMAC subgroups, GA Coordination Centers, GA Coordinating Groups, or to individual agency leadership, incident responders/wildland fire community, and/or other groups such as the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) and the Fire Management Board (FMB). Memoranda are distributed via e-mail and posted to the NMAC website the same day.
 - Letters are typically addressed to a particular person or entity, and the subject matter is not appropriate or of little interest to the greater fire community. Examples include Requests for Assistance (RFAs) and letters of gratitude to individuals or groups. Letters are distributed via e-mail but generally not posted to the NMAC website.
- Numbering: All NMAC correspondence is numbered by the year (preceded by M denoting memorandum, or L denoting letter), followed by a discreet number in sequence for calendar year.
 - For example, the first memorandum of the year in 2023 is numbered M2023-01. A letter is issued a month later and is numbered L2023-01.
- Subject line: Subject lines should be short but descriptive.
 - For correspondence establishing a task group or issuing a tasking, the subject line will begin with Task Group or Tasking, accordingly, followed by the descriptive effort.
- All NMAC correspondence will utilize a standard template with NMAC letterhead maintained by the NMAC Executive Secretary. All correspondence will utilize 12-point Times New Roman font, will have the signature of the NMAC Chair affixed, and will be released as a 508-accessible PDF.
- All NMAC correspondence will be released via e-mail by the NMAC Executive Secretary using the NMAC Executive Secretary e-mail account and distributed to NMAC membership.
- NMAC correspondence will also be posted in the appropriate section of the NMAC website by the NICC webmaster.
- NMAC membership is responsible for dissemination of written correspondence to their respective agencies (primary members) and/or GAs (associates).
- Drafting, reviewing, and approving NMAC Correspondence:
 - Typically, a member of NMAC (or the NICC staff) will draft the correspondence; every correspondence will have a Point of Contact (POC). NMAC should have a short discussion prior to drafting the correspondence to determine the type of correspondence (letter or memorandum), addressees/recipients and copied recipients (if any), main points of the correspondence, and timeframe for review and finalization.
 - Once drafted, comments/edits will be due to the POC by the date/time agreed upon. Positive response is required from all NMAC members prior to finalization.
 - The final draft is then provided to the NMAC Executive Secretary for formatting, numbering, signature, file type conversion, Section 508 accessibility, and release.
 - Correspondence from NWCG utilized by NMAC will be coordinated as appropriate and follow NWCG guidelines found at the NWCG website.

Each January, NMAC will review the prior year's correspondence and determine the disposition of each letter/memorandum. Guidance contained in memoranda should either be integrated into the *National Interagency Standards for Resource Mobilization*, left in memorandum form in effect for a short duration, or archived. It should then be moved to the appropriate section of the NMAC website: current year correspondence, prior year correspondence still in effect, or archived correspondence.

Appendix 2 – 2026 NICC Accident/Serious Incident Notification Flow

The *Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations* states that accident notifications should occur in the dispatch/coordination system, from the local dispatch center to the GA Coordination Center (GACC) then to the NICC.

Notifications should occur when wildland fire operations report any of the following:

- Fatality
- Serious aviation accident
- Entrapment/shelter deployment
- Equipment loss resulting in total damage or loss
- Serious injuries requiring hospitalization (not out-patient or treated and released)

NOTE: Not all red medical injuries need to be reported; only those meeting the above criteria.

1. Initial call/notification is directed to the Coordinator-on-Duty (COD) from the GACC or reporting party.
2. COD notifies Center Manager (CM) and Deputy Center Managers (DCM). – **Verbal / Group Me**
3. NICC CM/DCM makes preliminary notification to affected agency(s) NMAC Member(s). – **Verbal**
4. CM or DCM notifies the affected GACC's NMAC Liaison. – **Verbal**
 - a. If the affected GACC(s) primary NMAC member is immediately unavailable, contact the secondary NMAC member for that GACC(s).
- CM or DCM will notify primary NMAC Lead. – **Group Me**
- CM or DCM will then notify NMAC via NMAC. – **Group Me**
5. Official Accident Notification is sent out by COD, as directed by CM or DCM, once information is confirmed by affected agency/GACC. – **Email** (accident.notification@firenet.gov)
- Distribution list to include NMAC Primary/Secondary and National Fire Chiefs.

Appendix 3 – Template Delegations for NMAC Support Group Positions

Brief descriptions for each position follow for use when positions are filled:

NMAC Operations – The primary function of NMAC Operations is to work with NICC Center Manager and Deputy Center Managers, NICC CODs, and CIMT, Crew, Smokejumper and Rappel Coordinators to obtain the most current information on resource allocation, resource availability, resource repositioning, resource commitments, resources needs, and GA prioritization. NMAC Operations will regularly communicate with GA MACs and/or GACCs to validate incident activities and needs.

NMAC Operations will make recommendations to the NMAC Group on the allocation or reallocation of critical resources. NMAC Operations will provide these recommendations to the NMAC Coordinator prior to NMAC meetings to expedite processes and information sharing once decisions are made by the NMAC Group.

When activated, coordinators that will support and provide information to NMAC Operations may include CIMT, Crew, Smokejumper, Rappel, Fixed-Wing, and Rotor-Wing Coordinators. NMAC Operations will report directly to the NMAC Coordinator.

NMAC Coordinators' Roles and Responsibilities:

All

- Track availability, commitment, and shortage of corresponding resource.
- Provide corresponding resource allocation, reallocation, and extension recommendations to NMAC through NMAC Operations.
- Provide NMAC with glidepath and anticipated needs 48 – 72 hours out.
- Work with NICC staff to ensure information sharing.

Complex Incident Management Team (CIMT)

- Work daily with GA CIMT Coordinators to obtain the most current information on IMT resource availability, commitments, and needs.
- Act as the primary point of contact for GA CIMT Coordinators and for IMT ordering and management between the GAs and NMAC.
- Review all CIMT requests when NMAC Request for CIMT Assignment Form is required.
- Review all CIMT Extension Requests.

Crews

- Work daily with GA Crew Coordinators to obtain the most current information on Type 1, 2IA and 2 crew availability, commitments, and needs.
- Act as the primary point of contact for GA Crew Coordinators.

Smokejumpers

- Work daily with smokejumper base or GA coordinators to obtain the most current information on smokejumper availability, commitments, and needs.
- Act as the primary point of contact for GA smokejumper coordinators, when activated.

Rappel

- Work daily with agency or GA coordinators to obtain the most current information on rappel crew availability, commitments, and needs.
- Act as the primary point of contact for GA coordinators, when activated.

Fixed-Wing

- Coordinate with the NICC COD, NMAC Operations, and GACCs to evaluate intelligence information and make recommendations to NMAC on the placement and allocation of fixed-wing aviation resources.
- Maintain communication channels between GACC aviation desks, agency aviation managers, and NMAC Aviation.

Rotor-Wing

- Coordinate with the NICC COD, NMAC Operations, and GACCs to evaluate intelligence information and make recommendations to NMAC on the placement and allocation of rotor-wing aviation resources.
- Maintain communication channels between GACC aviation desks, agency aviation managers, and NMAC Aviation.

NMAC Liaisons

NMAC Risk/Safety Liaison – The primary function of the NMAC Safety Liaison is to monitor the overall incident safety situation across the GAs with a focus on risk management and information sharing. NMAC Safety will report directly to the NMAC Coordinator.

The NMAC Safety Liaison will:

- Coordinate with GA MACs and associated safety groups and representatives, including fire safety program managers or risk specialists, to gather information, share national perspectives, and identify support needs.
- Coordinate safety conference calls as appropriate among GA MACs to identify and address safety concerns from the field.
- Maintain daily contact with NMAC Coordinator or delegate and Aviation/Operations Specialists for coordination and situational awareness.
- Understand and communicate interagency risk management principles and policies.
- Participate in NMAC briefings/conference calls to report out on trends and accidents, injuries, fatalities, and issues.
- Upon request, provide briefings/materials to incoming IMTs on safety issues and policies.
- Prompt activation of safety liaison at GACC level when need is recognized.
- Recommends activation of reviews such as Safety Assistance Team (SAT) and Fire Assistance Safety Teams (FAST), Lesson Learned Review (LLR), Rapid Lesson Share (RLS), etc.
 - Provide support to team leaders. Recommend national safety messaging as needed.
- Support international mobilizations of resources.