Chapter 6

BIA Program Organization and Responsibilities

Bureau of Indian Affairs Fire Management Policy

Policy and responsibility for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) WFM program is documented in Part 90 Indian Affairs Manual (IAM), chapters 1-8. This part identifies the authorities, standards, and procedures that have general and continuing applicability to wildland fire activities under the jurisdiction of the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs.

BIA Mission

The Bureau of Indian Affairs Mission is to enhance the quality of life, to promote economic opportunity and to carry out responsibility to protect and improve the trust assets of American Indians, Indian Tribes, and Alaska Natives. Our Mission is to execute our fiduciary trust responsibility by protecting lives, property, and resources while restoring and maintaining healthy ecosystems through cost-effective and creative fire management programs, collaboration, and promoting Indian self-determination.

BIA Fire Operations Website

BIA Fire Operations maintains a website that hosts operational, informational, and policy-related documents. The website also contains information about the following programs: Job Recruitment, BIA Training, Pathways Internship Program, Fuels Management, Aviation Safety and Wildland Fire Prevention. The address to the BIA Fire Management website is https://www.bia.gov/bia/ots/dfwfmg/bwfm.

Agency Administrator’s Roles

The following positions are responsible for WFM activities of the Bureau (including such activities when contracted for, in whole or in part, with other Agencies or Tribes) under the statutes cited in 620 DM 1.1.

Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs

Responsible for the implementation of an effective WFM program:
- Responsible for implementation of policies and recommendations in the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy;
- Ensures compliance and capacity to comply with statutes, regulations, IA policy, and Department of the Interior (DOI) policy applicable to the prevention of human-caused wildfires on Indian Lands;
- Represents Indian Affairs on the Federal Fire Policy Council; and
- Approves national level cooperative wildland fire management agreements with other federal agencies and interagency wildland fire coordinating groups.
Director, Office of Trust Services
- Implements the policies and recommendations in the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review Report;
- Reviews and recommends national wildfire prevention policy for Indian Country;
- Coordinates wildfire prevention activities among and between Office of Trust Services programs;
- Coordinates with Division Directors to ensure consistent implementation of wildfire prevention policies;
- Provides for the coordination of wildland fire management activities with other federal, state, and non-government fire protection agencies; and
- Represents Indian Affairs in Interior Fire Executive Council and Fire Executive council.

Division Chief, Forestry and Wildland Fire Management
- Provides overall direction to the wildland fire management program.

Branch Chief, Wildland Fire Management
Responsible to recommend policies and standards for firefighter safety, training, prevention, suppression and use of wildland fires on Indian Trust lands.
- Integrates wildland fire management into natural resource management;
- Establishes wildland fire management position competencies, standards and minimum qualifications for fire management officers, wildland fire specialists and leaders based on federal interagency standards;
- Implements national fire programs and activities including: current planning model, preparedness, fuels management, community assistance, prevention, emergency wildland fire operations, post fire activities, medical standards, and Interagency Fire Program Management Qualifications (IFPM);
- Reviews and evaluates regional wildland fire management programs;
- Represents or delegates representation for Indian Affairs in the coordination of overall wildland fire management activities at the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) and coordinates Indian Affairs representation on intra- and interagency wildland fire committees, groups and working teams, which include but are not limited to:
  a. National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG)
  b. Fire Management Board
  c. Executive Aviation Committee (EAC)
  d. National Interagency Aviation Council (NIAC)
  e. Interior Fire Executive Council
  f. National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC)
  g. Information Technology Management Advisory Board (ITAB)
- In conjunction with other federal fire directors, establishes priorities for assignment of critical resources during wildland fire emergencies;
- Initiates or participates in boards of review concerning actions taken on selected wildland fires;
• Oversees prevention policy development and evaluates impacts on other wildland fire programs;
• Provides policy and procedural guidance to Regional Directors to achieve wildland fire prevention and education objectives;
• Negotiates cooperative agreements and/or modification of existing national level agreements to improve wildland fire management activities on Indian trust and restricted lands;
• Develops policies and standards for firefighter safety, equipment and training for the prevention, investigation, suppression and use of wildland fires on Indian trust and restricted lands;
• Reviews funding requests for fuels management, prevention, community assistance, facility construction, subsidiary and rehabilitation requests; makes determinations on funding levels and recommends approval to the Director, Office of Trust Services, based on guiding principles in the Federal Fire Policy, National Fire Plan (NFP), supporting documents and Secretarial directives;
• Approves and makes determination of funding levels for severity and post fire activity requests; and
• Oversees the national casual and vendor payment programs for emergency incident payments.

Regional Directors

Responsible for ensuring activities and/or plans reflect a commitment to safety and a state of readiness commensurate with values at risk to minimize wildland fire loss.
• Oversees allocation model implementation, preparedness, fuels management, community assistance, prevention, emergency wildland fire operations, post fire activities, medical standards, and IFPM standards;
• Develops regional level cooperative fire protection agreements;
• Ensures that wildfire prevention needs are met;
• Ensures that activities and/or plans reflect a commitment to firefighter and public safety and the reduction of property loss;
• Integrates wildland fire prevention program evaluations into fire readiness reviews conducted at Tribal and agency locations;
• Submits funding requests to Director of Operations, Branch of Fire Management for severity, fuels management, prevention, community assistance, facility construction, subsidiary and post fire activities;
• Ensures prevention needs are included in national long-term severity requests;
• Directs regional movement of fire management personnel and equipment to meet emergency needs;
• Oversees wildland fire prevention management programs within the region;
• Develops regional directives for standards and additional procedural policy, as needed, for wildland fire prevention planning, operational implementation, evaluation and fiscal accountability;
• Determines when a critical fire situation has exceeded agency capability and ensures that qualified personnel take immediate charge of fire suppression activities; requests assistance when the wildfire situation exceeds the capability of the region's resources;
• Certifies funding authorizations submitted by agency offices for estimated costs exceeding $5,000,000, and approves all decisions in WFDSS for fires exceeding $5 million dollars;
• Approves decisions over $10 million dollars as delegated by the Bureau Director. Notifies the Bureau Director when individual fires are anticipated to exceed $10 million dollars in cost;
• Assigns boards of review on selected individual wildland fires which presented unusual problems or situations;
• Provides direction for cooperative agreements, self-determination contracts, and self-governance compacts with Tribes for wildland fire management programs as needed;
• Coordinates and implements regional fire preparedness planning activities;
• Approves and certifies that agency and Tribal WFPP’s meet or exceed the IA policy requirements for wildfire prevention;
• Represents Indian landowners interests and Indian Affairs on Geographic Area Coordination Groups and on Multi-Agency Coordinating (MAC) groups;
• Coordinates with the Office of Justice Services (OJS) Special Agent in Charge when criminal activity associated with wildfires occurs on Indian Lands; and
• Develops region-wide wildfire investigation policies and procedures.

Agency Superintendent (unless excepted in regional directives)
Ensures that every wildland firefighter, fireline supervisor and fire manager takes positive action to obtain compliance with established standards and safe firefighting practices.
• Protects Indian trust and restricted lands from wildfire by taking appropriate action as specified in the approved fire management plan to meet Indian landowner objectives or in the absence of an approved plan, takes immediate suppression action, consistent with other standards;
• Ensures agency fire management personnel develop and maintain fire management job qualifications and meet physical fitness standards in accordance with policy and assign personnel to fire suppression, prescribed fire, wildland fire use activities according to qualifications and demonstrated ability;
• Manages personnel to ensure that prevention goals and objectives are being achieved;
• Develops, updates, and maintains the local fire preparedness planning activities, wildland fire prevention plan, annual mobilization plans, and ensures initial attack capability and management personnel availability to provide for an adequate level of protection from wildfire;
• Develops, updates and maintains agency Fire Management Plans;
• Negotiates cooperative agreements with adjacent protection organizations as needed;
• Negotiates reimbursable agreements with Tribal, local, state, and other federal agencies for wildland fire management activities as needed;
• Recommends a board of review be established to review actions taken on selected individual fires;
• Ensures that all escaped prescribed fire or any prescribed fire that results in resource or property damage are reviewed or investigated;
• Requests assistance through appropriate interagency channels when the fire situation exceeds the capabilities of the agency’s resources;
• Initiates investigation of trespass from wildfires to determine cause and origin and if fire trespass has occurred;
• Ensures established wildfire investigation procedures and guidance are followed;
• Coordinates with appropriate law enforcement agency when wildfire crimes are suspected and/or detected;
• Enters and maintains employee fire qualifications in the Incident Qualification Certification System (IQCS) and enters and maintains fire occurrence in the Bureau fire reporting system;
• Coordinate the development of Published Decisions within WFDSS for all fires identified as requiring a decision and consistent with authority identified in Chapter 11;
• Has responsibility for the adhering to the Administratively Determined (AD) Pay Plan for Emergency Workers (Casuals) hiring authority in accordance with the pay plan policy; and
• Using prevention funding to implement the wildfire prevention actions in the agency or Tribal WFPP, ensuring that carryover is held to below the one-half of one percent.

Tribal Contracts/Compacts

The Tribes have three options to manage fire protection services. Tribes may use direct services, self-determination contracts or self-governance compacts to manage either a portion, or all of a Bureau program.

Public Law 93-638 [The Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975, as amended; Title I and V]: provides maximum Indian participation in the governance and education of the Indian people; to provide for the full participation of Indian Tribes in programs and services conducted by the Federal Government for Indians and to encourage the development of human resources of the Indian people; to establish a program of assistance to upgrade Indian education; to support the right of Indian citizens to control their own educational activities; and for other purposes.
Fire Management Administration

These guidelines are intended to be used by the Bureau and Indian Tribes when negotiating annual funding agreements, whether P.L. 93-638 contracts (Title I) or Self-Governance Compacts (Title V).

Guiding Principles

• Indian Tribal fire management programs are held to the same standards as Bureau fire management programs. Both Bureau and Indian Tribal programs will strive to achieve excellence.

• Indian Tribal and Bureau WFM programs receive equal consideration for available budget and resources.

• The Bureau is committed to working with Indian Tribes to ensure the success of their WFM programs.

• Indian Tribes who desire to compact or contract national, regional or agency fire program functions or services provided by the Bureau, to benefit more than one Indian Tribe, must have a plan to provide comparable functionality or services and agreement of other affected Indian Tribes.

Inherently Federal Activities

• Hiring, termination and paying federal employees including Administratively Determined (AD) Emergency Workers (Casuals).

• The AD hiring authority is an inherently federal activity and requires Federal Government supervision. The AD hiring authority is granted through the DOI to the BIA, and cannot be delegated to a Tribally contracted or compacted program. However, Tribal programs can gather documentation to assist in meeting the requirements of the AD Pay Plan for Casuals and specific national guidance.

• Approval, consolidation and submission of budget requests.

• Obligating federal funds.

• Approval of resource management or land use plans, fire management plans (FMPs), NEPA documents, wildland fire decision support system (WFDSS) documents, post wildland fire activity (ES/BAER) plans, and Delegations of Authority to incident management and post fire activity teams. The Bureau must approve the documents in the preceding sentence to fulfill its trust responsibility in resource protection.

Program Operational Standards

• Unless waivers to the following standards are explicitly approved and identified in Tribal annual funding agreements, the following standards will apply to Tribal fire management programs (Personnel Qualifications (90 IAM Chapter 3, 3.1, C.) (1) and (2)):

  ○ Adherence to the NWCG Standards for Wildland Fire Position Qualifications PMS 310-1 is mandatory for all firefighters fighting wildfires on and off their respective jurisdictions.

  ○ Adherence to the IFPM Guide standards are mandatory for fire program management officers, fire specialists and fire project leaders.
○ Self-governance compact standards for qualification, physical fitness and safety will be those established by the parties to the agreement, but will not be less than NWCG and IFPM standards when mobilized off their Tribal lands.

○ Tribal fire management officers are responsible for certifying Tribal program employee qualifications and maintaining records of their employee qualifications. All BIA/Tribal units with fire management programs are required to use the Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS) to track all federal emergency responders.

○ Wildfires that burn Indian trust lands under a Tribe’s protection must be reported and certified in InFORM promptly after being declared out. Obligating government funds is an inherently federal function and fire reports are an essential element in accounting for the obligation of federal funds.

○ Placing resource orders for incident management teams (IMT) to manage extended, large fire operations or for post wildland fire activity teams requires the involvement of the Bureau. All actions require that the Bureau approve delegations of authority to teams.

**Program Planning**

Strategic planning for BIA field-level units relies primarily on two required documents, Fire Management Plans (including Spatial Fire Management Plans) and Fire Danger Operating Plans, per the interagency guidance in Chapters 9 and 10 respectively. Such plans rely on historical weather and fire occurrence data to depict the range of conditions in burning environment, define the fire season, and quantify the unit’s workload.

**Fire Occurrence Data and Reporting**

Consistent with the *Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy* (February 13, 2009), the Bureau recognizes two types of wildland fires when collecting and recording fire occurrence data. Those two types are: planned ignitions (i.e., prescribed fires) and unplanned ignitions (i.e., including escaped prescribed fires).

Specific guidance regarding prescribed fire data and reporting is provided in the *BIA Fuels Management Program Planning and Implementation Guide*. Starting in calendar year 2020, all wildfires that burn on Indian trust lands must be documented with a single, certified Individual Final Fire Report in the Interagency Fire Occurrence Reporting Modules (InFORM) application, which replaced the Wildland Fire Management Information (WFMI) fire reporting application. For large or otherwise significant wildfires involving Indian trust lands, approved Incident Status Summary (ICS-209) reports, including a designated final report, must also be submitted per the requirements and guidance in Chapter 11.
Records Management for Fire Reports

Individual Final Fire Reports and final ICS-209 reports are official records for wildfires that burn on Indian trust lands. Accordingly, the BIA administrative unit overseeing the affected land is responsible for adhering to Indian Affairs Records Management Manual (https://www.doi.gov/ost/indian-affairs-records-management-manual) and the local File Maintenance and Disposition Plan concerning management and archiving these records.

Additional guidance regarding wildland fire incident records can be found on the NWCG Incident Records Management website at https://www.nwgc.gov/committees/incident-planning-subcommittee.

Fire Weather/RAWS

The fire weather program is managed and coordinated by the WFM Fuels Management Section, which has one staff member designated as the BIA National RAWS Coordinator (405-206-1854). This program provides funding and technical support for the maintenance/emergency repairs of station sensors and the accuracy of station data for the wildland fire program.

All field-level units will identify at least one permanent, NFDRS fire weather station for fire planning purposes. A listing of these designated weather stations is maintained by the WFM Fuels Management staff and is updated annually.

Each Region must identify a Regional Point of Contact (RPOC), and each Agency/Tribe must identify a Local Point of Contact (LPOC) for fire weather and weather stations. These contacts must be updated immediately upon reassignment to a new POC and provided to the BIA National RAWS Coordinator.

Bureau and Tribal NFDRS Weather Stations

The BIA Central Office, Branch of Wildland Fire Management (BOWFM) maintains a national contract with Forest Technology Systems, Ltd., (FTS) to provide annual maintenance, factory exchange service, and emergency repair to 81 permanent NFDRS weather stations. When noncompliant or malfunctioning RAWS are identified or suspected, fire managers should implement the following hazard mitigation actions to expedite RAWS repair and to reduce risk to fire personnel: Contact a Technical Support Specialist at FTS and the BIA National RAWS Coordinator to resolve the noncompliance or emergency repair issue.

Non-NFDRS Weather Stations

In the Bureau’s managed inventory, there are 19 non-NFDRS weather stations, which are mostly portables and are mainly used for large wildfires and prescribed fires. These stations are also covered under the BIA’s national contract with Forest Technology Systems, Ltd., (FTS) to provide annual maintenance, factory exchange service and emergency repair.

• Non-NFDRS stations do not have to have a NWS station number or a station catalog in WIMS, but units may establish them as needed.
• Non-NFDRS weather stations, such as portable or research stations that support fire operations are required to receive annual calibration and certification. The equipment will meet the requirements of the Annual Rehabilitation Maintenance Section of the NWCG Standards for Fire Weather Stations (PMS 426-3) publication.

The maintenance will be documented in the WFMI Weather module.

Weather Station Naming Conventions
To ensure the continuity with historic records, the names of existing stations should not be changed without a good justification. Proposed name changes must have the concurrence of the BIA national fire weather program manager.
• New weather stations should be named after the nearest local geographic feature.
• Portable RAWS stations will use the following naming conventions: The Unit ID and the word “Port” followed by a sequential number. For example, the portable RAWS at Crow Agency is named MTCRA_Port1, where “MTCRA” represents Crow Agency in Montana and “Port1” represents a unique number to identify the station. If another portable RAWS was deployed at Crow Agency, the name of that station would then be MTCRA_Port2. Portable stations should not be renamed when relocated on the unit or temporarily assigned to another unit.
• For weather data collection and archiving standards for NFDRS, refer to the NWCG Standards for Fire Weather Stations (PMS 426-3) publication and the WIMS Web Application User Guide.

When any station (i.e., including portable stations) is desired to be moved to a different location, specific processes identified in the NWCG Standards for Fire Weather Stations (PMS 426-3) must be adhered to. The LPOC must first notify the BIA National RAWS Coordinator before notifying the BLM RAWS Depot Help Desk (208-387-5475) to make notification that the station is to be shutdown. Following the relocation, the LPOC must again first notify the BIA National RAWS Coordinator before informing the RAWS Depot Help Desk with the new location information and the time of reactivation.

Station Identifiers
When a station identifier is needed, contact the contact the BIA National RAWS Coordinator (405-206-1854), who will coordinate the request with the appropriate entities, including the GACC Predictive Services staff.

Weather Module in Wildland Fire Management Information (WFMI)
Weather Module Access
• The WFMI Weather Module provides access to the weather data that is transmitted from the more than 2,500 Remote Automatic Weather Stations (RAWS) located throughout the U.S.
• Individuals who desire access to the WFMI Weather Module must complete and submit only sections I and II of the “Weather Module – User Access Request” form to the BIA National RAWS Coordinator. Due to the terms of
the BIA’s national RAWS contract, individuals may only request “view-
only” access to the weather module. Edit access is restricted to prevent
possible contractual issues.

Program Preparedness

The wildland fire management program should reference the following
agreements, contracts, and operating plans as identified in the Program Planning
section above.

Preseason Agreements, Contracts and Operating Plans

The authority to enter into Interagency Agreements, Cooperative Agreements,
Memorandum of Understanding, Mutual-Aid Agreements and Contracts is cited
in Departmental Manual, Part 620 and respective statues; Indian Affairs
Manual (IAM) 90; the Reciprocal Fire Protection Act 42 U.S.C. 1856; and is
referenced in the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program
Review. See Chapter 8 for additional guidance.

Tribal Disaster Assistance

On January 29, 2013, the president signed the Sandy Recovery Improvement
Act of 2013, which amended the Stafford Act. The Act included a provision to
provide federally-recognized Indian Tribal governments the option to request a
Presidential emergency or major disaster declaration independent of a state.
Tribal governments may still choose to seek assistance under a state declaration
request.

FEMA established Tribal liaisons in each FEMA region to assist Tribes with
emergency assistance as it relates to providing disaster assistance. Contacts
within each Region are identified at

More information about Tribal Declaration and Disaster Assistance resources, is
on the FEMA Tribal Affairs web page at
https://www.fema.gov/about/organization/tribes.

Tribal Support for Emergency Support Function (ESF)

BIA is an Emergency Support Function (ESF) support agency under the USDA-
FS and USFA ESF #4 and #5 Annexes. Tribes may provide support through this
mechanism; however, they must follow their designated reimbursement process
to participate under an ESF.

National Program Preparedness/Readiness Reviews

Branch of Wildland Fire Management will conduct regularly scheduled fire
preparedness review of regional offices. Each review will include fiscal and
budget reviews of standard operating procedures (SOP) and administrative
activities. A schedule will be developed by BIA-NIFC, with input from the
Regions, to coordinate review scheduling. At least one review every five (5)
years will be conducted at each region, though more frequent reviews would be
preferable. BIA-NIFC’s implementation intentions are to administer one
preparedness review and one fiscal accountability review in two separate regions every year. Additionally, local unit pre-season fire preparedness/readiness reviews will be conducted.


**FireCode Business Rules**

The BIA developed business rules and procedures to implement the FireCode System. The FireCode System User Guide and Business Procedures can be accessed through the BIA-NIFC office.

Wildfires on BIA Trust land (BIA/Tribal unit is the host unit) will have an assigned FireCode.

- BIA/Tribe host unit dispatcher will access the FireCode website and enter the incident information and generate a FireCode for every wildfire. This FireCode will be used for all financial obligations charged to an incident and by all resources assigned to an incident. The FireCode will be a required entry on the fire report.
- The FireCode will be used by the BIA when entering an obligation to FBMS. Contract/Compact Tribes will use this code to identify all costs associated with an incident.
- Compact/Contract Tribes will use the FireCode to identify costs for wildfires when reporting to the BIA Regional office.
- BIA-NIFC will generate one false alarm FireCode for each region, which will be used for each false alarm fire report.

Wildfires on BIA Trust lands when BIA/Tribal resources are ordered from another BIA/Tribal unit(s).

- All BIA/Tribal resources responding will use the hosting BIA/Tribal unit’s FireCode to charge all financial obligations related to that wildfire.
- Compact/Contract Tribes will use the FireCode to identify their respective costs for assistance to other BIA/Tribal units when reporting to the Regional office.

Wildfires on other federal lands when the BIA/Tribe is ordered (another federal agency is the host unit).

- All BIA/Tribal resources responding to other federal agency fires will use a FireCode created by the host federal agency.
- Compact/Contract Tribes will use the FireCode to identify their respective costs for assistance to other federal agencies when reporting to the Regional office.

Wildfires on state lands when the BIA/Tribe is ordered (state agency is the host unit).
• All BIA/Tribal resources responding to state agency wildfires will create a FireCode for each fire if a FireCode has not already been created by another federal agency. If a FireCode has been created, the BIA/Tribal unit(s) will use that FireCode as the charge code (project code) for all financial obligations related to that wildfire.

• BIA/Tribal units will create a support action fire report in WFMI when responding to another unit’s wildfire.

• Compact/Contract Tribes will use the FireCode to identify their respective costs for assistance to state agencies when reporting to the Regional office.

Short-term Severity actions where additional local resources are employed under operations to supplement readiness capability as a direct result of short duration high fire danger on BIA Trust lands.

• BWFM will generate one short-term severity FireCode for each region.

• Each region will use the short-term severity FireCode to cover local short-term severity needs relating to employing additional personnel.

• Request to use the short-term severity FireCode must be made to the Regional FMO, or their acting, and approval given before the FireCode is to be used.

Long-term Severity FireCodes will be used by BIA resources to identify all costs related to approve BIA wildfire severity actions.

• All severity requests will be submitted to the BWFM for approval. Upon approval, the BWFM will generate a FireCode and notify the Region of the FireCode and authorized funding level.

• The FireCode will be used to charge all authorized financial obligations for readiness under the severity request.

• If a BIA Agency/Tribe responds to another BIA Agency/Tribe’s severity request, the responding BIA Agency/Tribe will use the hosting Agency/Tribal unit’s FireCode to charge all financial obligations.

• Compact/Contract Tribes will use the FireCode to identify their respective severity costs when reporting to the Regional office.

Casual Training – A FireCode established by the BWFM will be used by all BIA units to charge obligations related to Administratively Determined (AD) or casual workers during training. BIA units must use a FireCode with their organizational code to charge obligations for casual field exercises.

Wildland Fire Severity Support to Other Agencies – To account for resource usage and costs incurred when BIA provides severity support to other agencies, the BWFM will generate a separate FireCode for each agency (USFS, BLM, FWS, NPS, and State/Local). In lieu of using the requesting Agency’s own FireCode (if any), the BIA-issued FireCode will be used by BIA units to charge all authorized financial obligations for readiness related to their support of another agency’s severity actions.
Wildland Fire Management Funding

Preparedness Activity
This activity consists of all the actions needed to prepare for the response to wildland fire ignitions. Preparedness funds provide support to the overall management and planning of the Bureau’s and Indian Tribal fire management programs. Preparedness includes, but is not limited to, readiness and capability to provide safe, cost-effective fire management programs in support of land and resource management plans. This activity includes the hiring and training of fire personnel, purchasing/contracting of equipment and supplies, support, planning and coordination, policy development, oversight, and research. Interagency coordination and direction includes establishment and funding of interagency agreements and interagency fair share contributions.
- Indian Tribes are eligible for indirect costs from the wildland fire appropriation for preparedness.
- Wildland Fire Management funding and indirect costs may be included in the Indian Tribal annual funding agreements (AFAs). For compact wildland fire preparedness, wildland fire prevention and interagency hotshot programs, funding shall be transferred to the Office of Self-Governance (OSG) by the BWFM Budget.
- One-time funding or one-time project funding will be applied for annually and distributed to the region for distribution to agencies/Tribes. Funding shall be transferred to the OSG by the BWFM. These are project-based one-time transfers of funds. Indirect costs on non-recurring or one-time wildland fire preparedness funds are not authorized. Indian Tribal and Bureau programs will be given equal consideration for non-recurring preparedness funding and will be coordinated at the Regional Office level.

Suppression Activity
This activity provides for the development and implementation of three operation components: Suppression, Post Wildland Fire Activities and Severity.
- Funding is obtained by Indian Tribes through agreements established by Bureau regional offices or other federal agencies to reimburse Indian Tribes for fire costs on a fire-by-fire basis (per FireCode). Indirect costs for fire suppression are not authorized.
- Severity (short- and long-term) authority and funding for activities necessary to augment initial attack capability when abnormal fire conditions occur throughout a region resulting in the fire season starting earlier than normal, or exceeding average high fire danger ratings for periods. Funding is obtained by Tribes through agreements established by Bureau regional offices or other federal agencies to reimburse Indian Tribes for severity costs incurred under an approved fire severity cost request. Indirect costs for severity funds are not authorized.
- Post Wildland Fire Activities includes all post fire burned area activities covered by approved plans. Funding is obtained by Indian Tribes through agreements established by the Bureau regional offices or other federal...
agencies to reimburse Indian Tribes for costs on a project by project basis
(per FireCode). Indirect costs for emergency stabilization projects are not
authorized, however reasonable administrative and overhead costs incurred
by Indian Tribes in such projects may be authorized within stabilization
plans and should be built into the project and treated as a direct cost.

Interagency Severity Funding Request Procedures

Qualification of Need

To adequately quantify the need for severity funding, at least one of the criteria
listed below should demonstrate that abnormal conditions exist. Severity funds
and project approval will be identified by a severity FireCode generated by BIA-
NIFC. Requests for special projects must be evaluated and approved by the
respective Regional Office and forwarded to BIA-NIFC for approval and
execution. All costs associated with a severity request must include the severity
FireCode when procuring and/or encoding to the Financial Business and
Management System (FBMS).

- Fire danger models or analysis software (FireFamily Plus) graphically
  contrasts the current seasonal trend for ERC and/or BI, with all-time worst
  and historical average ERC and/or BI, based on an analysis of year-round
data.
- Palmer Index or standardized precipitation indices that specify the departure
  from normal.
- Fuel Loading Quantitative information comparing current to the average.
- Current local fuel moisture compared to average trend and all-time worst
  provided by Normalized Differences Vegetative Index (NDVI) and/or Live
  Fuel Moisture Project reports. Note: Data from NDVI and Live Fuel
  Moisture Project may be a week old or older.
- NWS 30-day weather outlook.
- Weather station NFDRS number and name.

Narrative Statement

Provide a brief statement of the interagency situation (local and geographic).
Each agency should request funds only for their respective needs, not for needs
of another agency. Sharing resources when all parties have needs is desirable.

When requesting prevention or investigation resources, the following
information must be included:

- Human-Caused Fire Activity; number of human-caused fires to date as
  compared to previous years, include fire cause category;
- Description of how the team will be utilized; shared resource covering
  multiple areas, etc.;
- Any significant upcoming events or activities; and
- Justification for additional funds for prevention materials or supplies.

Severity requests for prevention/investigation resources are to be reviewed by
the Regional WUI/Prevention Specialist.
Requested Resources
Requested resources should be identified by type, quantity, and cost using the severity cost estimation worksheet. Utilize the Prevention tab for requesting prevention/investigation resources.

Budget Management
This section governs use of the Bureau’s Wildland Fire Management (WFM) appropriation account structure, procedures, cost accounting and one-time funding procedures. Personnel at all levels within the Bureau need to be aware of the responsibilities and limitations on the use of these funds, which this chapter and other financial and budget handbooks address.

Program Budget Annual Appropriations
Annual appropriations are made available for the WFM, pursuant to the passage of the annual appropriation act for the DOI and related agencies. The WFM appropriation is a no-year appropriation.

Funded Program Procedures
WFM funds, excluding emergency suppression funding (unless under a Continuing Resolution), will be distributed to the BWFM Budget Management office, which distributes funds to WFM Regional Office programs. The exception to the allocation is compacted programs which will be disbursed directly from WFM-NIFC to OSG. Instructions documented on a financial allocation forms (e.g., Funding Entry Document or FED) detail how distributions are to be made from regions to Agencies/Tribes for preparedness programs.

One-Time Funding/Critical Needs
The one-time Funding program provides mechanisms to request funding for special projects or needs that exceed an agency’s regular budgeted funds. Funds used in this program are non-recurring in nature, and are based on either available prior year un-obligated balances, or unused Indirect costs. WFM will issue a memo annually during the second quarter with a standard form that will identify timelines for current year. The Individual plans are required to be submitted to Regional offices for review, changes or rejection. Once approved at the regional level, the requests will be forwarded to WFM. Critical needs projects are high priority or an activity ready for implementation, and require immediate funding at the start of the FY, before appropriations bills are signed. Critical needs should only cover three (3) months of project needs, but will continue under Continuing Resolutions (CR) until an appropriations bill is passed.

One-time funding for Preparedness (signed by appropriate Regional Director) will be submitted to WFM Budget Officer no later than May 15th for the upcoming Fiscal Year for current year needs. Requests received after deadlines will be given lower priority. WFM-NIFC will evaluate all requests based on the region’s prioritization and the availability of funds.
Procedures for One-Time Funding Submission
One-time funding requests must be submitted using the following process:
• Requests are submitted to the Regional Office for approval. The process verifies the request meets the intent and fire policy of Interior appropriation act language.
• The Regional Office then submits prioritized funding requests to the Branch of Wildland Fire Management Budget office.
• WBS to be assigned by WFM-NIFC Budget or the DC Central Office.

BIA National Fire Fleet Program Wildland Fire Model 52 Engine Program
The Model 52 Wildland Engine program was created by the BIA in 1996. The objective of the program is to provide a centralized process for replacement parts and training of Model 52 pumping systems. Detailed information on the program can be found in the BIA National Model 52 Wildland Engine Program Operations Guide.

Mission/Policy
• Provide a standardized Model 52 engine for the participating Agency or Tribal organization.
• Provide an opportunity to supply trucks for Model 52 pumping systems.
• Provide repair services for Fire Management Planning Analysis (FMPA) approved number of engines.
• Provide training in the use and maintenance of the Model 52 pumping systems.
• Evaluate new equipment and Model 52 improvements to meet the wildland fire program needs.
• Provide emergency repair or replacement for Model 52 pumping systems.
• No aftermarket parts of any kind are to be place on any Model 52 equipment without prior approval from the Deputy, Fire Operations and concurrence from the Program Center Managers.

Vehicle Maintenance, Replacement and Repairs
Daily preventative maintenance checks, regular servicing, and prompt repairs, and lifecycle replacement are critical to providing mission readiness, performance, and safe operation.

Annual Safety Inspections, Scheduled Maintenance, and Daily Inspections
It is required to complete and document annual safety inspections, regularly scheduled preventative maintenance and daily (or pre-trip) inspections for all BIA wildland fire vehicles. Annual safety inspections must be documented on Form 1520-35 or designated local form. Regularly scheduled preventative maintenance, unscheduled maintenance and repairs for interior owned (I-plate) vehicles are recorded in FBMS. Daily inspections must be kept with the vehicle records for the life of that vehicle.
The cost of all vehicle repairs and maintenance is the responsibility of the individual region, agency or Tribe unless the damage is directly attributable to operations on a wildfire. In that case, with approval from the IC, the damages may be paid for under the fire’s suppression account.

Wildland fire vehicles that are not operationally sound or have safety deficiencies must not be put into service. In addition, vehicles that suffer from mechanical or safety issues while en route or on assignment must be taken out of service at the earliest opportunity in which it is safe to do so and must not be put back into service until corrective action can be completed.

Replacement Guidelines

BIA Model 52 GSA Standards updated replacement schedule is set as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Life Span</th>
<th>Miles</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model 52 Type 6</td>
<td>8 Years</td>
<td>100,000 Miles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Model 52 Type 4</td>
<td>10 Years</td>
<td>250,000 Miles</td>
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Organization

The program is organized into three geographical areas:

- Missoula, MT services the Northwest, Rocky Mountain and north half of the Pacific Region.
- Eagle Butte, SD services the Great Plains, Midwest, and Eastern Regions.
- Dulce, NM services the Southwest, Western, Navajo, Eastern Oklahoma, Southern Plains, and south half of the Pacific Region.

Emergency Repairs

Emergency fire related repairs to a BIA Model 52 pumping package will be requested through the assigned user area Model 52 Center. The request will be reviewed and approved by the Center Manager before a Service Truck is dispatched or replacement parts are sent to the requesting agency.

Non-Emergency/Non-Suppression Repairs

Non-emergency repairs shall be charged to the identified agency account. The account will be approved by an agency official (e.g., FMO, Forest Manager, Superintendent) before requested action is taken. Authorization of account will be sent by email or signed fax identifying account, name and title of authorizing official. Initial request for all non-emergency repairs will be requested through the assigned user area Model 52 Center. The request will be reviewed and approved by the Center Manager before a Service Truck is dispatched or replacement part is mailed to the requesting agency.

All Emergency and Non-Emergency repair expenditures shall be charged to an appropriate account.

Administration

The program is administered through the BWFM Fire Operations Section. A Model 52 Oversight Group has been established to plan, develop and budget for the annual operations of the program. The Group is comprised of the Model 52 Program Leads at each center and the Deputy, Fire Operations. Trucks and
fabrication orders for the Model 52 are procured nationally through the BIA-NIFC office.

**Fire Facility Construction and Maintenance Activity**

This activity provides for the maintenance and construction of fire facilities for line item funded in the DOI wildland fire appropriation only. All projects are approved through a consolidated DOI process and entered into the Departments five year plan. The five-year plan is a fiscal year based plan and is part of the overall budget process. The plan requires annual updating so that the budget request continues to reflect a five-year picture of the actual need. As a result, the schedule of activities is based on the fiscal year, not the calendar year. The annual update presents the opportunity for the fire bureaus’ to adjust project priorities based on newly identified needs or previously identified needs that have become more critical during the past year. Projects in the out-years may also be removed become more critical during the past year. Projects in the out-year may also be removed because they were addressed through other means.

The Bureau’s five-year plan submissions are completed at least a year before Congress enacts the annual appropriation.

Consists of the following:

- Projects for construction of fire facilities must be included in the five-year DOI Facilities Construction Plan and identified as part of the Wildland Fire Annual Budget Appropriation.
- Funding is obtained by Indian Tribes through Bureau regional offices via cooperative agreements, contracts or through agreements with other federal agencies to reimburse Indian Tribes for fire facilities construction costs on a project-by-project basis.
- Indirect costs for fire facilities and deferred maintenance construction projects are not authorized. Administrative fees are authorized when requests have them built into the total cost of the construction project as a direct cost.

**National Aviation Program**

The BIA Wildland Fire and Aviation Management program recommends Bureau policy, procedures, and standards; and maintains functional oversight and interagency coordination for all aviation activities. The BIA-BWFM established two Inter-Regional Aviation Management Offices to provide technical aviation expertise support for Regional, Agency, and field offices. Each of these offices supports Bureau Regions across geographic boundaries. Each of the Inter-Regional offices is staffed by an IRAM and an AOS, both of which are available to provide support for any Region.

**Aviation Program Goals**

The primary goals of each of these positions are to promote aviation safety and cost-effectiveness. The Branch of Wildland Fire Management Director, Aviation and Safety supports Bureau aviation activities and missions, which includes fire
suppression, through strategic program guidance, managing aviation programs of national scope, coordination with Office of Aviation Services (OAS) and interagency partners.

The Director, Aviation and Safety has the responsibility and authority, after consultation with Regional FMOs, for funding and acquisition of all fire aircraft, prioritizing the allocation of BIA aircraft on a Bureau wide basis, and approving Regional Office requests to acquire supplemental aircraft resources.

Refer to Indian Affairs Manual; Part 57 for information on BIA aviation policy and procedures. Refer to 112 DM 12 for a list of responsibilities.

**Regional Office Level**

Regional FMOs are responsible for providing oversight for aircraft hosted in their region and have the authority and responsibility to approve, with the WFM Branch Chief concurrence, acquisition of supplemental aircraft resources within their region.

- Regional FMOs have the authority to prioritize the allocation, pre-positioning and movement of all aircraft assigned to the BIA within their region.
- Regional Offices will coordinate with the National Office on movement of their aircraft outside of their region.

Regional Aviation Managers (RAM) are associated with every BIA Region. They implement aviation program objectives and directives to support the BIA mission and each Region’s goals. Some Regions may have additional support staff assigned to support aircraft operations and to provide technical expertise. A Regional Aviation Management Plan is required to outline goals of the Region’s aviation program and to identify policy and procedures specific to that Region.

Important Note: A Region is not generally authorized to supplement this policy with more restrictive policy or procedures than the national policy, unless the policy or procedure is approved by the Director, Aviation and Safety.

**Agency/Field Office Level**

Agency, Field Managers and staff manage their programs as necessary to conduct their aviation operations safely. Agency Aviation Managers (AAMs) serve as the focal point for the Agency Aviation Program by providing technical expertise and management of aviation resources to support agency programs.

While many agencies have aviation management as a collateral duty, during periods of intense aviation activity (e.g., wildland fire support) it is still absolutely critical that aviation oversight be maintained.

When other duties interfere or compete with effective aviation management, request assistance from the Regional Office. Agencies are responsible for hosting, supporting, providing daily management, and dispatching all aircraft assigned to their unit. Agencies have the authority to request additional
resources, establish priorities, and make assignments for all aircraft assigned to
the BIA within their agency.
• AAMs have the responsibility for aviation activities at the local level,
  including aviation mission planning, risk management and safety,
  supervision, and evaluation. AAMs assist Line Officers with risk
  assessment/management and cost analysis.

All Tribal and agency offices utilizing aircraft should have a current and
approved aviation management plan on file.

Aviation Safety
The BIA and the interagency partners have adopted Safety Management
Systems (SMS) as the foundation to our aviation safety program. For further
information, reference Chapter 16.

Flight Request and Approval
Bureau flights will be requested and documented using the process defined in
the Regional or Agency Aviation Plans. As a minimum, flight management
procedures will follow the National Interagency Mobilization Guide, Chapter
80, Flight Management Procedures. The BLM Aircraft Flight Request/Schedule
(9400-1a) form is one example which may be used.

Safety and Risk Management

Motor Vehicle Operation Policy
Effective immediately, the Bureau requires supervisors to ensure all wildland
fire personnel who operate government owned and/or leased vehicles have the
proper licensure and are adhering to their respective state laws and licensing
requirements, prior to operating any government owned and/or leased vehicles.
This includes ensuring employees have the appropriate commercial driver's
license, tank endorsements, air brake endorsements and other applicable
certifications. Additional resources regarding BIA driving requirements can be
found under Motor Vehicle Information on the Branch of Wildland Fire
Management, Fire Safety web page:

On January 1, 2021, the BL-300 course will become mandatory for all wildland
fire management and support personnel who operate vehicles. Course material is

Lights and Siren Response
Responding to BIA wildfire incidents normally does not warrant the use of
emergency lights and siren to safely and effectively perform the BIA mission.
However, there may be rare or extenuating circumstances when limited use of
lights and sirens are appropriate and necessary due to an immediate threat to life.
Those BIA Regions that determine a lights and sirens response is necessary to
meet mission requirements must develop an operating plan that is signed and
approved by the Regional Director and forwarded to the Chief, Division of Fire Operations, BIA. The operating plan must ensure the following:

1. All vehicles (command, engines, etc.) will be properly marked, equipped, and operated in accordance with state statutes, codes, permits, and BIA unit requirements.

2. Drivers will complete training in the proper use of lights and sirens response in accordance with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1451 and 1002 standards, as well as any state requirements.

3. Engine drivers responding with lights and sirens will be minimally qualified as engine operator with a qualified engine boss in the engine; otherwise, driver must be engine boss qualified. Command vehicle drivers will be minimally qualified as single resource boss.

4. Lights and sirens will meet NFPA and state code requirements.

5. Posted speed limits will be followed at all times, regardless of response type.

6. Operators will stop or reduce speed as circumstances dictate prior to proceeding through all intersections.

7. Traffic light changing mechanisms (e.g., Opticons) will only be used under formal written agreement with state and local governments. They will be used only when they are necessary to create safe right-of-way through urban high-traffic areas. All pertinent state and local statutes and procedures will be adhered to.

8. Authorization to respond with lights and sirens does not cross state lines. No driver will be authorized by one state to operate with lights and sirens in another state.

**Physical Fitness and Conditioning**

The *NWCG Standards for Wildland Fire Position Qualifications* (PMS 310-1) establishes physical fitness standards for NWCG sanctioned firefighters. These standards are assessed using the Work Capacity Tests (WCT). Prior to attempting the WCT, all permanent, career-seasonal, temporary, and AD/EFF employees who participate in wildland fire activities requiring a fitness level of arduous must participate in the DOI Medical Qualification Standards Program (DOI MSP).

Employees serving in wildland fire line-going positions that require a fitness rating of arduous, moderate or light are authorized to perform physical fitness conditioning for up to five hours per week, not to exceed more than 2 hours per day.

Units will maintain a fitness program that ensures BIA firefighters will possess the physical ability to perform the duties of their positions safely and effectively while ensuring compliance with the requirements of the Work Capacity Test (WCT).

Information on the WCT and the DOI MSP is located in Chapter 13 of this publication.

*Release Date: January 2021*
CHAPTER 6  BIA PROGRAM ORGANIZATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Business Management and Administration

The BIA follows the uniform application (IAM Part 90, 1.2, (18)) of the interagency policies and guidelines as developed in the *NWCG Standards for Interagency Incident Business Management*. BIA will follow the direction set forth in the *NWCG Standards for Interagency Incident Business Management* in all incident business management functions except where specific to agency legal mandates, policies, rules or regulations.

Casuals Hired as Drivers When Employed by BIA

In accordance with the BIA Motor Vehicle Policy, casuals hired as drivers are required to possess a valid driver’s license in order to operate a motor vehicle and have a safe driving record.

Agencies should recruit a pool of drivers prior to fire season. They must submit GSA Form 3607, Government Motor Vehicle Operator’s License and Driving Record, in advance to verify they have a favorable driving record.

- Form 3607 will be processed through Regional channels to retrieve the driving record of the application with the State, or National Driver Registry and applicable Tribe.
- Regional Directors can contact the Division of Safety and Risk Management for information on completing and submitting Form 3607.
- Meeting the qualification requirements for a motor vehicle license is a condition of employment within BIA for those individuals whose duties require the operation of a motor vehicle for official wildland fire operations business. Failure to adhere to the policy will result in automatic termination of the casual.

Request for Funding Authorization

The authorization and procedure for use of the operations “suppression” (AF2001010) program account, for emergency workers field activities is as follows.

- A regional funding request plan must be completed that identifies the program need for casual funding for field activities only;
- The request must be submitted through the Regional FMO by January 1st of each year; and
- The requests will be reviewed and authorized in writing to the respective agency.

Acquisitions

Per 90 IAM, the WFM program requires adherence to the *NWCG Standards for Interagency Incident Business Management* in conducting wildland fire business.

The BIA Branch of Fire Management’s waiver for fire/emergency personnel purchases are cited in Memoranda Expanded Government Charge Card Purchase Authority During Emergency Wildland Fire Operations, dated 6/12/03 at https://www.bia.gov/nifc/library/Memos/index.htm. The exceptions are:
• Meals, Beverages and Lodging – This exception will be used to lodge and feed employees without credit cards or to support mixed charge card/non-charge card crews.
• Personal Gear – This exception will be used to purchase personal items if destroyed, lost or stolen while serving on the fire crew/emergency incident, (e.g., clothing, footwear and/or toiletries).
• Payment of medical treatment for casuals and overhead when authorized for Incident Agency Provided Medical Care (APMC).

Emergency Equipment Rental Agreements (EERA)
The Emergency Equipment Payment Operating Guidelines provides procedure, guidance and instructions to the BIA WFM Programs, Regional fire management offices and agency offices, Office of Financial Management, Office of Acquisition and Property for implementation of the EERAs payment process. Refer to the NWCG Standards for Interagency Incident Business Management, Chapter 20, for EERA Administration.

Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS)
BIA follows interagency policy regarding use of WFDSS found in Chapter 11.

Fuels Management, Planning & Implementation
The national and interagency policy guides for Fuels Management programs are contained in the following guides and handbooks:

• Chapter 17 – NFES 2724, Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations (Red Book).

Exclusive use of these handbooks and guides enhances intra- and inter-agency program continuity, avoids duplication, reduces the chances to misinterpret policy and provides one stop shopping for the fuels programs policy in a fire management and political environment where changes occur frequently. Please call the Director of Fuels Management for more information.

Prescribed Fire Review
The goal of a Prescribed Fire Review is to provide recommendations, identify deficiencies and specific corrective actions. Reviews do not have to be associated with a specific incident.
Any Prescribed Fire related incident that has resource or property damage that may result in a claim for compensation shall initiate a review.
The review team and their expertise should be commensurate with the scope, and focus of the review. Interagency participation is encouraged with team selection.

Fire Communications and Education

Early Alert Notification Process
Early Alerts will be made via phone call and a written Early Alert Notification. All units (federal and tribal) will provide information to the Regional Fire Management Office and the Branch of Wildland Fire Management Duty Officer within six hours of the incident.

- Crew Supervisor notifies the Unit Fire Management Officer (FMO).
- Unit FMO notifies Regional Fire Management Officer (RFMO) and Dispatch Center.
  - Dispatch Center: If 4th tier, notifies 3rd tier Dispatch Center who then notifies the Geographic Area Coordination Center.
- Regional Fire Management Officer (RFMO) will immediately notify the Branch of Wildland Fire Management On-Call Duty Officer at: **208-387-5080** AND within six hours, email to: EarlyAlert@bia.gov.

Situations Requiring an Early Alert Notification
- Fatality
- Injury Requiring Transports to Medical Facility
- Significant Property Damage to Equipment
- Serious Wildland Fire Accident
- Wildland Fire Accident
- Entrapment/Burnover
- Shelter Deployment
- Near-miss
- Aviation accident
- Evacuations
- Highway and interstate closures
- Structure loss
- Escape prescribed fire
- Fire approaching Large Fire thresholds (100 acres in timber; 300 acres in grass)
- Any Wildland Fire Management Delegation of Authority issued by a line officer

The Early Alert Notification Communication Process, Template and PMS 405-1 are accessible online at https://www.bia.gov/bia/ots/dfwfm/bwfm/safety.

Notification Requirements for Entrapments or Fatalities
If a wildland fire entrapment or fatality occurs, immediate notification to the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) is required using the *Wildland Fire Fatality and Entrapment Initial Report* (PMS 405-1). Following the issuance of an Early Alert, the local unit will provide the PMS 405-1 to the
3rd tier Dispatch Center which will then provide it to the Geographic Area Coordination Center (GACC) electronically within 24 hours. The GACC immediately notifies the NICC Coordinator on Duty (COD) and within 24 hours, submits the PMS 405-1 to NICC COD.

Wildland Fire Media Relations Guidance
During dynamic events such as wildland fire, providing accurate information is critical for public safety. To be effective, communication must be timely, if not immediate. For this reason news bulletins and routine fire information pertaining to the topics listed below are authorized for media release on behalf of the BIA, Branch of Wildland Fire Management (DFWFM). For cases that may include multiple agency jurisdictions, these releases are also approved for use. The DFWFM media release template and approved supporting fire messages can be found online at https://www.bia.gov/bia/ots/dfwfm/bwfm/fire-information.

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