

## Chapter 19

### Dispatch and Coordination System

#### Introduction

The primary mission of the national dispatch/coordination system is the timely, cost-effective, and efficient coordination, mobilization, and demobilization of wildland fire resources. This mission is accomplished at the direction of agency administrators and designated fire managers at the local, geographic, and national level and delegated to the center manager. Agency administrators and fire managers are responsible for providing direction to their respective dispatch/coordination centers. The dispatch/coordination system implements the movement of resources in response to the direction as delegated.

Agency administrators and fire managers will:

- Provide oversight for the development and implementation of dispatch/coordination center plans and operating procedures (e.g., initial response plans, dispatch operating guides/manuals, and mobilization guides) that enable the effective implementation of the fire management plan (FMP).
- Through prior planning, provide dispatch with an initial response plan to allocate resources to new incidents under the leadership of the center manager or delegated acting.
- Establish priorities for prepositioning and deployment of fire suppression resources based on evaluation of current/predicted fire activity and firefighting resource status and availability and communicate these priorities to the dispatch/coordination managers through established command channels for implementation.
- Serve as authorized representatives on local, geographic, and national coordinating groups and multiagency coordinating (MAC) groups.

Dispatch/coordination center managers will:

- Ensure that dispatch/coordination center decisions and actions are consistent with priorities, established plans, and operating procedures as determined by agency administrators and fire managers.
- Implement preplanned response for allocation of resources to new incidents, pursuant to their delegation from agency administrators and designated fire managers.
- Develop and implement dispatch/coordination center plans and operating procedures (e.g., initial response plans, dispatch operating guides/manuals, and mobilization guides) that enable the effective implementation of the fire management plan.

#### National Dispatch/Coordination System

The wildland fire dispatch and coordination system in the United States has three levels (tiers):

- National – National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC)

- 1 • Geographic – Geographic Area Coordination Centers (GACC)
  - 2 • Local – Local dispatch centers
- 3 Logistical dispatch operations occur at all three levels, while initial attack  
4 dispatch operations occur primarily at the local level. Any geographic area or  
5 local dispatch center using a dispatch system outside the three-tier system must  
6 justify why a non-standard system is being used and request written  
7 authorization from the BLM, FWS, and/or NPS national office or USFS regional  
8 office.

### 9 **National Interagency Coordination Center**

10 The National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) is located at the National  
11 Interagency Fire Center (NIFC), in Boise, Idaho. The principal mission of NICC  
12 is the cost-effective and timely coordination of land management agency  
13 emergency response for wildland fire at the national level. This is accomplished  
14 through planning, situation monitoring, and expediting resource orders between  
15 the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) areas, Bureau of Land Management (BLM)  
16 states, National Association of State Foresters (NASF), Fish and Wildlife  
17 Service (FWS) regions, Forest Service (FS) regions, National Park Service  
18 (NPS) regions, National Weather Service (NWS) regions, Federal Emergency  
19 Management Agency (FEMA) regions through the United States Fire  
20 Administration (USFA), and other cooperating agencies.

21 The NICC coordinates any requests for support from foreign countries, either  
22 through Departments of Agriculture (USDA) and Interior (DOI) agreements  
23 (Canada and Mexico) or arrangements (Australia and New Zealand), or from the  
24 Forest Service International Programs' Disaster Assistance Support Program  
25 (DASP) through the U.S. Agency for International Development's Office of  
26 Foreign Disaster Assistance.

27 The NICC supports non-fire emergencies when tasked by an appropriate agency,  
28 such as FEMA, through the National Response Framework (NRF). The NICC  
29 collects and consolidates information from the GACCs and disseminates the  
30 *National Incident Management Situation Report* through the NICC website at  
31 <https://www.nifc.gov/nicc/sitreprt.pdf>.

### 32 **Geographic Area Coordination Centers**

33 There are 10 GACCs, each of which serve a specific geographic portion of the  
34 United States. Each GACC interacts with the local dispatch centers, as well as  
35 with NICC and neighboring GACCs. Refer to the *National Interagency*  
36 *Mobilization Guide* for a complete directory of GACC locations, addresses, and  
37 personnel.

38 The principal mission of each GACC is to provide the cost-effective and timely  
39 coordination of emergency response for all incidents within the specified  
40 geographic area. GACCs are also responsible for:

- 41 • Determining needs;
- 42 • Coordinating priorities;

- 1 • Facilitating mobilization of resources within their geographic area (GA) and  
2 in support of other GAs; and
- 3 • Supplying intelligence associated with incidents and resource availability  
4 within their GA to NICC and cooperating agencies.

### 5 **Local Dispatch Centers**

6 Local dispatch centers are located throughout the country as dictated by the  
7 needs of fire management agencies. Local dispatch centers dispatch multi-  
8 agency wildland firefighting resources within a preestablished and identified  
9 dispatch zone boundary. The principal mission of a local dispatch center is to  
10 provide safe, timely, and cost-effective coordination of emergency response for  
11 all incidents within its specified geographic-area. This entails the coordination of  
12 initial attack responses and the ordering of additional resources when fires  
13 require extended attack.

14 Local dispatch centers are also responsible for supplying intelligence and  
15 information relating to fires and resource status to their GACC and to their  
16 agency managers and cooperators. Local dispatch centers may work for, or with,  
17 numerous agencies, but should only report to one GACC.

18 Some local dispatch centers are also tasked with law enforcement and agency  
19 administrative workloads for non-wildfire operations. If this is the case, a  
20 commensurate amount of funding and training should be provided by the  
21 benefiting activity to accompany the increased workload. If non-wildfire  
22 workload is generated by another agency operating in an interagency dispatch  
23 center, the agency generating the additional workload should offset this  
24 increased workload with additional funding or personnel.

### 25 **Mobilization Guides**

26 The NICC and each GACC annually publish a mobilization guide. The  
27 mobilization guides identify standard procedures which guide the operations of  
28 multi-agency logistical support activity throughout the coordination system.  
29 These guides are intended to facilitate interagency dispatch coordination,  
30 ensuring timely and cost-effective incident support services are provided. Local  
31 and geographic area mobilization guides supplement the *National Interagency*  
32 *Mobilization Guide*.

33 The *National Interagency Mobilization Guide* (NFES 2092) and links to  
34 geographic area mobilization guides are available at <https://www.nifc.gov/nicc/>.

### 35 **Local Mobilization Guide/Dispatch Operating Plan**

36 Local dispatch centers will have a local mobilization guide or dispatch operating  
37 plan to supplement the GACC and national mobilization guides. The  
38 mobilization guide or operating plan will include or provide reference to the  
39 minimum elements and procedures to guide the operation of a local dispatch  
40 center. See appendix P for minimum required elements and procedures for  
41 inclusion in a local mobilization guide/dispatch operating plan or at  
42 <https://www.nifc.gov/standards/guides/red-book>.

**1 Local and Geographic Area Drawdown**

2 Drawdown is the predetermined number and type of suppression resources that  
3 are required to maintain viable initial attack capability at either the local or  
4 geographic area. Drawdown resources are considered unavailable outside the  
5 local or geographic area for which they have been identified.

6 Drawdown is intended to:

- 7 • Ensure adequate fire suppression capability for local and/or geographic area  
8 managers; and
- 9 • Enable sound planning and preparedness at all management levels.

10 Although drawdown resources are considered unavailable outside the local or  
11 geographic area for which they have been identified, they may still be  
12 reallocated by the geographic area or national MAC to meet higher priority  
13 obligations.

**14 Establishing Drawdown Levels**

15 Local drawdown is established by the local unit and/or the local MAC group and  
16 implemented by the local dispatch office. The local dispatch office will notify  
17 the Geographic Area Coordination Center (GACC) of local drawdown decisions  
18 and actions.

19 Geographic area drawdown is established by the Geographic Multi-Agency  
20 Coordinating Group (GMAC) and implemented by the GACC. The GACC will  
21 notify the local dispatch offices and NICC of geographic area drawdown  
22 decision and actions.

**23 National Ready Reserve**

24 National Ready Reserve (NRR) is a means by which the NMAC identifies and  
25 readies specific categories, types, and quantities of fire suppression resources in  
26 order to maintain overall national readiness during periods of actual or predicted  
27 national suppression resource scarcity.

28 NRR implementation responsibilities are as follows:

- 29 • NMAC establishes NRR requirements by resource category, type, and  
30 quantity.
- 31 • NICC implements NMAC intent by directing individual GACCs to place  
32 specific categories, types, and quantities of resources on NRR.
- 33 • GACCs direct local dispatch centers and/or assigned incident management  
34 teams (IMT) to specifically identify resources to be placed on NRR.
- 35 • NICC mobilizes NRR assets through normal coordination system channels  
36 as necessary.

37 National ready reserve resources must meet the following requirements:

- 38 • May be currently assigned to ongoing incidents;
- 39 • Must be able to demobilize and be en route to new assignment in less than 2  
40 hours;

- 1 • Resources must have a minimum of 7 days left in 14-day rotation
  - 2 (extensions will not be factored in this calculation);
  - 3 • May be assigned to incidents after being designated ready reserve, in
  - 4 coordination with NICC; and
  - 5 • Designated ready reserve resources may be adjusted on a daily basis.
- 6 NMAC will adjust ready reserve requirements as needed. Furthermore, in order
- 7 to maintain national surge capability, NMAC may retain available resources
- 8 within a geographic area, over and above the established geographic area
- 9 drawdown level.

## 10 **Dispatch/Coordination Center Administration**

### 11 **Memorandum of Understanding**

12 Each dispatch/coordination center will have a memorandum of understanding

13 (MOU) signed by all cooperators. This MOU will be reviewed and updated

14 annually. Dispatch/coordination center MOUs and their associated operating

15 plans will be current and will define:

- 16 • The roles and responsibilities of each interagency partner's fiscal and
- 17 infrastructure support responsibilities;
- 18 • Administrative oversight/support groups involved with the
- 19 dispatch/coordination center;
- 20 • Clear fiscal reimbursement procedures and interagency funding procedures;
- 21 • The dispatch/coordination center's organizational charts;
- 22 • Communication protocols for local and geographic area cooperating
- 23 agencies, including briefings, planned meetings, and conference calls;
- 24 • Procedures for IMT mobilization and close-out; and
- 25 • Supporting documentation, such as any local initial attack or fire and
- 26 aviation agreements for units serviced by the center.

27 Funding for facilities, equipment, and staffing needs shall be identified in each

28 participating agency's planning and budget process and included in the

29 MOU/operating plan.

### 30 **Service and Supply Plans**

31 All local dispatch centers shall maintain a service and supply plan that contains

32 current copies of procurement documents related to locally available resources.

33 Service and supply plans must be current, complete, organized, and accessible to

34 initial attack and expanded dispatchers.

35 The service and supply plan will contain current copies of competitive incident

36 blanket purchase agreements (I-BPAs), as well as source lists for incident-only

37 agreements. Resources and their respective contracts/agreements will be entered

38 into the Interagency Resource Ordering Capability (IROC) system, if applicable;

39 and naming conventions will meet national standards.

40 For additional required components of a service and supply plan, refer to

41 appendix P at <https://www.nifc.gov/standards/guides/red-book>.

**1 Continuity of Operations Plan**

2 All centers will maintain a current continuity of operations plan (COOP) which  
3 includes a preidentified alternate location with adequate supplies, notification  
4 procedures for activation, a back-up computer system, and contingency plans for  
5 loss of telecommunications equipment and/or loss of access to network  
6 connectivity. Additionally, all centers which are required to maintain  
7 communications with field-going resources, including aircraft, will ensure the  
8 COOP identifies procedures to maintain and/or transfer communications in the  
9 event of a possible loss of radios and/or telecommunications equipment.

10 A dispatch center and a coordination center shall be designated as an emergency  
11 facility that meets the requirements of applicable building codes and NFPA  
12 standards for communication centers. They shall be equipped with a critical  
13 operations power system (COPS) that provides emergency power to  
14 communications systems, information technology (IT) rooms, telephone and  
15 radio rooms, electrical equipment rooms, mechanical equipment, fire protection  
16 equipment rooms, sanitary facilities, security systems, and other spaces and  
17 equipment designated by the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) as requiring  
18 critical operations power.

**19 Dispatch/Coordination Center Manager Delegation of Authority**

20 All dispatch/coordination center managers shall have a signed delegation of  
21 authority providing an adequate level of operational authority from all  
22 participating agencies. The delegation of authority will include appropriate  
23 supervisory authority and a process for completion of employee performance  
24 evaluations.

25 The dispatch/coordination center manager may, where appropriate, complete a  
26 delegation of authority for staff that identifies roles and responsibilities for the  
27 acting center manager, coordinator-on-duty, floor supervisor, and/or internal  
28 duty officer.

**29 National Interagency Coordination Center Functional Responsibilities**

30 The NICC has established the coordinator-on-duty (NICC COD) position. The  
31 NICC COD is responsible for managing the daily operation of the NICC and for  
32 resource allocation decisions in alignment with NMAC direction.

**33 Positioning and Movement of Resources**

34 The NICC, in conjunction with the GACCs, is responsible for ensuring a  
35 coordinated response to wildland fire incidents and/or all-hazards incidents  
36 under the NRF or other appropriate authorities. The NICC positions resources  
37 (personnel, aircraft, supplies, and equipment) to meet existing and anticipated  
38 incident, preparedness, severity, wildland, and prescribed fire needs regardless  
39 of geographic location or agency affiliation. Additionally, NICC coordinates  
40 movement of resources across geographic area boundaries and allocates  
41 resources according to NMAC direction when competition for wildland fire  
42 resources occurs among geographic areas.

**1 Management of National Aviation Resources**

2 As directed or delegated by NMAC, NICC allocates national resource aviation  
3 assets, in conjunction with appropriate agency aviation leadership, to the  
4 geographic areas based upon national priorities. These national resources  
5 include:

- 6 • Federal airtankers
- 7 • Federal single engine airtankers (SEATs)
- 8 • Large transport aircraft
- 9 • Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System (MAFFS) airtankers
- 10 • Type 1 and 2 FS exclusive-use (EU)/call-when-needed (CWN) helicopters  
11 and associated helitack and/or rappellers
- 12 • Airborne thermal infrared (IR) fire mapping aircraft
- 13 • Leadplanes and aerial supervision modules
- 14 • Smokejumpers
- 15 • Smokejumper aircraft
- 16 • Water scoopers
- 17 • Federally contracted, EU and CWN unmanned aircraft system (UAS)
- 18 • Rappelers

19 The NICC has established authorities and procedures for dispatching aviation  
20 resources. These authorities and procedures include:

- 21 • Aircraft ordering protocols for fire, logistical and administrative flights;
- 22 • Tracking of all aircraft ordered through NICC that cross geographic area  
23 boundaries;
- 24 • Mechanisms for disseminating availability and commitment status  
25 throughout the dispatch/coordination system; and
- 26 • Procedures for mobilization and use of large transport aircraft (NICC is the  
27 sole source for large transport aircraft).
- 28 • GACCs hosting national type 1 and 2 helicopters will coordinate with NICC  
29 prior to releasing flight crews for the day when those resources are not  
30 being used within the host area and could be utilized elsewhere for  
31 emerging or ongoing fire activity.
- 32 • Priority should be given to EU aviation assets over CWN aviation assets  
33 whenever feasible.

**34 Management of National Support Resources**

35 NICC mobilizes national support resources such as National Interagency Radio  
36 Support Cache (NIRSC) radio systems and kits, incident remote automatic  
37 weather stations (RAWS), project remote automatic weather stations, national  
38 contract mobile food services, and national contract mobile shower facilities.  
39 Refer to the *National Interagency Mobilization Guide* for more information.

**40 Allocation of Other National Resources**

41 As directed or delegated by the NMAC, NICC mobilizes national program  
42 resources such as national interagency buying teams, administrative payment  
43 teams, burned area emergency response teams, and national fire prevention and

1 education teams to the geographic areas based upon national priorities. Refer to  
2 the *National Interagency Mobilization Guide* for more information.

### 3 **Predictive Services**

4 The National Predictive Services Program mission is to integrate climate,  
5 weather, fuels, situation, and incident resource status information to enhance the  
6 ability of managers to make sound decisions for both short- and long-range  
7 strategic planning. Working as cohesive units situated at each of the Geographic  
8 Area and National Interagency Coordination Centers, Predictive Services will  
9 blend the functions of intelligence, fire management analysis, and meteorology  
10 for delivering decision support products and services in support of geographic  
11 area and national decision-making.

12 The National Predictive Services Oversight Group (PSOG) provides  
13 management oversight and direction to the National Predictive Services  
14 Program. The group coordinates, directs, and oversees the development and  
15 implementation of national program products and services, ensures the integrity  
16 and cohesiveness of program operations, arbitrates differences, and provides a  
17 venue for dialogue and deliberation in support of a sustainable and effective  
18 program.

19 The National Predictive Services staff works under the direction of the NICC  
20 Manager, with guidance from NMAC. Geographic Area Coordination Center  
21 Predictive Services staff work under the direction of the GACC manager, with  
22 guidance from the Geographic Area Coordinating Groups (GACG). National  
23 and GACC missions share importance; and as such, National and GACC  
24 Predictive Services work in unison to create and maintain products and services  
25 which provide value to users at all levels.

26 Predictive Services is comprised of meteorologists, fuels and fire behavior  
27 analysts, intelligence coordinators, and officers at NICC and the GACCs. GACC  
28 managers and GACGs determine the need and allocation of positions within  
29 each GACC with input from National Predictive Service staff, the NICC  
30 Manager, and NMAC.

### 31 **International and Department of Defense Assistance**

32 The NICC serves as the focal point for international assistance requested from  
33 NMAC either under existing agreements or by the US Department of State. The  
34 NICC also serves as the focal point for any requests for assistance from the  
35 Department of Defense.

36 For more information, see agreements at  
37 <https://www.nifc.gov/nicc/logistics/references.htm>.

### 38 **Geographic Area Coordination Center Functional Responsibilities**

39 Each GACC manager will be responsible for managing the daily operation of  
40 the GACC and for resource allocations within their GA. Resource allocation will  
41 be in alignment with their GMAC and NMAC. The GACC manager may



- 1 identify an additional point-of-contact (POC) in the form of coordinator-on-duty
- 2 (COD), duty officer and/or duty chief.

### 3 **Positioning and Movement of Resources**

4 Geographic Area Coordination Centers, in conjunction with NICC and local  
5 dispatch centers, are responsible for ensuring a coordinated response to wildland  
6 fire incidents and/or all-hazards incidents under the NRF or other appropriate  
7 authorities. GACCs mobilize and position resources (personnel, aircraft,  
8 supplies, and equipment) internally among local dispatch centers to meet  
9 existing and anticipated incident, preparedness, severity, wildland, and  
10 prescribed fire needs, regardless of geographic location or agency affiliation.  
11 Geographic Area Coordination Centers coordinate movement of resources  
12 within geographic area boundaries and allocate resources according to GMAC  
13 direction when competition for wildland fire resources occurs within the  
14 geographic area. Geographic Area Coordination Centers will ensure adequate  
15 fire suppression capability for local and/or geographic area managers and enable  
16 sound planning and preparedness at all management levels.

17 Geographic areas will establish priorities for their incidents and wildland fires  
18 and report them to NICC. Geographic Area Coordination Centers will notify  
19 NICC and adjoining GACCs of the commitment of national resources within  
20 their area and will notify the local dispatch offices and the NICC of geographic  
21 area drawdown decision and actions.

22 Activities associated with the NRF will be accomplished utilizing established  
23 dispatch coordination procedures. The affected GACC will coordinate ordering  
24 points with the regional ESF #4 coordinator and the ESF #4 lead at the  
25 appropriate Regional Response Coordination Centers (RRCC) and Joint Field  
26 Offices (JFO).

### 27 **Management of Aviation Resources**

28 Geographic Area Coordination Centers have established authorities and  
29 procedures for dispatching aviation resources. These procedures include:  
30 • Aircraft ordering protocols for fire, logistical and administrative flights;  
31 • Procedures for ordering agency-approved infrared (IR) mapping aircraft and  
32 UAS;  
33 • Procedures for tracking of all aircraft within geographic area boundaries;  
34 • Mechanisms for disseminating availability and commitment status  
35 throughout the dispatch/coordination system;  
36 • Ordering and operational procedures between the GACC, dispatch center(s)  
37 and airtanker base(s);  
38 • Procedures for flight following (including protocols for use of Automated  
39 Flight Following (AFF) and initial call on the National Flight Following  
40 frequency;  
41 • Procedures for ordering and establishing temporary flight restrictions (TFR)  
42 and operating guidelines for airspace deconfliction for military air space  
43 (military training route [MTR], special use airspace [SUA], military

- 1 operations area [MOA]) and restricted areas. Geographic Area Coordination
- 2 Centers will participate in planned airspace meetings annually;
- 3 • Procedures for ordering and utilization of Federal Aviation Administration
- 4 (FAA) temporary towers;
- 5 • Procedures for reporting through the SAFECOM system; and
- 6 • Procedures for reporting drone intrusions.

#### 7 **Predictive Services**

8 The GACC and/or Predictive Service managers will provide daily supervision of  
9 their respective Predictive Services programs, including developing GACC-  
10 specific operating plans. These plans will encompass the daily activities of the  
11 GACC Predictive Services program, including supervision, the flow of  
12 information within the GACC and geographic area, and the products produced  
13 for geographic area purposes. GACC and/or predictive service managers will  
14 have ultimate responsibility for ensuring GACC Predictive Services staff have  
15 the appropriate allocation of time and resources to produce required national  
16 products, including the National 7-Day Significant Fire Potential Outlook, the  
17 National Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook, and Fuels and Fire  
18 Behavior Advisories as needed.

#### 19 **Local Dispatch Center Functional Responsibilities**

20 Local dispatch centers are responsible for initial attack dispatching, coordination  
21 of communications, intelligence gathering and dissemination, and logistical  
22 support for local incidents and field operations.

#### 23 **Initial Attack Dispatching**

24 Local dispatch centers are the focal point for the report of, and initial response to  
25 wildland fires, and under appropriate authorities, other emergency incidents at  
26 the local level. Deployment of response resources is made in accordance with  
27 local processes and procedures as outlined in the dispatch center's mobilization  
28 guide.

29 Each dispatch office with the responsibility for initial response to wildland fires  
30 shall have a preplanned response plan that allocates resources to new wildland  
31 fires in accordance with fire management direction, initial attack agreements,  
32 and established ordering procedures. The preplanned response plan will be  
33 reviewed and updated annually prior to fire season.

34 Incident records will be created by the dispatch center with delegated authority  
35 for the benefiting agency and associated Protecting Unit  
36 (<https://www.nwcg.gov/term/glossary/unit-protecting>) based on the point of  
37 origin (POO) of the incident. Reference "jurisdictional unit"  
38 (<https://www.nwcg.gov/term/glossary/unit-jurisdictional>) for additional  
39 information. Unique incident identifiers are the concatenation of the year from  
40 the fire discovery date/time, the POO protecting unit, and the local incident  
41 identifier. The year is not exposed to the user in most applications. Unique  
42 incident identifiers are referenced in user interface in the following format: MT-

1 FNF-000567. Incident data and all ordering for the incident is tracked under this  
2 unique designator for the life of the incident. Multiple event/records will not be  
3 created when an incident burns onto or crosses jurisdictional boundaries. When  
4 duplicate records are inadvertently created, every effort will be made to rectify  
5 by aligning incident and resource data associated with two records to the correct  
6 record, the duplicate record will be updated to an invalid record.

7 Additionally, each center will have a method to document actions taken and  
8 resources sent to wildland fires. Centers may use either a manual or computer-  
9 aided dispatch system.

10 Each dispatch center shall have maps posted that depict initial attack response  
11 areas, land ownership, jurisdictional and protection boundaries, hazards, and  
12 resource concerns. Each center will also ensure that computer-aided dispatch  
13 (CAD) and geographic information system (GIS) products are current,  
14 functioning, and utilized.

15 When an incident's POO is on unprotected lands  
16 ([https://www.nwcg.gov/term/glossary/unprotected-](https://www.nwcg.gov/term/glossary/unprotected-lands#:~:text=Areas%20for%20which%20no%20fire,a%20timber%20or%20rangeland%20association)  
17 [lands#:~:text=Areas%20for%20which%20no%20fire,a%20timber%20or%20ran-](https://www.nwcg.gov/term/glossary/unprotected-lands#:~:text=Areas%20for%20which%20no%20fire,a%20timber%20or%20rangeland%20association)  
18 [geland%20association](https://www.nwcg.gov/term/glossary/unprotected-lands#:~:text=Areas%20for%20which%20no%20fire,a%20timber%20or%20rangeland%20association)) or areas for which no fire organization has responsibility  
19 for management of a wildfire authorized by law, contract, or personal interest of  
20 the fire organization (e.g., a timber or rangeland association), there are two  
21 acceptable rationales for local dispatch incident record creation:

- 22 • The responding organization determines threat to protected lands.
- 23 • The responding organization determines incident has already burned onto  
24 protected lands.

25 Fire management direction/duty officer will determine if either criterion is met  
26 and necessitates an incident record creation and subsequent response. In this  
27 instance, the responding organization's Unit Identifiers (Unit ID) will be used  
28 for the protecting unit data element within the unique incident identifier.

29 Dispatch centers will have protocols in place for frequency management,  
30 priority use of frequencies, and procedures for obtaining additional frequencies.

31 Local dispatch centers will have protocols in place for monitoring, requesting,  
32 and disseminating fire weather forecasts, spot weather forecasts, fire weather  
33 watches, red flag warnings and other severe weather events (e.g., severe storm  
34 warnings, flash flood warnings, tornado warnings) to firefighters, incident  
35 commanders, and field-going personnel.

36 The National Multi-agency Coordination Group has established incident name  
37 protocols. Guidance can be found at  
38 <https://www.nifc.gov/nicc/administrative/nmac/index.html>.

39 All required reference material will be current and accessible, and expired or  
40 out-of-date material will be removed.

**1 Intelligence**

2 The intelligence function is responsible for gathering and disseminating  
3 incident, resource, weather, and predictive services information. Each dispatch  
4 center will ensure that locations and conditions of the fire weather stations are  
5 known, and a current weather station catalog is available. Weather data will be  
6 archived daily in WIMS and seasonal inputs will be maintained, including  
7 vegetative state, fuel moisture values, daily state of the weather observations,  
8 and updating breakpoints.

- 9 • **FS** – *Dispatch centers are required to have a person trained in the National  
10 Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS) assigned to data quality assurance  
11 responsibilities.*

12 Dispatch centers will ensure that coordination/communication with the local  
13 NWS Forecast Office occurs annually prior to fire season.

14 Local dispatch centers will have a process in place for submission of the daily  
15 situation report and ICS-209s.

16 Dispatch centers with websites will ensure current intelligence and weather  
17 information is posted.

**18 Expanded Dispatch and Incident Business Management**

19 Expanded dispatch is a functional branch of the Incident Support Organization  
20 (ISO) that supports incidents and expands as local fire conditions and activity  
21 dictates. Expanded dispatch is established when a high volume of activity  
22 indicates that increased dispatch and coordination capability is required.

23 Each dispatch center will have an expanded dispatch operating plan which  
24 provides specific details about when, where, and how to implement an expanded  
25 dispatch. The plan will identify logistical support facilities available for  
26 expanded dispatch use. These facilities will be preidentified, procured, and  
27 available for immediate setup, along with necessary equipment.

28 The expanded dispatch workspace will be separate from, but accessible to, the  
29 initial attack organization. The area should have adequate office space, including  
30 suitable lighting, heating/cooling systems, and security. Expanded dispatchers  
31 will have access to communications equipment, including telephones, fax  
32 machines, copiers, and computer hardware with adequate data storage space.

33 Qualified personnel should be on site in order to adequately staff required  
34 expanded dispatch functions. Expanded dispatch supervisors are responsible for  
35 establishing a staffing and operating schedule for expanded dispatch, including  
36 operational period changes, briefings, and strategy meetings.

**37 Aviation**

38 Each dispatch center will have documented procedures established for  
39 dispatching of aviation resources. These procedures will include:

- 40 • Aircraft ordering protocols for fire, logistical, and administrative flights;
- 41 • Procedures for ordering agency-approved IR mapping aircraft and UAS;

- 1 • Procedures for disseminating availability and commitment status throughout
- 2 the dispatch/coordination system;
- 3 • Procedures for coordination with airtanker bases;
- 4 • Procedures for airtanker, smokejumper, and rappeler use and restrictions;
- 5 • Procedures for flight following (including protocols for use of AFF and
- 6 initial call on the National Flight Following frequency);
- 7 • Procedures for ordering and establishing TFRs;
- 8 • Procedures for airspace de-confliction for military air space (MTR, SUA,
- 9 MOA) and restricted areas, and current aviation flight hazard maps or
- 10 military operating area sectionals;
- 11 • Procedures for requesting FAA temporary towers;
- 12 • Procedures for reporting through the SAFECOM system; and
- 13 • Procedures for reporting drone intrusions.

#### 14 **Accident Notification**

15 When an accident occurs, agency notification requirements will be followed. As  
16 soon as the accident is verified, the following should be notified:

- 17 • Local dispatch center;
- 18 • Unit fire management officer (FMO); and
- 19 • Agency administrators.

20 Additional notifications should occur in the dispatch/coordination system, from  
21 the local dispatch center to the NICC through the GACC.

#### 22 **Incident Emergency Management Planning**

23 To achieve successful medical response, agency administrators will ensure that  
24 their units have completed the following items prior to each field season:

- 25 • A medical emergency response plan that identifies medical evacuation
- 26 options, local/county/State/Federal resource capabilities, capacities,
- 27 ordering procedures, cooperative agreements, role of dispatch centers, and
- 28 key contacts or liaisons;
- 29 • Standardized incident and communication center protocols identified in the
- 30 “Medical Incident Report” section of the *IRPG*.
- 31 • For incidents that require the preparation of an incident action plan (IAP),
- 32 Form ICS-206-WF will be used. This form is available at
- 33 [https://www.nwcg.gov/sites/default/files/products/ics-](https://www.nwcg.gov/sites/default/files/products/ics-forms/ics_206_wf.pdf)
- 34 [forms/ics\\_206\\_wf.pdf](https://www.nwcg.gov/sites/default/files/products/ics-forms/ics_206_wf.pdf).

#### 35 **Dispatch/Coordination Center Reference Material**

36 All coordination/dispatch centers will have reference materials available to all  
37 dispatchers. See appendix P for a list of minimum required reference materials  
38 at <https://www.nifc.gov/standards/guides/red-book>.

**1 Training**

2 Dispatch/coordination center staff will be trained in, and follow established  
3 procedures for, the use of applications utilized in center operations.

4 Personnel will be cross trained in each function (i.e., aircraft, crews, overhead,  
5 equipment, intelligence) in order to provide staffing coverage. Dispatch  
6 personnel will be trained in and follow center procedures for the following (as  
7 applicable):

- 8 • Interagency Resource Ordering Capability (IROC);
- 9 • Computer-aided dispatch (CAD);
- 10 • Fire Code;
- 11 • Automated Flight Following (AFF);
- 12 • Unit Identifiers;
- 13 • SIT Report/209; and
- 14 • Other applications (e.g., WFDSS, e-ISuite).

15 All dispatch center employees will have a documentation file for current season  
16 training, past season fire training, certifications and experience, fire experience,  
17 performance evaluations, and have position task books initiated appropriate to  
18 their training needs. All supervisors will be familiar with safety and accident  
19 reporting processes (e.g., Safety Management Information System [SMIS],  
20 SAFENET, SAFECOM).

21 All employees will have current incident qualification cards produced by the  
22 Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS) as per chapter 13.

- 23 • **BLM** – *BLM employees are required to complete the Fire and Aviation*  
24 *Employee Orientation Checklist available at*  
25 *<https://www.nifc.gov/standards/blm-preparedness-review>.*

**26 Facilities and Equipment**

27 All dispatch/coordination centers will have a telephone system with an adequate  
28 number of lines for normal business volume, and the capability to expand as  
29 conditions dictate. Centers will have teleconference capabilities commensurate  
30 with the anticipated volume of business.

31 Copying, facsimile, computer, and GIS systems shall meet operational needs  
32 (quantity and capability) and comply with agency standards. Software will be  
33 compatible with information resource management and agency requirements for  
34 security.

35 All facilities shall have an evacuation plan, security plan, and safety practices in  
36 place to safeguard the health and welfare of employees.

37 Adequate facilities will be available to host an expanded dispatch or Multi-  
38 Agency Coordination (MAC) Group and shall include telephones, computer  
39 access, copiers, and basic office supplies. Rooms for MAC Group use will have  
40 adequate information technology (IT) equipment and support.

- 1 All centers will have adequate workspace with room for reference materials and
- 2 other necessary items to perform assigned duties. Individual workspace should
- 3 be provided away from the initial attack floor for each permanent employee, and
- 4 a break room area should be provided for employees.
- 5 Employees will have access to a locked area to store data that may contain
- 6 personally identifiable information (PII) or personal items.

7 **Radio Systems**

- 8 Radio systems will have an adequate number of frequencies to provide for
- 9 separation of incidents and use by all interagency partners. Base station and
- 10 repeater transmissions shall be recorded and maintained in accordance with
- 11 agency records management policies. Radio systems may have alert tones
- 12 available for use as determined by local center policies.

