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Chapter 8 Interagency Coordination and Cooperation

Introduction

Fire management planning, preparedness, prevention, suppression, restoration and rehabilitation, monitoring, research, and education will be conducted on an interagency basis with the involvement of cooperators and partners. The same capabilities used in wildland fire management will also be used, when appropriate and authorized, on non-fire incidents in the United States, and on both wildland fires and non-fire incidents internationally.

National Wildland Fire Cooperative Agreements

USDOI and USDA Interagency Agreement for Fire Management

The objectives of the *Interagency Agreement for Fire Management Between the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), National Park Service (NPS), Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) of the United States Department of the Interior (DOI) and the Forest Service (FS) of the United States Department of Agriculture* are:

- To provide a basis for cooperation among the agencies on all aspects of wildland fire management and as authorized in non-fire emergencies.
- To facilitate the exchange of personnel, equipment (including aircraft), supplies, services, and funds among the agencies.

DOI, USDA, and DOD Interagency Agreement

The purpose of the *Interagency Agreement for the Provision of Temporary Support During Wildland Firefighting Operations among the United States Department of the Interior, the United States Department of Agriculture, and the United States Department of Defense* is:

- To establish the general guidelines, terms and conditions under which the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) will request, and DOD will provide, temporary support to NIFC in wildfire emergencies occurring within all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and all U.S. Territories and Possessions, including fires on State and private lands. It is also intended to provide the basis for reimbursement of DOD under the Economy Act.

These and other agreements pertinent to interagency wildland fire management can be found in their entirety at <https://www.nifc.gov/nicc/logistics/references.htm>.

1 National Wildland Fire Management Structure**2 Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC)**

3 The WFLC is a cooperative, interagency body dedicated to achieving consistent
4 implementation of the goals, actions, and policies in the National Fire Plan and
5 the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy. The WFLC provides a forum for
6 high-level dialogues between federal and non-federal entities to set strategic
7 direction for national fire management.

8 The Council consists of the Department of Agriculture's Undersecretary for
9 Natural Resources and Environment, the Deputy Undersecretary for Natural
10 Resources and Environment, and the Chief of the U.S. Forest Service; the
11 Department of the Interior's (DOI) Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management
12 and Budget, the Directors of the National Park Service, Bureau of Indian
13 Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S.
14 Geological Survey; the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Fire
15 Administration Administrator; the President of the Intertribal Timber Council;
16 two state governors selected from the National Governors Association; a county
17 commissioner serving as a member of the National Association of Counties; a
18 mayor serving as a member of the National League of Cities; a State Forester
19 serving at the request of a senior state elected official; and a fire chief serving at
20 the request of a senior local government elected official.

21 The Council is coordinated by the Department of Agriculture's Deputy
22 Undersecretary for Natural Resources and Environment and DOI's Assistant
23 Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget.

24 Wildland Fire Executive Council (WFEC)

25 The WFEC is an advisory council that provides recommendations on national
26 wildland fire management to the secretaries of Agriculture and Interior through
27 WFLC. Members include the Director, USDA FS Fire and Aviation
28 Management; the Director, DOI Office of Wildland Fire; the Deputy
29 Administrator, DHS U. S. Fire Administration; an NWCG Executive Board
30 representative; a National League of Cities representative; an Intertribal Timber
31 Council representative; a Fire Committee representative from the National
32 Association of State Foresters; a National Association of Counties
33 representative; an International Association of Fire Chiefs representative, and a
34 National Governors Association representative.

35 Federal Fire Policy Council (FFPC)

36 The FFPC provides a common national federal agency approach to wildland fire
37 management. FFPC ensures that wildland fire management policies, programs,
38 activities, and budgets are coordinated and consistent among and between the
39 member agencies and strives for coordinated and consistent policies and
40 programs with non-federal partner and cooperator agencies. FFPC sets strategic
41 policy and program direction, provides coordinated recommendations to the

1 Secretaries of Agriculture, the Interior, and Homeland Security and resolves
2 inconsistencies among and between federal wildland fire programs.

3 The FFPC is accountable and has the authority to:

- 4 • Set the vision and provide leadership for the federal wildland fire program.
- 5 • Set national federal strategic wildland fire program goals and priorities.
- 6 • Establish the Fire Executive Council.

7 The FFPC is responsible to:

- 8 • Provide coordinated federal wildland fire management policy direction.
- 9 • Resolve policy and program management inconsistencies.
- 10 • Set strategic budget priorities for wildland fire management.
- 11 • Coordinate and communicate with non-federal entities.

12 The FFPC is composed of the USDA Deputy Under Secretary for National
13 Resources and Environment; the Chief of the Forest Service and the Deputy
14 Chief of State and Private Forestry; and for DOI the Assistant Secretaries for
15 Policy, Management and Budget, Fish and Wildlife and Parks, Indian Affairs,
16 Land and Minerals Management, and Water and Science; the Bureau Directors
17 of the Bureau of Land Management, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the National
18 Park Service, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the US Geological Survey; the
19 Deputy Assistant Secretary – Law Enforcement, Security and Emergency
20 Management; the Assistant Administrator of DHS-US Fire Administration; and
21 the Environmental Protection Agency representative.

22 **Fire Executive Council (FEC)**

23 The FEC provides a common, integrated, and coordinated federal agency
24 approach to wildland fire policy, leadership, budget, and program oversight.
25 Within the broad strategic direction and vision set by the FFPC, the FEC ensures
26 that the wildland fire management policies, programs, activities, and budgets are
27 coordinated and consistent among and between the member agencies. FEC sets
28 policy and program direction for federal wildland fire program implementation,
29 provides coordinated recommendations to the FFPC, and resolves
30 inconsistencies among and between federal wildland fire programs. FEC ensures
31 policy and program coordination and integration with non-fire management
32 programs and activities as well as non-federal partners and cooperators.

33 The FEC is accountable and has the authority to:

- 34 • Establish strategic federal fire program budget direction and priorities.
- 35 • Ensure coordinated federal policy development.
- 36 • Develop federal business requirements and priorities.

37 The FEC is responsible and has the authority to:

- 38 • Provide coordinated federal interagency executive level wildland fire policy
39 leadership, direction, and program oversight.
- 40 • Provide coordinated recommendations and advice to the FFPC.

- 1 • Provide wildland fire policy and program direction to the Fire Management
- 2 Board (FMB).
- 3 • Provide strategic policy and program integration with resource
- 4 management, aviation, and other related program areas.
- 5 • Coordinate and communicate with other non-federal entities.
- 6 • Set strategic budget direction and recommendations.
- 7 • Establish strategic direction and requirements for wildland fire information
- 8 and technology, wildland fire administrative/business support, scientific and
- 9 research support, and other program areas.
- 10 • Approve wildland fire policy, as appropriate.
- 11 • Resolve policy and program management inconsistencies and differences.
- 12 • Oversee compliance with policy, budget, and program direction.
- 13 • Charter the Fire Management Board.
- 14 • Charter the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) along with the
- 15 Intertribal Timber Council and the National Association of State Foresters.

16 The FEC is composed of the Director and Deputy Directors, USFS Fire and
17 Aviation Management (USDA); the Director, Office of Wildland Fire, Director,
18 Office of Aviation Services, Fire Executives from BLM, NPS, BIA, and
19 USFWS (DOI); and the US Fire Administration Chief, Emergency Support
20 Branch, National Fire Programs (USDHS-FEMA).

21 **Fire Management Board (FMB)**

22 The FMB provides a mechanism for coordinated and integrated federal wildland
23 fire program management and implementation. The FMB, taking strategic
24 policy and program direction from the FEC, directs, coordinates and oversees
25 the development and implementation of federal wildland fire policy and
26 programs to provide consistent and cost-effective program management.

27 The FMB is accountable and has the authority to:

- 28 • Coordinate federal program management and oversight.

29 The FMB is responsible for and has the authority to:

- 30 • Provide common, integrated implementation strategies, approaches,
- 31 programs, and oversight for implementing federal wildland fire policies.
- 32 • Provide federal wildland fire program strategy, policy, budget and program
- 33 recommendations to the FEC.
- 34 • Provide recommendations on information and technology requirements,
- 35 priorities, and investments to the Wildland Fire Information and
- 36 Technology Executive Board.
- 37 • Provide recommendations on science and research requirements and
- 38 priorities necessary to support wildland fire program management activities.
- 39 • Identify requirements and recommend priorities for standards necessary to
- 40 ensure interoperability of intergovernmental wildland fire activities and
- 41 operations.

- 1 • Consult with our non-federal partners.
- 2 • Develop recommendations for interagency wildland fire
- 3 administrative/business support needs.

4 The FMB is composed of the USFS Fire and Aviation Management Assistant
5 Directors (USDA); the Deputy Director, Office of Wildland Fire, the Deputy
6 Director, Office of Aviation Services, the Fire Directors for BIA, BLM,
7 USFWS, and NPS (DOI); and the Wildfire Program Manager, US Fire
8 Administration (USDHS-FEMA).

9 **National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG)**

10 The NWCG is made up of the USFS, BIA, BLM, FWS, and NPS; Intertribal
11 Timber Council; U.S. Fire Administration (USFA); state forestry agencies
12 through the National Association of State Foresters (NASF); and the
13 International Association of Fire Chiefs. The mission of the NWCG is to
14 provide leadership in establishing, maintaining, and communicating consistent
15 interagency standards, guidelines, and qualifications for wildland fire
16 management. Its goal is to provide more effective execution of each agency's
17 fire management program. The group provides a formalized system to agree
18 upon standards of training, equipment, qualifications, and other operational
19 functions.

20 **Interior Fire Executive Council (IFEC)**

21 The Interior Fire Executive Council (IFEC) provides interagency coordination
22 and interagency executive-level wildland fire policy leadership, direction, and
23 program oversight. IFEC is the focal point for discussing wildland fire policy
24 issues that affect the DOI and provides a forum for gathering the interests of the
25 DOI bureaus to formulate a DOI recommendation and/or position to be taken
26 forward to the Wildland Fire Executive Council (WFEC).

27 The IFEC is composed of the Director, Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) and the
28 four DOI fire directors and their respective senior executives, as well as the
29 Director, Aviation Management Directorate and a representative from USGS.

30 **Office of Wildland Fire (OWF)**

31 The OWF is a Department of the Interior organization responsible for managing
32 and overseeing all wildland fire management activities executed by the bureaus.
33 OWF coordinates the Department's wildland fire programs within the
34 Department and with other federal and non-federal partners, to establish legally
35 and scientifically based Department-wide policies and budgets, and to provide
36 strategic leadership and oversight, that result in safe, comprehensive, cohesive,
37 efficient, and effective wildland fire programs for the nation consistent with the
38 bureaus' statutory authorities and constraints.

1 For more information about the Office of Wildland Fire and the Federal
2 wildland fire management organization, follow the links under “About OWF” at
3 <https://www.doi.gov/wildlandfire>.

4 **Multi-Agency Management and Coordination**

5 **National Multi-Agency Coordinating (NMAC) Group**

6 National multi-agency coordination is overseen by the NMAC Group, which
7 consists of one representative each from the following agencies: BLM, FWS,
8 NPS, BIA, FS, NASF, and the USFA, who have been delegated authority by
9 their respective agency directors to manage wildland fire operations on a
10 national scale when fire management resource shortages are probable. The
11 delegated authorities include:

- 12 • Provide oversight of general business practices between the NMAC group
13 and the Geographic Area Multi-Agency Coordination groups.
- 14 • Establish priorities among geographic areas.
- 15 • Activate and maintain a ready reserve of national resources for assignment
16 directly by NMAC as needed.
- 17 • Implement decisions of the NMAC.

18 The NMAC Operating Plan, NMAC Correspondence, and other resources and
19 references are at <https://www.nifc.gov/nicc/administrative/nmac/index.html>.

20 **Geographic Area Multi-Agency Coordinating (GMAC) Groups**

21 Geographic area multi-agency coordination is overseen by GMAC Groups,
22 which are comprised of geographic area (State, Region) lead administrators or
23 fire managers from agencies that have jurisdictional or support responsibilities,
24 or that may be significantly impacted by resource commitments. GMAC
25 responsibilities include:

- 26 • Establish priorities for the geographic area.
- 27 • Acquire, allocate, and reallocate resources.
- 28 • Provide NMAC with National Ready Reserve (NRR) resources as required.
- 29 • Issue coordinated and collective situation status reports.

30 **National Dispatch/Coordination System**

31 See Chapter 19.

32 **Local and Geographic Area Drawdown**

33 See Chapter 19.

34 **National Ready Reserve (NRR)**

35 See Chapter 19.

1 **Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook**

2 All federal agencies have adopted the NWCG *Interagency Incident Business*
3 *Management Handbook* (IIBMH) as the official guide to provide execution of
4 each agency's incident business management program. Unit offices, geographic
5 areas, or NWCG may issue supplements, as long as policy or conceptual data is
6 not changed.

7 Since consistent application of interagency policies and guidelines is essential,
8 procedures in the IIBMH will be followed. Agency manuals provide a bridge
9 between manual sections and the IIBMH so that continuity of agency manual
10 systems is maintained and all additions, changes, and supplements are filed in a
11 uniform manner.

- 12 • **DOI** – *The Department of the Interior All Hazards-Supplement to the*
13 *Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook establishes business*
14 *management guidelines for the Department of the Interior's (DOI's) all-*
15 *hazards incidents. The DOI Supplement is available at*
16 *<https://www.doi.gov/emergency/emergency-policy.cfm>.*
- 17 • **BLM** – *The IIBMH replaces BLM Manual Section 1111.*
- 18 • **NPS** – *Refer to RM-18.*
- 19 • **FWS** – *Refer to Service Manual 621 FW 1 Wildland Fire Management.*
- 20 • **FS** – *Refer to FSH 5109.34.*

21 **Standards for Cooperative Agreements**

22 **Agreement Policy**

23 Agreements will be comprised of two components: the actual agreement and an
24 operations plan. The agreement will outline the authority and general
25 responsibilities of each party and the operations plan will define the specific
26 operating procedures.

27 Any agreement which obligates federal funds or commits anything of value
28 must be signed by the appropriate warranted contracting officer. Specifications
29 for funding responsibilities should include billing procedures and schedules for
30 payment.

31 Any agreement that extends beyond a fiscal year must be made subject to the
32 availability of funds. Any transfer of federal property must be in accordance
33 with federal property management regulations.

34 All agreements must undergo periodic joint review; and, as appropriate,
35 revision. Assistance in preparing agreements can be obtained from local or state
36 office fire and/or procurement staff.

37 All appropriate agreements and operating plans will be provided to the servicing
38 dispatch center. The authority to enter into interagency agreements is extensive.

- 1 • **BLM** – *BLM Manual 9200, Departmental Manual 620 DM, the Reciprocal*
2 *Fire Protection Act, 42 U.S.C. 1856, and the Federal Wildland Fire*
3 *Management Policy and Program Review.*
- 4 • **NPS** – *Chapter 2, Federal Assistance and Interagency Agreements*
5 *Guideline (DO-20), and the Departmental Manual 620 (DM-620). NPS-*
6 *RM-18, Interagency Agreements, Release Number 1, 02/22/99.*
- 7 • **FWS** – *Service Manual, Departmental Manual 620 DM, and Reciprocal*
8 *Fire Protection Act, 42U.S.C. 1856.*
- 9 • **FS** – *FSM 1580, 5106.2 and FSH 1509.11.*

10 **Types of Agreements**

11 **National Interagency Agreements**

12 The national agreement, which serves as an umbrella for interagency assistance
13 among federal agencies is the interagency agreement between the Bureau of
14 Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Park Service, Fish and
15 Wildlife Service of the United States Department of the Interior, and the Forest
16 Service of the United States Department of Agriculture. This and other national
17 agreements give substantial latitude while providing a framework for the
18 development of state and local agreements and operating plans.

19 **Regional/State Interagency Agreements**

20 Regional and state cooperative agreements shall be developed for mutual
21 assistance. These agreements are essential to the fire management program.
22 Concerns for area-wide scope should be addressed through these agreements.

23 **Local Interagency Agreements**

24 Local units are responsible for developing agreements with local agencies and
25 fire departments to meet mutual needs for suppression and/or prescribed fire
26 services.

27 **Emergency Assistance**

28 Approved, established reimbursable agreements are the appropriate and
29 recommended way to provide emergency assistance. If no agreements are
30 established, refer to your Agency Administrator to determine the authorities
31 delegated to your agency to provide emergency assistance.

32 **Contracts**

33 Contracts may be used where they are the most cost-effective means of
34 providing for protection commensurate with established standards. A contract,
35 however, does not absolve an Agency Administrator of the responsibility for
36 managing a fire program.

37 Contracts should be developed and administered in accordance with Federal
38 Acquisition Regulations. In particular, a contract should specify conditions for
39 abandonment of a fire in order to respond to a new call elsewhere.

1 Elements of an Agreement

2 The following elements should be addressed in each agreement:

- 3 • The authorities appropriate for each party to enter in an agreement.
- 4 • The roles and responsibilities of each agency signing the agreement.
- 5 • An element addressing the cooperative roles of each participant in
6 prevention, pre-suppression, suppression, fuels, and prescribed fire
7 management operations.
- 8 • Reimbursements/Compensation – All mutually approved operations that
9 require reimbursement and/or compensation will be identified and agreed to
10 by all participating parties through a cost-share agreement. The mechanism
11 and timing of the funding exchanges will be identified and agreed upon.
- 12 • Appropriation Limitations – Parties to this agreement are not obligated to
13 make expenditures of funds or reimbursements of expenditures under terms
14 of this agreement unless the Congress of the United States of America
15 appropriates such funds for that purpose by the Counties of _____, by the
16 Cities of _____, and/or the Governing Board of Fire Commissioners
17 of _____.
- 18 • Liabilities/Waivers – Each party waives all claims against every other party
19 for compensation for any loss, damage, personal injury, or death occurring
20 as a consequence of the performance of this agreement unless gross
21 negligence on any part of any party is determined.
- 22 • Termination Procedure – The agreement shall identify the duration of the
23 agreement and cancellation procedures.
- 24 • A signature page identifying the names of the responsible officials shall be
25 included in the agreement.
 - 26 ○ *BLM – Refer to Chapter 2, Agreements with Cooperators (Rangeland*
27 *Fire Protection Association (RFPA) and Local Fire Department).*
 - 28 ○ *NPS – Refer to DO-20 for detailed instructions and format for*
29 *developing agreements.*
 - 30 ○ *BIA – Refer to Notification of Required Use of Cooperative Agreement*
31 *Template in response to Office of Inspector General’s Independent*
32 *Report on the “Bureau of Indian Affairs Wildland Fire Suppression”*
33 *(memo dated September 06, 2013) and Clarification of Authorities on*
34 *Implementation of the Wildland Fire Cooperative Agreement Template*
35 *(memo dated May 28, 2014).*

36 Annual Operating Plans (AOPs)

37 Annual Operating Plans shall be reviewed, updated, and approved prior to the
38 fire season. The plan may be amended after a major incident as part of a joint
39 debriefing and review. The plan shall contain detailed, specific procedures
40 which will provide for safe, efficient, and effective operations.

41 General Elements of an Annual Operating Plan

42 The following items should be addressed in the AOP:

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- 1 • **Mutual Aid**
2 The AOP should address that there may be times when cooperators are
3 involved in emergency operations and unable to provide mutual aid. In this
4 case, other cooperators may be contacted for assistance.
- 5 • **Command Structure**
6 The Incident Command System (ICS) will be used to manage all fires under
7 federal jurisdiction. Unified command should be used, as appropriate,
8 whenever multiple jurisdictions are involved, unless one or more parties
9 request a single agency IC. If there is a question about jurisdiction, fire
10 managers should mutually decide and agree on the command structure as
11 soon as they arrive on the fire; Agency Administrators should confirm this
12 decision as soon as possible. Once this decision has been made, the incident
13 organization in use should be relayed to all units on the incident as well as
14 dispatch centers. In all cases, the identity of the IC must be made known to
15 all fireline and support personnel.
- 16 • **Communications**
17 In mutual aid situations, a common designated radio frequency identified in
18 the AOP should be used for incident communications. All incident
19 resources should utilize and monitor this frequency for incident
20 information, tactical use, and changes in weather conditions or other
21 emergency situations. In some cases, because of equipment availability/
22 capabilities, departments/agencies may have to use their own frequencies
23 for tactical operations, allowing the “common” frequency to be the link
24 between departments. It is important that all department/agencies change to
25 a single frequency or establish a common communications link as soon as
26 practical. Clear text should be used. Avoid personal identifiers, such as
27 names. This paragraph in the AOP shall meet Federal Communications
28 Commission (FCC) requirements for documenting shared use of radio
29 frequencies.
- 30 • **Distance/Boundaries**
31 Responding and requesting parties should identify any mileage limitations
32 from mutual boundaries where “mutual aid” is either pay or non-pay status.
33 Also, for some fire departments, the mileage issue may not be one of initial
34 attack “mutual aid,” but of mutual assistance. In this situation, you may
35 have the option to make it part of this agreement or identify it as a situation
36 where the request would be made to the agency having jurisdiction, which
37 would then dispatch the fire department.
- 38 ○ *BLM – Agreements/AOPs with Department of Defense, best practices*
39 *(including UXO protocols) are located on the BLM Fire Operations*
40 *website http://web.blm.gov/internal/fire/fire_ops/toolbox.htm.*
- 41 • **Time/Duration**
42 Responding and requesting parties should identify time limitations (usually
43 24 hours) for resources in a non-reimbursable status, and “reimbursable
44 rates” when the resources are in a reimbursable status.

- 1 • **Qualifications/Minimum Requirements**
2 The National Wildfire Coordinating Group publication, *National Incident*
3 *Management System: Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide* (PMS 310-
4 1), outlines the minimum requirements for training, experience, physical
5 fitness level, and currency standards for wildland fire positions, which all
6 participating agencies have agreed to meet for national mobilization.
7 ○ During initial action, all agencies (federal, state, local and Tribal)
8 accept each other's standards. Once jurisdiction is clearly established,
9 then the standards of the agency(s) with jurisdiction prevail.
10 ▪ *BLM – BLM may accept the standards of any local cooperator*
11 *through the duration of an incident when the cooperator has a*
12 *current cooperative fire response agreement with BLM, and the*
13 *cooperator is in compliance with the agreement. Personnel from*
14 *agencies that do not subscribe to the NWCG qualification*
15 *standards may be used on agency managed fires, and must only be*
16 *assigned to duties commensurate with their competencies,*
17 *qualifications, and equipment capabilities.*
18 ○ Prior to the fire season, federal agencies should meet with their state,
19 local, and Tribal agency partners and communicate the qualification/
20 certification standards that will apply to the use of local, non-federal
21 firefighters during initial action on fires on lands under the jurisdiction
22 of a federal agency.
23 ○ The Geographic Area Coordinating Group should determine the
24 application of 310-1 qualification/certification standards for
25 mobilization within the geographic area.
26 ○ On a fire where a non-federal agency is also an agency with legal
27 jurisdiction, the standards of that agency apply.
28 ○ The AOP should address qualification and certification standards
29 applicable to the involved parties.
- 30 • **Reimbursement/Compensation**
31 Compensation shall be as close to actual expenditures as possible. This
32 should be clearly identified in the AOP. Vehicles and equipment operated
33 under the federal excess property system will only be reimbursed for
34 maintenance and operating costs.
- 35 • **Cooperation**
36 The annual operating plan will be used to identify how the cooperators will
37 share expertise, training, and information on items such as prevention,
38 investigation, communication plans, safety, training, ICS, and the
39 integration of resources.
- 40 • **Agency Reviews and Investigations**
41 Annual operating plans should describe processes for conducting agency
42 specific reviews and investigations. AOPs should also describe processes
43 for accident notifications to the appropriate fire managers, line officers, and
44 dispatch/coordination centers.

1 • **Dispatch Centers**

2 Dispatch centers will ensure all resources know the name of the assigned IC
3 and announce all changes in incident command. Geographic Area
4 Mobilization Guides, Zone Mobilization Guides, and Local Mobilization
5 Guides should include this procedure as they are revised for each fire
6 season.

7 **Fiscal Responsibility Elements of an Annual Operating Plan**

8 Annual Operating Plans should address the following:

- 9 • The level of communication required with neighboring jurisdictions
10 regarding the management of all wildland fires, especially those with
11 multiple objectives.
- 12 • The level of communication required with neighboring jurisdictions
13 regarding suppression resource availability and allocation, especially for
14 wildland fires with objectives that include benefit.
- 15 • Identify how to involve all parties in developing the strategy and tactics to
16 be used in preventing wildland fire from crossing the jurisdictional
17 boundary, and how all parties will be involved in developing mitigations
18 which would be used if a wildland fire does cross jurisdictional boundaries.
- 19 • Jurisdictions, which may include state and private lands, should identify the
20 conditions under which wildland fire may be managed to achieve benefit,
21 and the information or criteria that will be used to make that determination
22 (e.g., critical habitat, hazardous fuels, and land management planning
23 documents).
- 24 • Jurisdictions will identify conditions under which cost efficiency may
25 dictate where suppression strategies and tactical actions are taken (i.e., it
26 may be more cost effective to put the containment line along an open
27 grassland than along a mid-slope in timber). Points to consider include loss
28 and benefit to land, resource, social and political values, and existing legal
29 statutes.
- 30 • The cost-sharing methodologies that will be utilized should wildfire spread
31 to a neighboring jurisdiction in a location where fire is not wanted.
- 32 • The cost-share methodologies that will be used should a jurisdiction accept
33 or receive a wildland fire and manage it to create benefit.
- 34 • Any distinctions in what cost-share methodology will be used if the reason
35 the fire spreads to another jurisdiction is attributed to a strategic decision,
36 versus environmental conditions (weather, fuels, and fire behavior), or
37 tactical considerations (firefighter safety, resource availability) that preclude
38 stopping the fire at jurisdictional boundaries. Examples of cost-sharing
39 methodologies may include, but are not limited to, the following:
- 40 ○ When a wildland fire that is being managed for benefit spreads to a
41 neighboring jurisdiction because of strategic decisions, and in a
42 location where fire is not wanted, the managing jurisdiction shall be
43 responsible for wildfire suppression costs.

- 1 ○ In those situations where weather, fuels, or fire behavior of the
2 wildland fire precludes stopping at jurisdiction boundaries cost-share
3 methodologies may include, but are not limited to:
- 4 a) Each jurisdiction pays for its own resources – fire suppression
5 efforts are primarily on jurisdictional responsibility lands.
6 b) Each jurisdiction pays for its own resources – services rendered
7 approximate the percentage of jurisdictional responsibility, but not
8 necessarily performed on those lands.
9 c) Cost share by percentage of ownership.
10 d) Cost is apportioned by geographic division. Examples of
11 geographic divisions are: Divisions A and B (using a map as an
12 attachment); privately owned property with structures; or specific
13 locations such as campgrounds.
14 e) Reconciliation of daily estimates (for larger, multi-day incidents).
15 This method relies upon daily agreed to cost estimates, using
16 Incident Action Plans or other means to determine multi-Agency
17 contributions. Reimbursements can be made upon estimates
18 instead of actual bill receipts.

19 For further information, refer to NWCG Memorandum EB-M-09-009, *Revisions*
20 *to the Annual Operating Plans for Master Cooperative Fire and Stafford Act*
21 *Agreements due to Implementation of Revised Guidance for the Implementation*
22 *of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy*, April 13, 2009.

23 **All-Hazards Coordination and Cooperation**

24 All-hazards is defined by NWCG as an incident, natural or manmade, that
25 warrants action to protect life, property, environment, and public health or
26 safety, and to minimize disruptions of government, social, or economic
27 activities. Wildland fire is one type of all-hazard incident. All-hazards incidents
28 are managed using a standardized national incident management system and
29 response framework.

30 **Stafford Act Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance**

31 The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Public
32 Law 93-288, as amended) establishes the programs and processes for the Federal
33 Government to provide disaster and emergency assistance to states, local
34 governments, Tribal nations, individuals, and qualified private non-profit
35 organizations. The provisions of the Stafford Act cover all hazards including
36 natural disasters and terrorist events. In response to, or in anticipation of, a
37 major disaster or emergency as defined by the act, the President “may direct any
38 federal agency, with or without reimbursement, to utilize its authorities and the
39 resources granted to it under federal law (including personnel, equipment,
40 supplies, facilities, managerial, technical, and advisory services) in support of
41 state and local assistance efforts.”

- 1 • *BIA – Refer to Chapter 6 for the Stafford Act Amendment Tribal Disaster*
2 *Assistance.*

3 **Homeland Security Act**

4 The *Homeland Security Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-296)* established the
5 Department of Homeland Security (DHS) with the mandate and legal authority
6 to protect the American people from the continuing threat of terrorism. In the
7 act, Congress also assigned DHS as the primary focal point regarding natural
8 and manmade crises and emergency planning.

9 **Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5**

10 *Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD-5), Management of Domestic*
11 *Incidents, February 28, 2003*, is intended to enhance the ability of the United
12 States to manage domestic incidents by establishing a single, comprehensive
13 national incident management system. HSPD-5 designates the Secretary of
14 Homeland Security as the Principal Federal Official (PFO) for domestic incident
15 management and empowers the Secretary to coordinate Federal resources used
16 in response to or recovery from terrorist attacks, major disasters, or other
17 emergencies in specific cases.

18 **National Response Framework**

19 Federal disaster relief and emergency assistance are coordinated by the Federal
20 Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) using the National Response
21 Framework (NRF). The NRF, using the National Incident Management System
22 (NIMS), establishes a single, comprehensive framework for the management of
23 domestic incidents. The NRF provides the structure and mechanisms for the
24 coordination of federal support to state, local, and Tribal incident managers; and
25 for exercising direct federal authorities and responsibilities. Information about
26 the National Response Framework can be found at
27 <https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/117791>.

28 **National Incident Management System (NIMS)**

29 HSPD-5 directed that the DHS Secretary develop and administer a National
30 Incident Management System to provide a consistent, nationwide approach for
31 Federal, State, and local governments to work effectively and efficiently
32 together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents,
33 regardless of cause, size, or complexity. To provide for interoperability and
34 compatibility among federal, state, and local capabilities, the NIMS will include
35 a core set of concepts, principles, terminology, and technologies covering the
36 incident command system; multi-agency coordination systems; unified
37 command; training; identification and management of resources (including
38 systems for classifying types of resources); qualifications and certification; and
39 the collection, tracking, and reporting of incident information and incident
40 resources. Information about the NIMS can be found at [www.fema.gov/national-](http://www.fema.gov/national-incident-management-system)
41 [incident-management-system](http://www.fema.gov/national-incident-management-system).

1 **Emergency Support Function (ESF) Annexes**

2 Emergency Support Function (ESF) Annexes are the components of the NRF
 3 that detail the mission, policies, structures, and responsibilities of federal
 4 agencies. They are utilized for coordinating resource and programmatic support
 5 to the states, tribes, and other federal agencies or other jurisdictions and entities
 6 during Incidents of National Significance. Each ESF Annex identifies the ESF
 7 coordinator and the primary and support agencies pertinent to the ESF. USDA-
 8 FS and USFA are the Co-coordinators of ESF #4 – Firefighting. USDA-FS
 9 coordinates at the national and regional levels with FEMA, state agencies, and
 10 cooperating agencies on all issues related to response activities. USFA
 11 coordinates with appropriate state agencies and local fire departments to expand
 12 structural firefighting resource capacity in the existing national firefighting
 13 mobilization system and provides information on protection of emergency
 14 services sector critical infrastructure.

15 The ESF primary agency serves as a federal executive agent under the Federal
 16 Coordinating Officer to accomplish the ESF mission. The ESF support agencies,
 17 when requested by the designated ESF primary agency, are responsible for
 18 conducting operations using their own authorities, subject-matter experts,
 19 capabilities, or resources. USDA-FS is the primary agency for ESF #4 –
 20 Firefighting.

21 See <https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/32180?id=7353> for
 22 further information regarding ESF #4.

23 Other NRF USDA-FS and DOI responsibilities are:

| ESF Support Annex | USDA-FS Role | DOI Role |
|--|-----------------------|----------|
| #01 Transportation | Support | Support |
| #02 Communications | Support | Support |
| #03 Public Works and Engineering | Support | Support |
| #04 Firefighting | Coordinator & Primary | Support |
| #05 Emergency Management | Support | Support |
| #06 Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing, and Human Services | Support | Support |
| #07 Logistics Management and Resources Support | Support | Support |
| #08 Public Health and Medical Services | Support | Support |
| #09 Search and Rescue | Support | Primary |
| #10 Oil and Hazardous Materials Response | Support | Support |

| ESF Support Annex | USDA-FS Role | DOI Role |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|----------|
| #11 Agriculture and Natural Resources | Primary | Primary |
| #12 Energy | | Support |
| #13 Public Safety and Security | Support | Support |
| #15 External Affairs | Support | Support |

1 **National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP,**
2 **40 CFR 300)**

3 The NCP provides the organizational structure and procedures for preparing for
4 and responding to discharges of oil and releases of hazardous substances,
5 pollutants, and contaminants. The NCP is required by section 105 of the
6 Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of
7 1980 (CERCLA), 42 U.S.C. 9605, as amended by the Superfund Amendments
8 and Reauthorization Act of 1986 (SARA), P.L. 99–499, and by section 311(d) of
9 the Clean Water Act (CWA), 33 U.S.C. 1321(d), as amended by the Oil
10 Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA), P.L. 101–380. The NCP identifies the national
11 response organization that may be activated in response actions to discharges of
12 oil and releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, and contaminants in
13 accordance with the authorities of CERCLA and the CWA. It specifies
14 responsibilities among the federal, state, and local governments and describes
15 resources that are available for response, and provides procedures for involving
16 state governments in the initiation, development, selection, and implementation
17 of response actions, pursuant to CERCLA. The NCP works in conjunction with
18 the National Response Framework through Emergency Support Function 10 –
19 Oil and Hazardous Material Response.

20 **Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act**

21 *The Post-Katrina Emergency Reform Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-295)*
22 amended the Homeland Security Act. This law established the FEMA
23 Administrator as responsible for managing the Federal response to emergencies
24 and disasters, and for reporting directly to the President. The Secretary of
25 Homeland Security is the Principal Federal Official, but has no direct authority
26 for response or coordination. This law also amends the Stafford Act to allow
27 FEMA, in the absence of a specific request or Presidential declaration, to direct
28 other Federal agencies to provide resources and support where necessary to save
29 lives, prevent human suffering, or mitigate severe damage.

30 **Presidential Policy Directive-8**

31 *Presidential Policy Directive-8 (PPD-8), National Preparedness, March 30,*
32 *2011* is intended to strengthen all-of-Nation preparedness. PPD-8 directs the
33 Secretary of Homeland Security to develop a national preparedness goal and a
34 national preparedness system in coordination and consultation with other federal
35 departments and agencies, state, local, tribal, and territorial governments, private

1 and non-profit sectors, and the public. The national preparedness system is
2 comprised of:

- 3 • National planning frameworks for the prevention, protection, mitigation,
4 response to, and recovery from national threats. These frameworks are
5 similar and complementary to the National Response Framework (NRF).
- 6 • Corresponding Federal interagency operational plans.
- 7 • Guidance for the national interoperability of personnel and equipment.
- 8 • Guidance for business, community, family, and individual preparedness.

9 **All-Hazards Coordination and Cooperation**

10 In an actual or potential incident of national significance that is not encompassed
11 by the Stafford Act, the President may instruct a federal department or agency,
12 subject to any statutory limitations on the department or agency, to utilize the
13 authorities and resources granted to it by Congress. In accordance with
14 Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5, federal departments and agencies
15 are expected to provide their full and prompt support, cooperation, available
16 resources, consistent with their own responsibilities for protecting national
17 security. Personnel assigned to all-hazard incidents may only perform duties
18 within agency policy, training, and capability.

19 **NWCG Role in Support, Coordination, and All-Hazards Response by** 20 **Wildland Fire Agencies**

21 The National Wildfire Coordinating Group has established guidelines to define
22 NWCG's role in the preparedness for, coordination of, and support to all-
23 hazards incidents.

24 General All-Hazards Guidelines for NWCG:

- 25 • The National Incident Management System (NIMS) is the foundation of all
26 response. NWCG principles, procedures, and publications will comply with
27 and support the NIMS. NWCG expects that all local, State, and Federal
28 response agencies and organizations will comply with NIMS.
- 29 • NWCG uses the NIMS definition of All-Hazards, which includes wildland
30 fire. This definition is:
 - 31 ○ All-Hazards: Describing an incident, natural or manmade, that warrants
32 action to protect life, property, environment, and public health or
33 safety, and to minimize disruptions of government, social, or economic
34 activities.
- 35 • NWCG recognizes FEMA's role in overseeing the development,
36 implementation, and maintenance of NIMS, which includes the Incident
37 Command System (ICS) and its components (forms, core competencies,
38 training, qualifications and standards, etc.).
- 39 • NWCG accepts the components of NIMS and will develop an endorsement
40 process and additional qualifications requirements for positions having
41 specific wildland fire application.

- 1 • NWCG recognizes and supports the use of position-specific qualifications
- 2 from other NIMS compliant disciplines (law enforcement, structure fire,
- 3 hazmat, etc.).
- 4 • NWCG supports the ongoing development and maintenance of wildland fire
- 5 systems to be adaptable for all-hazards response.
- 6 • NWCG expects that all wildland fire personnel engaged in all-hazards
- 7 response, whether at the national, regional or local level will base actions on
- 8 both NWCG and agency policies, standards, doctrine, and procedures.
- 9 • NWCG member agencies ensure all personnel responding to all-hazards
- 10 incidents are properly trained, equipped, and qualified for their assigned
- 11 position.
- 12 • NWCG encourages all wildland fire agencies and personnel to receive
- 13 appropriate preparedness training, focusing on general knowledge of all-
- 14 hazards response, disaster characteristics, and the effects from these events
- 15 on citizens and responders.
- 16 • NWCG encourages all wildland fire agencies and personnel to consider
- 17 appropriate risk mitigation measures (e.g., vaccinations, personal protective
- 18 equipment, etc.) prior to responding to all-hazards incidents.
- 19 • NWCG coordinates with member agencies to ensure accountability of
- 20 wildland fire personnel during all-hazards response.

21 **USFS All-Hazards Guiding Principles and Doctrine**

22 The Forest Service has developed doctrine, known as the *Foundational Doctrine*
23 *for All-Hazard Response*, outlining the guiding principles, roles, and
24 responsibilities of the agency during all-hazards response. Forest Service
25 responders and leadership are expected to follow this doctrine, established to
26 help ensure the safest response conditions possible.

27 The following principles encompass the guidelines, roles, and responsibilities
28 established in this doctrine:

- 29 • The intent of Forest Service all-hazard response and support is to protect
- 30 human life, property, and at-risk lands and resources *while imminent threats*
31 *exist*.
- 32 • Personnel should be prepared and organized to support all-hazard responses
- 33 by providing trained personnel to utilize their inherent skills, capabilities,
34 and assets, without requiring significant advanced training and preparation.
35 Support to cooperators requiring wildland resources will be consistent with
36 employee core skills, capabilities, and training.
- 37 • As incidents move from the *response phase* to the *recovery phase*, there
38 should be a shift to demobilizing agency resources.
- 39 • Within all-hazard response environments, agency personnel may encounter
40 situations in which there is an imminent threat to life and property outside
41 of their Agency's jurisdiction. These environments include scenarios
42 ranging from being first on scene at a vehicle accident, to committing

- 1 Agency resources to protect a local community. Leaders are therefore
2 expected to use their judgment and respond appropriately.
- 3 • Wildland resources deployed to all-hazard responses will understand the
4 dynamic and complex environment and utilize their leadership, training, and
5 skills to adapt, innovate, and bring order to chaos.
 - 6 • Leaders are expected to operate within the incident organizational structure
7 encountered on all-hazard responses. When such structure is absent, they
8 will utilize National Incident Management System principles to assure safe
9 and effective utilization of agency resources.
 - 10 • Leaders are expected to operate under existing policies and doctrine under
11 normal conditions. On all-hazard responses, fire and aviation business and
12 safety standards may have to be adapted to the situation to successfully
13 accomplish the mission. When conflicts occur, employees will use their
14 judgment, weigh the risk versus gain, and operate within the intent of
15 Agency policy and doctrine.
 - 16 • All-hazard response will be focused on missions that we perform
17 consistently and successfully. Workforce assignments will be directed
18 toward the core skills developed through our existing training and
19 curriculum.
 - 20 • Agency employees will be trained to operate safely and successfully in the
21 all-hazard environment. Preparedness training will focus on gaining general
22 knowledge of all-hazard response, disaster characteristics, as well as the
23 effects from these events on citizens and responders.
 - 24 • Specific operational skills will be facilitated through the National Incident
25 Management System, working with the responsible agencies who supply
26 the technical specialists who, in turn, provide the specific skill sets. The
27 Forest Service will not train or equip to meet every hazard.
 - 28 • Wildland employees are expected to perform all-hazard support as directed
29 within their qualifications and physical capabilities. All employees have the
30 right to a safe assignment. The employee may suspend his or her work
31 whenever any environmental condition—or combination of condition—
32 become so extreme than an immediate danger is posed to employee health
33 and safety that cannot be readily mitigated by the use of appropriate,
34 approved protective equipment or technology.
 - 35 • Acceptable risk is risk mitigated to a level that provides for reasonable
36 assurances that the all-hazard task can be accomplished without serious
37 injury to life or damage to property.
 - 38 • All-hazard incident-specific briefing and training will be accomplished
39 *prior* to task implementation. This preparation will usually occur prior to
40 mobilization where incident description, mission requirements, and known
41 hazards are addressed. Key protective equipment and associated needs for
42 these all-hazard tasks that wildland employees do not routinely encounter or
43 perform will be identified. This will be done—and be in place—*prior* to
44 task implementation.

- 1 • Agency employees will be provided with appropriate vaccinations,
2 credentials, and personal protective equipment to operate in the all-hazard
3 environment to which they are assigned.
- 4 • Additional information can be found in the Forest Service Foundational
5 Doctrine for All-Hazard Response.
6 https://www.fs.fed.us/fire/doctrine/conferences/all_hazard_response.pdf

7 **All-Hazard Incident Management Teams (IMTs) and Other Non-Wildland** 8 **Fire IMTs**

9 Different entities have developed IMTs based on ICS core competencies under
10 the National Incident Management System (NIMS). Federal agencies with IMTs
11 include the U.S. Coast Guard, the Environmental Protection Agency, USDA's
12 Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), DOI's National Park
13 Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and others. In addition, many states
14 and metropolitan areas have developed All Hazard Incident Management Teams
15 (AHIMTs). AHIMT consists of personnel from various disciplines (fire, rescue,
16 emergency medical, hazardous materials, law enforcement, public works, public
17 health and others) trained to perform the functions of the Command and General
18 Staff at the Type 3 level. AHIMTs are often sponsored or administered by a
19 state or local emergency management agency.

20 Many different entities that sponsor an AHIMT or other non-wildland fire IMT
21 have requested that their personnel be allowed to "shadow" wildland fire IMT
22 positions during incidents (sometimes referred to as "field training" or "field
23 mentoring"). The primary purpose of shadowing is to gain insight to complex
24 incident management. All shadowing events should be coordinated with the
25 receiving GACCs and the IC at an incident.

- 26 • **DOI** – <https://www.doi.gov/emergency/emergency-policy.cfm>

27 **International Wildland Fire Coordination and Cooperation**

28 **U.S. – Mexico Cross Border Cooperation on Wildland Fires**

29 In April 2015, the Department of Interior and the Department of Agriculture
30 signed a Wildfire Protection Agreement with Mexico. The agreement has two
31 purposes:

- 32 • To enable wildfire protection resources originating in the territory of one
33 country to cross the United States-Mexico border in order to suppress
34 wildfires on the other side of the border within the zone of mutual
35 assistance (10 miles/16 kilometers) in appropriate circumstances.
- 36 • To give authority for Mexican and U.S. fire management organizations to
37 cooperate on other fire management activities outside the zone of mutual
38 assistance.

39 National Operational Guidelines for this agreement are located at
40 <https://www.nifc.gov/nicc/logistics/references.htm>. These guidelines cover
41 issues at the national level and also provide a template for those issues that need

1 to be addressed in local operating plans. The local operating plans identify how
2 the agreement will be implemented by the GACCs (and Zone Coordination
3 Centers) that have dispatching responsibility on the border. The local operating
4 plans will provide the standard operational procedures for wildfire suppression
5 resources that could potentially cross the U.S. border into Mexico.

6 **U.S. – Canada, Reciprocal Forest Firefighting Arrangement**

7 Information about United States – Canada cross border support is located at
8 <https://www.nifc.gov/nicc/logistics/references.htm>. This chapter provides policy
9 guidance, which was determined by an exchange of diplomatic notes between
10 the U.S. and Canada in 1982. This chapter also provides operational guidelines
11 for the Canada – U.S. Reciprocal Forest Fire Fighting Arrangement. These
12 guidelines are updated yearly.

13 **U.S. – Australia/New Zealand Wildland Fire Arrangement**

14 Information about United States – Australia/New Zealand support is located at
15 <https://www.nifc.gov/nicc/logistics/references.htm>. This chapter provides a copy
16 of the arrangements signed between the U.S. and the states of Australia and the
17 country of New Zealand for support to one another during severe fire seasons. It
18 also contains the AOP that provides more detail on the procedures,
19 responsibilities, and requirements used during activation.

20 **International Non-Wildland Fire Coordination and Cooperation**

21 **International Disasters Support**

22 Federal wildland fire employees may be requested through the FS to support the
23 U.S. Government's (USG) response to international disasters by serving on
24 Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DARTs). A DART is the operational
25 equivalent of an ICS team used by the U.S. Agency for International
26 Development's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) to provide an on-
27 the-ground operational capability at the site of an international disaster. Prior to
28 being requested for a DART assignment, employees will have completed a
29 weeklong DART training course covering information about:

- 30 • USG agencies charged with the responsibility to coordinate USG responses
31 to international disaster.
- 32 • The purpose, organizational structure, and operational procedures of a
33 DART.
- 34 • How the DART relates to other international organizations and countries
35 during an assignment. Requests for these assignments are coordinated
36 through the FS International Programs, Disaster Assistance Support
37 Program (DASP).
- 38 • DART assignments should not be confused with technical exchange
39 activities, which do not require DART training.

40 More information about DARTs can be obtained at the FS International
41 Program's website, <https://www.fs.fed.us/global/aboutus/dasp/welcome.htm>.

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