

United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
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To: State Directors
From: Director, Office of Fire & Aviation
Subject: Miscellaneous Incident Business Management Issues

Program Area: Incident Business Management

Purpose: Over the past several years, the Office of Fire and Aviation (OF&A) and several state offices have gathered documentation to support billings for fires declared under the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), as well as other FEMA declared incidents (Space Shuttle Incident, hurricanes, etc). A review of the documentation has shown inconsistencies in applying established policies and retaining appropriate documentation. As a result, OF&A feels it is necessary to remind all personnel involved in incident management and support of their responsibilities.

Did you know...

All purchases against an incident number, including airfare and TMC fee, should be documented with an incident order and request number. It is not sufficient to just show the charge code. The authority to purchase or charge an incident for a purchase is the incident order and request number.

The \$3 camp rate reimbursement also applies to Alaska. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) personnel on incident assignment to Alaska whose meals are provided are only entitled to claim \$3 camp rate per day. On the first and last day of travel, a traveler may claim \$3 plus any meals purchased en route based on the locality rate, not to exceed 3/4 of the locality rate. (See the current National Business Center instruction memorandum on camp rate).

Personnel funded out of preparedness who are assigned to or in support of a fire should charge their base hours to preparedness (2810) with the incident number. (2810-HU-XXXX). It is important to correctly charge personnel time to incidents to accurately show total incident costs in order to accurately bill for reimbursable fires. Accurate reimbursable bills

provide additional funding to the fire program through redistribution of 2852 funds. (See current OF&A IM on Base 8 funding)

Personnel use their own state and office code with 2821 charges. Do not use the state/office code indicated on the resource order. Federal agencies and BLM offices do not cross-bill for suppression charges and these charges do not affect hard dollar budgets. It's easier to validate charges and obtain documentation if the home unit state/office code is used.

It is a requirement to file the OF-288, Emergency Firefighter Time Report, for personnel on incident assignment with their payroll records. Local support personnel who record their time on an OF-288 should provide the approved OF-288 for inclusion in their payroll records as well. (See current OF&A IM on incident timekeeping)

Claims for damage to rental cars should be covered under the Government Agreement. As long as the terms and conditions of the Government agreement are adhered to, the government rental rate provides coverage for damage that occurs during the rental period. Employees who rent a car under the Government Agreement and violate terms of the agreement take on personal liability for damage. The rental car vendor must file a Tort claim if they wish to claim damages. Rental car damage cannot be settled as a contract claim. If the incident assignment requires operation of the vehicle outside the Government Agreement, other procurement methods should be used to obtain the vehicle. (See Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook, Chapter 10, Section 17.1)

The description line for a charge card transaction should be configured to identify the card holder in the event issues/questions arise or documentation is necessary. It is suggested to include at a minimum, the cardholder's last name, brief description of the transaction, and the last 10 digits of the card number, e.g., Smith, TMC, 12345678910.

The home unit org code should be used with FireCode and Severity project numbers. In order to document who is charging what to fires or severity projects it is recommended that the individual's home unit org code be used for all charges incurred by the individual. This rule does not apply for a hurricane response or other disasters that require a reimbursable code.

The mandatory two days off following a 14-day assignment will be coded as Administrative Leave (060) and not charged to the incident. After completion of a 14-day assignment and return to the home unit, two days off will be provided (2 after 14). Code a paid day off *occurring on a regular workday* to hours code 060 and charge it to sub-activity 0999-77. Employees are not compensated for a day off occurring at the home unit or on the incident that falls on a scheduled day off or on a holiday. (See current OF&A IM on Emergency Incident Related Payroll Operations)

Incident replacement of government property items on fires is not handled consistently and oftentimes the incident is incorrectly charged. Specialty items originally provided by the home unit through use of preparedness funds and replacement is due to normal wear and tear should be accomplished using home unit funds, not incident funds. If the government property item was damaged on the incident due to a specific event, e.g, wind event destroys tent, the

incident could, upon receipt of required documentation and proof of damage, authorize replacement using the Incident Replacement Requisition. Cache items will be replaced if available at the incident; replacement of non standard items is the responsibility of the home unit. (The Interagency Incident Business Management, Chapter 30, Section 35 addresses government property/equipment damage/replacement.)

Contact: Questions should be directed to Hallie Locklear, Incident Business Management Specialist, at 208-387-5166.

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