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Chapter 08

Interagency Coordination & Cooperation

Introduction

Fire management planning, preparedness, prevention, suppression, fire use, 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

USDOJ 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 NIFC will request, and DOD will provide, temporary support to NIFC in wildland fire 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 in the *National Interagency Mobilization Guide* (NFES #2092).

National Wildland Fire Oversight Structure

Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC)

The Council is a cooperative, interagency organization dedicated to achieving consistent implementation of the goals, actions, and policies in the National Fire Plan and the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy. The Council provides

1 leadership and oversight to ensure policy coordination, accountability and
2 effective implementation of the National Fire Plan and the Federal Wildland
3 Fire Management Policy.

4
5 The Council consists of the Department of Agriculture's Undersecretary for
6 Natural Resources and the Environment and the Chief of the U.S. Forest
7 Service, the Department of the Interior's Directors of the National Park Service,
8 Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, the Assistant Secretary
9 of Indian Affairs and the Chief of Staff to the Secretary of the Interior. Staffing
10 the Council will be coordinated by the Department of Agriculture's Office of
11 Fire and Aviation Management and the Department of the Interior's Office of
12 Wildland Fire Coordination.

13 **Office of Wildland Fire Coordination (OWFC)**

14 The Office of Wildland Fire Coordination (OWFC) is a Department of the
15 Interior organization responsible for managing, coordinating and overseeing the
16 Department's wildland fire management programs and policies. They include:
17 smoke management, preparedness, suppression, emergency stabilization and
18 rehabilitation, rural fire assistance, prevention, biomass, hazardous fuels, budget
19 and financial initiatives, and information technology. The OWFC also
20 coordinates with interagency partners including government and non-
21 government groups.

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

23
24 The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) is made up of the USDA
25 Forest Service (FS); four Department of the Interior agencies: Bureau of Land
26 Management (BLM), National Park Service (NPS), Bureau of Indian Affairs
27 (BIA), and the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS); and State forestry agencies
28 through the National Association of State Foresters (NASF). The mission of the
29 NWCG is to provide leadership in establishing and maintaining consistent
30 interagency standards and guidelines, qualifications, and communications for
31 wildland fire management. Its goal is to provide more effective execution of
32 each agency's fire management program. The group provides a formalized
33 system to agree upon standards of training, equipment, qualifications, and other
34 operational functions.

35 **Multi-Agency Management and Coordination**

36 **National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group**

37 National multi-agency coordination is overseen by the National Multi-Agency
38 Coordination (NMAC) Group, which consists of one representative each from
39 the following agencies: BLM, FWS, NPS, BIA, FS, NASF, and the Federal
40 Emergency Management Agency - United States Fire Administration (FEMA-
41 USFA), who have been delegated authority by their respective agency directors
42 to manage wildland fire operations on a national scale when fire management
43 resource shortages are probable. The delegated authorities include:
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- 1 • Provide oversight of general business practices between the National Multi-
2 Agency Coordination (NMAC) group and the Geographic Area Multi-
3 Agency Coordination (GMAC) groups.
- 4 • Establish priorities among geographic areas.
- 5 • Direct, control, allocate, and reallocate resources among or between
6 geographic areas to meet NMAC priorities.
- 7 • Implement decisions of the NMAC.

8

9 **Geographic Area Coordinating Groups**

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

- 15 • Establish priorities for the geographic area.
- 16 • Acquire, allocate, and reallocate resources.
- 17 • Issue coordinated and collective situation status reports.

18

19 **Sub-Geographic/Local Area Multi-Agency Coordinating Groups**

20 Sub-geographic or local area multi-agency coordination is overseen by Sub-
21 Geographic/Local Area Multi-Agency Coordinating Groups, which are
22 comprised of local area lead administrators or fire managers from agencies that
23 have jurisdictional or support responsibilities, or that may be significantly
24 impacted by resource commitments. Local MAC responsibilities include:

- 25 • Establish priorities for the local area.
- 26 • Acquire, allocate, and reallocate resources.
- 27 • Issue coordinated and collective situation status reports.

28

29 For additional information on MAC Groups see Chapter 30 of the *National*
30 *Interagency Mobilization Guide* or pertinent Geographic Area Mobilization
31 Guides.

32

33 **National Dispatch/Coordination System**

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

- 35 • National
- 36 • Geographic
- 37 • Local

38

39 Logistical dispatch operations occur at all three levels, while initial attack
40 dispatch operations occur primarily at the local level. Any geographic area or
41 local dispatch center using a dispatch system outside the three-tier system must
42 justify why a non-standard system is being used.

- 43 • **BLM** - Any geographic area or local dispatch center using a dispatch
44 structure outside the approved three-tier system must annually request
45 written authorization from the Director, Office of Fire and Aviation.

- 1 • *FS - Any geographic area or local dispatch center using a dispatch*
2 *structure outside the approved three-tier system must annually request*
3 *written authorization from the Forest Service Regional Director of Fire*
4 *and Aviation.*

5
6 **National Interagency Mobilization Guide**

7 The *National Interagency Mobilization Guide* (NFES 2092) identifies standard
8 procedures which guide the operations of multi-agency logistical support
9 activity throughout the coordination system. The guide is intended to facilitate
10 interagency dispatch coordination, ensuring timely and cost effective incident
11 support. Local and Geographic Area Mobilization Guides should be used to
12 supplement the *National Interagency Mobilization Guide*.

13
14 **Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook**

15 All federal agencies have adopted the *National Wildfire Coordinating Group*
16 *(NWCG) Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook (IIBMH)* as the
17 official guide to provide execution of each agency's incident business
18 management program. Unit offices, geographic areas, or NWCG may issue
19 supplements, as long as policy or conceptual data is not changed.

20
21 **Policy**

22 Since consistent application of interagency policies and guidelines is essential,
23 procedures in the *IIBMH* will be followed. Agency manuals provide a bridge
24 between manual sections and the *IIBMH* so that continuity of agency manual
25 systems is maintained and all additions, changes, and supplements are filed in a
26 uniform manner.

- 27 • *BLM - The IIBMH replaces BLM Manual Section 1111.*
28 • *FWS - Refer to Service Manual 095 FW 3 Wildland Fire Management.*
29 • *NPS - Refer to RM-18.*
30 • *FS - Refer to FSH 5109.34.*

31
32 **National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC)**

33 The National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) is located at the National
34 Interagency Fire Center (NIFC), Boise, Idaho. The principal mission of the
35 NICC is the cost-effective and timely coordination of land management agency
36 emergency response for wildland fire at the national level. This is accomplished
37 through planning, situation monitoring, and expediting resources orders between
38 the BIA Areas, BLM States, NASF, FWS Regions, FS Regions, NPS Regions,
39 National Weather Service (NWS) Regions, Federal Emergency Management
40 Agency (FEMA) Regions through the United States Fire Administration
41 (USFA), and other cooperating agencies.

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1 NICC supports non-fire emergencies when tasked by an appropriate agency,
2 such as FEMA, through the National Response Plan. NICC collects and
3 consolidates information from the GACCs and disseminates the *National*
4 *Incident Management Situation Report* through the NICC website at
5 <http://www.nifc.gov/nicc/sitreprt.pdf>

6

7 **Geographic Area Coordination Centers (GACCs)**

8 There are 11 GACCs, each of which serves a specific geographic portion of the
9 United States. Each GACC interacts with the local dispatch centers, as well as
10 with NICC and neighboring GACCs. Refer to the *National Interagency*
11 *Mobilization Guide* for a complete directory of GACC locations, addresses, and
12 personnel.

13

14 The principal mission of each GACC is to provide the cost-effective and timely
15 coordination of emergency response for all incidents within the specified
16 geographic area. GACCs are also responsible for determining needs,
17 coordinating priorities, and facilitating the mobilization of resources from their
18 areas to other geographic areas.

19

20 Each GACC prepares an intelligence report that consolidates fire and resource
21 status information received from each of the local dispatch centers in its area.
22 This report is sent to NICC and to the local dispatch centers, caches, and agency
23 managers in the geographic area.

24

25 **Local Dispatch Centers**

26 Local dispatch centers, are located throughout the country as dictated by the
27 needs of fire management agencies. The principal mission of a local dispatch
28 center is to provide safe, timely, and cost-effective coordination of emergency
29 response for all incidents within its specified geographic area. This most often
30 entails the coordination of initial attack responses and the ordering of additional
31 resources when fires escape initial attack.

32

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

37

38 Some local dispatch centers are also tasked with law enforcement and agency
39 administrative workloads for non-fire operations; if this is the case, a
40 commensurate amount of funding and training should be provided by the
41 benefiting activity to accompany the increased workload. If a non-wildland fire
42 workload is generated by another agency operating in an interagency dispatch
43 center, the agency generating the additional workload should offset this
44 increased workload with additional funding or personnel.

45

46

1 **Standards for Cooperative Agreements**

2

3 **Agreement Policy**

4 Agreements will be comprised of two components: the actual agreement and an
5 operations plan. The agreement will outline the authority and general
6 responsibilities of each party and the operations plan will define the specific
7 operating procedures.

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

12

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

16

17 All agreements must undergo periodic joint review; and, as appropriate,
18 revision.

19

20 Assistance in preparing agreements can be obtained from local or state office
21 fire and/or procurement staff.

22

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

25 • *BLM - BLM Manual 9200, Departmental Manual 620 DM, the Reciprocal*
26 *Fire Protection Act, 42 U.S.C. 1856, and the Federal Wildland Fire*
27 *Management Policy and Program Review.*

28 • *FWS - Service Manual, Departmental Manual 620 DM, and Reciprocal*
29 *Fire Protection Act, 42U.S.C. 1856.*

30 • *NPS - Chapter 2, Federal Assistance and Interagency Agreements*
31 *Guideline (DO-20), and the Departmental Manual 620 (DM-620). NPS-*
32 *RM-18, Interagency Agreements, Release Number 1, 02/22/99.*

33 • *FS - FSM 1580, 5106.2 and FSH 1509.11.*

34

35 **Elements of an Agreement**

36 The following elements should be addressed in each agreement:

37 • The authorities appropriate for each party to enter in an agreement.

38 • The roles and responsibilities of each agency signing the agreement.

39 • An element addressing the cooperative roles of each participant in
40 prevention, pre-suppression, suppression, fuels, and prescribed fire
41 management operations.

42 • Reimbursements/Compensation - All mutually approved operations that
43 require reimbursement and/or compensation will be identified and agreed
44 to by all participating parties through a cost-share agreement. The

- 1 mechanism and timing of the funding exchanges will be identified and
2 agreed upon.
- 3 • Appropriation Limitations - Parties to this agreement are not obligated to
4 make expenditures of funds or reimbursements of expenditures under
5 terms of this agreement unless the Congress of the United States of
6 America appropriates such funds for that purpose by the Counties of -
7 _____, by the Cities of _____, and/or the Governing Board of Fire
8 Commissioners of _____.
 - 9 • Liabilities/Waivers - Each party waives all claims against every other party
10 for compensation for any loss, damage, personal injury, or death occurring
11 as a consequence of the performance of this agreement unless gross
12 negligence on any part of any party is determined.
 - 13 • Termination Procedure - The agreement shall identify the duration of the
14 agreement and cancellation procedures.
 - 15 • A signature page identifying the names of the responsible officials should
16 be included in the agreement.
 - 17 • *NPS - Refer to DO-20 for detailed instructions and format for developing*
18 *agreements.*

19
20 **Annual Operating Plans (AOPs)**

21 Annual Operating Plan, shall be reviewed, updated, and approved prior to the
22 fire season. The plan may be amended after a major incident as part of a joint
23 debriefing and review.

- 24 • The plan shall contain detailed, specific procedures which will provide for
25 safe, efficient, and effective operations.

26
27 **Elements of an AOP**

28 The following items shall be addressed in the AOP:

- 29 • **Mutual Aid**
30 The AOP should address that there may be times when cooperators are
31 involved in emergency operations and unable to provide mutual aid. In
32 this case other cooperators may be contacted for assistance.
- 33 • **Command Structure**
34 Unified command should be used, as appropriate, whenever multiple
35 jurisdictions are involved, unless one or more parties request a single
36 agency incident commander (IC). If there is a question about jurisdiction,
37 fire managers should mutually decide and agree on the command structure
38 as soon as they arrive on the fire; agency administrators should confirm
39 this decision as soon as possible. Once this decision has been made, the
40 incident organization in use should be relayed to all units on the incident as
41 well as dispatch centers. In all cases, the identity of the IC must be made
42 known to all fireline and support personnel.

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- 1 • **Communications**
2 In mutual aid situations, a common designated radio frequency identified
3 in the AOP should be used for incident communications. All incident
4 resources should utilize and monitor this frequency for incident
5 information, tactical use, and changes in weather conditions or other
6 emergency situations. In some cases, because of equipment availability/
7 capabilities, departments/agencies may have to use their own frequencies
8 for tactical operations, allowing the “common” frequency to be the link
9 between departments. It is important that all department /agencies change
10 to a single frequency or establish a common communications link as soon
11 as practical. Clear text should be used. Avoid personal identifiers, such as
12 names. This paragraph in the Annual Operating Plan shall meet Federal
13 Communications Commission (FCC) requirements for documenting shared
14 use of radio frequencies.
- 15 • **Distance/Boundaries**
16 Responding and requesting parties should identify any mileage limitations
17 from mutual boundaries where “mutual aid” is either pay or non-pay status.
18 Also, for some fire departments, the mileage issue may not be one of initial
19 attack “mutual aid,” but of mutual assistance. In this situation, you may
20 have the option to make it part of this agreement or identify it as a situation
21 where the request would be made to the agency having jurisdiction, which
22 would then dispatch the fire department.
- 23 • **Time/Duration**
24 Responding and requesting parties should identify time limitations (usually
25 24 hours) for resources in a non-reimbursable status, and “rental rates”
26 when the resources are in a reimbursable status. Use of geographic area
27 interagency equipment rates is strongly encouraged.
- 28 • **Qualifications/Minimum Requirements**
29 Agencies, under the National Interagency Incident Management System
30 (NIIMS) concept, have agreed to accept cooperator’s standards for fire
31 personnel qualifications and equipment during initial attack. Once
32 jurisdiction is clearly established, then the standards of the agency(s) with
33 jurisdiction prevail. This direction may be found in the documents *NWCG*
34 *Clarification of Qualifications Standards - Initial Attack 6/20/01*.
- 35 • **Reimbursement/Compensation**
36 Compensation should be “standard” for all fire departments in the
37 geographic area. The rates identified shall be used. Reimbursements
38 should be negotiated on a case-by-case basis, as some fire departments
39 may not expect full compensation, but only reimbursement for their actual
40 costs. Vehicles and equipment operated under the federal excess property
41 system will only be reimbursed for maintenance and operating costs.
- 42 • **Cooperation**
43 The annual operating plan will be used to identify how the cooperators will
44 share expertise, training, and information on items such as prevention,
45 investigation, safety, and training.
- 46

- 1 • **Dispatch Center**
2 Dispatch centers will ensure all resources know the name of the assigned
3 IC 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
8 **Types of Agreements**

9
10 **National Interagency Agreements**

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

18
19 **Regional/State Interagency Agreements**

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

23
24 **Local Interagency Agreements**

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

28
29 **Emergency Assistance**

30 Approved, established interagency emergency assistance agreements are the
31 appropriate and recommended way to provide emergency assistance. If no
32 agreements are established, refer to your agency administrator to determine the
33 authorities delegated to your agency to provide emergency assistance.

34
35 **Contracts**

36 Contracts may be used where they are the most cost-effective means of
37 providing for protection commensurate with established standards. A contract,
38 however, does not absolve an agency administrator of the responsibility for
39 managing a fire program. The office's approved fire management plan must
40 define the role of the contractor in the overall program.

41
42 Contracts should be developed and administered in accordance with federal
43 acquisition regulations. In particular, a contract should specify conditions for
44 abandonment of a fire in order to respond to a new call elsewhere.

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1 **Domestic Non-Wildland Fire Coordination and Cooperation**

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3 **Homeland Security Act**

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

9

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

11 The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Public
12 Law 93-288, as amended) establishes the programs and processes for the Federal
13 Government to provide disaster and emergency assistance to states, local
14 governments, tribal nations, individuals, and qualified private non-profit
15 organizations. The provisions of the Stafford Act cover all hazards including
16 natural disasters and terrorist events. In a major disaster or emergency as
17 defined by the act, the President “may direct any federal agency, with or without
18 reimbursement, to utilize its authorities and the resources granted to it under
19 federal law (including personnel, equipment, supplies, facilities, managerial,
20 technical, and advisory services) in support of state and local assistance efforts.”

21

22 **Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5**

23 HSPD-5, Management of Domestic Incidents, February 28, 2003, is intended to
24 enhance the ability of the United States to manage domestic incidents by
25 establishing a single, comprehensive national incident management system.
26 HSPD-5 designates the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Principal
27 Federal Official (PFO) for domestic incident management and empowers the
28 Secretary to coordinate Federal resources used in response to or recovery from
29 terrorist attacks, major disasters, or other emergencies in specific cases.

30

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

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

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1 **National Response Plan**
 2 Federal disaster relief and emergency assistance are managed under the
 3 Department of Homeland Security/Emergency Preparedness and
 4 Response/Federal Emergency Management Agency (DHS/EPR/FEMA) using
 5 the National Response Plan (NRP). The NRP, using the NIMS, is an all-hazards
 6 plan that establishes a single, comprehensive framework for the management of
 7 domestic incidents. The NRP provides the structure and mechanisms for the
 8 coordination of Federal support to State, local, and tribal incident managers; and
 9 for exercising direct Federal authorities and responsibilities.

10
 11 **Emergency Support Function (ESF) Annexes**

12 The NRP includes 15 Emergency Support Function (ESF) Annexes, which are a
 13 component of the NRP that detail the mission, policies, structures, and
 14 responsibilities of Federal agencies for coordinating resource and programmatic
 15 support to the States, tribes, and other federal agencies or other jurisdictions and
 16 entities during Incidents of National Significance. Each ESF Annex identifies
 17 the ESF coordinator and the primary and support agencies pertinent to the ESF.
 18 The primary agency serves as a Federal executive agent under the Federal
 19 Coordinating Officer to accomplish the ESF mission. Support agencies, when
 20 requested by the DHS or the designated ESF primary agency, are responsible for
 21 conducting operations using their own authorities, subject-matter experts,
 22 capabilities, or resources. USDA-FS is the coordinator and primary agency for
 23 ESF #4 – Firefighting. Other USDA-FS and DOI responsibilities are:

24	25 ESF Support Annex	USDA-FS Role	DOI Role
26	#01 Transportation	Support	Support
27	#02 Communications	Support	Support
28	#03 Public Works and Engineering	Support	Support
29	#04 Firefighting	Coord. & Primary	Support
30	#05 Emergency Management	Support	Support
31	#06 Mass Care, Housing, and Human Services	Support	Support
32	#07 Resource Support	Support	
33	#08 Public Health and Medical Services	Support	
34	#09 Urban Search and Rescue	Support	
35	#10 Oil and HazMat Response	Support	Support
36	#11 Agriculture and Natural Resources		Primary
37	#12 Energy		Support
38	#13 Public Safety and Security	Support	Support
39	#14 Long-term Community Recovery and Mitigation		Support
40	#15 External Affairs		Support

41
 42 **Non-Stafford Act Non-Wildland Fire Coordination and Cooperation**

43 In an actual or potential Incident of National Significance that is not
 44 encompassed by the Stafford Act, the President may instruct a Federal
 45 department or agency, subject to any statutory limitations on the department or
 46 agency, to utilize the authorities and resources granted to it by Congress. In

1 accordance with Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5, Federal
2 departments and agencies are expected to provide their full and prompt support,
3 cooperation, available resources, consistent with their own responsibilities for
4 protecting national security.

5

6 **International Wildland Fire Coordination and Cooperation**

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8 **U.S. - Mexico Cross Border Cooperation on Wildland Fires**

9 In June of 1999, the Department of Interior and the Department of Agriculture
10 signed a Wildfire Protection Agreement with Mexico. The agreement has two
11 purposes:

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

19

20 National Operational Guidelines for this agreement are located in Chapter 40 of
21 the *National Interagency Mobilization Guide*. These guidelines cover issues at
22 the national level and also provide a template for those issues that need to be
23 addressed in local operating plans. The local operating plans identify how the
24 agreement will be implemented by the GACCs (and Zone Coordination Centers)
25 that have dispatching responsibility on the border. The local operating plans
26 will provide the standard operational procedures for wildfire suppression
27 resources that could potentially cross the U.S. border into Mexico.

28

29 **U.S. - Canada, Reciprocal Forest Firefighting Arrangement**

30 Information about United States - Canada cross border support is located in
31 Chapter 40 of the *National Interagency Mobilization Guide*. This chapter
32 provides policy guidance, which was determined by an exchange of diplomatic
33 notes between the U.S. and Canada in 1982. This chapter also provides
34 operational guidelines for the Canada - U.S. Reciprocal Forest Fire Fighting
35 Arrangement. These guidelines are updated yearly.

36

37 **U.S. - Australia/New Zealand Wildland Fire Arrangement**

38 Information about United States - Australia/New Zealand support is located in
39 Chapter 40 of the *National Interagency Mobilization Guide*. This chapter
40 provides a copy of the arrangements signed between the U.S. and the states of
41 Australia and the country of New Zealand for support to one another during
42 severe fire seasons. It also contains the Annual Operating Plan that provides
43 more detail on the procedures, responsibilities, and requirements used during
44 activation.

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1 International Non-Wildland Fire Coordination and Cooperation

2

3 International Disasters Support

4 Federal wildland fire employees may be requested through the Forest Service, to
5 support the U.S. Government's (USG) response to international disasters by
6 serving on Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DARTs). A DART is the
7 operational equivalent of an ICS team used by the U.S. Agency for International
8 Development's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) to provide an on-
9 the-ground operational capability at the site of an international disaster. Prior to
10 being requested for a DART assignment, employees will have completed a
11 weeklong DART training course covering information about:

- 12 • USG agencies charged with the responsibility to coordinate USG responses
13 to international disaster.
- 14 • The purpose, organizational structure, and operational procedures of a
15 DART.
- 16 • How the DART relates to other international organizations and countries
17 during an assignment. Requests for these assignments are coordinated
18 through the FS International Programs, Disaster Assistance Support
19 Program (DASP).
- 20 • DART assignments should not be confused with technical exchange
21 activities, which do not require DART training. More information about
22 DARTs can be obtained at the FS International Program's website:
23 <http://www.fs.fed.us/global/aboutus/dasp/welcome.htm>.