NWCG Data Standard
LOCAL INCIDENT IDENTIFIER
Discussion Paper
November 29, 2007

1. Because the local practices vary, the standards for the LOCAL INCIDENT IDENTIFIER are purposefully defined in relatively general terms. The intent of the data element is to ensure each reporting unit has a scheme for uniquely identifying its individual fires for a given calendar year. Broad latitude is allowed to accommodate the many coding or numbering schemes that are in use now or may be devised to satisfy this requirement.

2. The LOCAL INCIDENT IDENTIFIER must be assigned before action is initiated for the incident. This allows the LOCAL INCIDENT IDENTIFIER to be communicated to any responding or cooperating units.

3. Typically, the LOCAL INCIDENT IDENTIFIER is the FireCode or other cost accounting codes, or a sequential number assigned in the unit's annual dispatch log for the corresponding fire.

4. The reporting unit's agency policies and guidelines will determine whether a fire with multiple points of ignition is documented as a single fire. Based on this local discretion, a LOCAL INCIDENT IDENTIFIER may correspond to multiple ignitions if they are documented as a single fire.

5. To provide consistency and ensure uniqueness of individual records in interagency data sets, the data exchange standard for LOCAL INCIDENT IDENTIFIER specifies a minimum length of 6 characters. Allowing for a special character such as a period or hyphen, this standard allows every reporting unit to issue up to 99,999 unique LOCAL INCIDENT IDENTIFIERS for a particular calendar year (assuming the characters used are numbers).

6. The uniqueness of the LOCAL INCIDENT IDENTIFIER applies to a local fire management organization and a particular calendar year. Other fire management organizations may use the same values for their LOCAL INCIDENT IDENTIFIER (for example, two adjacent Zone Dispatch offices will probably have an incident #5 in any given year). Similarly, a local fire management organization may reuse a value assigned as LOCAL INCIDENT IDENTIFIER (for example, a particular Zone Dispatch will have an incident #5 this year and another incident #5 next year).