



FY 2008 ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT

Forest Service

Washington Office
Fire and Aviation Management



National Incident Management Organization

Who We Are and What We Do

The National Incident Management Organization (NIMO) is the operational arm of wildland fire doctrine and incident management for the National Office of the US Forest Service (USFS). NIMO is tasked with defining the future of wildland fire and incident management, drawing strength from being interagency in scope, transcending historic boundaries and applying new practices and emerging technologies.

The teams are founded upon, and strictly adhere to, the wildland firefighter core values of Duty, Respect and Integrity by providing strong leadership, emphasizing sound land management practices, and supporting accountability for actions and decisions.

Currently, the NIMO program consists of four Type 1 incident management teams. Each seven-person team has a full-time Incident Commander and Command and General Staff positions.

NIMO provides a national level perspective to fire, resource, and incident management; including but not limited to fuels management, enhancing workforce capacity and capability, expanding the existence and use of Type 3 organizations, streamlining training and qualifications, and developing non-traditional partnerships. Using the basic concept of the Incident Command System (ICS), NIMO expands and contracts as needed. From a single individual to a fully-staffed Type 1 IMT, NIMO builds upon the needs of the incident and the host unit.

The teams are employed full-time to respond to incidents and conduct special projects, allowing for long-term commitment. This reduces the cost that can be incurred through transition of teams. Reducing transitions also provides consistency and an additional level of safety, since transition is the most vulnerable time for miscommunication and accidents on an incident.

NIMO believes in developing capability at all levels of fire and aviation management. We develop national leaders within our ranks as well as those we mentor and interact with on projects and assignments.

When considering NIMO as a tool, host units and agencies can expect NIMO to deliver simple, cost-effective and non-traditional solutions to the assigned task. NIMO is ordered through established wildland fire dispatching channels via the National Interagency Fire Center for incidents or directly through the Forest Service's Fire and Aviation Management National Office for project-related assignments.

Incident Assignments

Fire Suppression

NIMO collaborated in the management of incidents in three geographic areas including the Sierra, Los Padres, Klamath, Six Rivers, Gifford Pinchot, and Rogue-Siskiyou National Forests, as well as lands protected by the North Carolina Division of Forestry and the US Fish and Wildlife Service in Virginia and North Carolina. During these assignments, NIMO successfully employed contemporary fire management strategies such as reference budgets, Key Decision Logs and Theater Level Management to improve resource efficiency while reducing costs.

Iron 44 Tribute

NIMO was privileged to coordinate one of the largest tributes ever put on for fallen firefighters. One Carson Helicopter pilot, one Forest Service pilot and seven Grayback firefighters were victims of a helicopter crash in California. NIMO coordinated complex, simultaneous efforts in Redding, California and Medford, Oregon, to provide two memorial services. The event was coordinated across two states, between multiple jurisdictions and two National Forests, involving several federal, state and private agencies.

All-Hazard

NIMO served as the delegated lead ESF4 in the FEMA Regional Resource Coordination Center in Denton, TX and in Louisiana at the Joint Field Office (JFO) for Hurricane Gustav. While assigned, NIMO established an appropriate set of expectations for wildland participation with FEMA as ESF4 within the context of the new National Response Framework. They also worked out of National and Regional Logistics Staging Areas in Beaumont and Houston, Texas on Hurricane Ike, in coordination with the Texas FS and FEMA. They developed streamlined and maintained delivery of critically needed supplies to residents affected by the hurricane, while taking the opportunity to build capacity on two State Type 2 teams.



Houston's Logistical Staging Area

Super Bowl XLII

NIMO provided mentoring to over 28 local, state and federal agencies, leading them to work in a coordinated effort to plan and execute the public safety mission of Super Bowl XLII, sponsoring the first NIMS compliant NFL public safety management. This was a request from Phoenix Fire Department, through the US Fire Administration, to train and develop the Phoenix All-Hazard IMT. This not only spotlighted the incident management process to non-traditional entities, but it expanded national capability and capacity. As a result, this year during the California 2008 fire siege when there was a demand for critical resources, the Phoenix All-Hazard IMT ran a staging area for wildland fire resources.

Managing Complex Fires

Accountable Cost Management

By request of the Inter Deputy Group in the spring of 2008, NIMO developed and rolled out the Accountable Cost Management (ACM) program. The program targeted five regions, containing

forests that historically suffer from the largest and most costly fires. NIMO held workshops in four of the five regions to present not only the primary concepts, but develop relationships with each of the regions to assist them in using ACM during the 2008 fire season. The program espouses five major components: a Key Decision Log (used in 5 regions), a more doctrinal Delegation of Authority, an Incident Reference Budget, Long Term Implementation Plans (used in 3 regions), and During Action Reviews. By request of the Region, team members also conducted the first practical application of ACM principles on the Indians Fire, while others provided support to the Chief's Principle Representative on wildfires throughout California.

Five Critical Regions

In addition to assisting the Regions with applying ACM, NIMO also helped with building capacity through training, assisting with future workforce development, developing choices for fuel mitigation and providing support in large fire planning and management for:

- Northern Rockies
- Rocky Mountain
- Pacific Northwest
- Intermountain
- Pacific Southwest

Theater Level Management

NIMO worked in late summer on the Klamath and Six Rivers National Forests to manage numerous lightning caused fires under the Theater Level Management concept. This effort combined multiple fires under one management organization with one comprehensive strategy. Successes of the theater approach were decentralized command and branch level planning, adopting a "fire is fire" strategy that allowed for many methods of dealing with the landscape. NIMO's presence reduced transitions and provided flexibility to upsize or downsize quickly making for a more resource efficient organization and reducing cost.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)/North Carolina Department of Forestry

NIMO facilitated Unified Command between the North Carolina Division of Forest Resources and USFWS. This enabled close coordination over a 40,000 acre wildfire. This fire was burning in both surface and ground fuels in multiple jurisdictions and ownerships. The complexity of the fire increased due to the two kinds of fire which required a variety of tactics and strategies.. Recognizing the long duration of the event, measures were implemented which facilitated acquisition and utilization of scarce water resources as a suppression tactic and habitat loss mitigation measure. Application of Accountable Cost Management (ACM) tools including Key Decision Log (KDL), During Action Reviews (DAR) and Long-Term Planning (LTP) was also presented and used effectively by the agencies in order to more closely coordinate and collaborate in meeting incident objectives. This was the first time a Department of Interior or a State agency had adopted ACM principles. All parties involved were pleased with the use of NIMO and the incorporation of ACM. NIMO also promoted the Theater Level Management concept at the Evans Road & South 1 Fires in support of North Carolina State, two USFWS Regions and Wilder's Southeast Area Type 2 IMT.

Multi-Agency Coordinating Group Support

NIMO provided support to NMAC in Boise during National Preparedness Level 4-5. Team members developed tools and innovative methodologies for comparing and presenting national resource information to NMAC to assist in improving the 14 day outlook. An NMAC Support Guide for

future detailers was completed, which outlines the intelligence to gather, its source, presentation formats and archival protocols.

NIMO assisted in the Northern and Southern California GACCs during the fall of 2007 and summer of 2008. NIMO provided assistance in every functional area, as well as with setting of priorities, long-term planning and assisted with Nation Response Framework, federal support, to the state through the ESF-4 function.

Cost & Resource Effectiveness

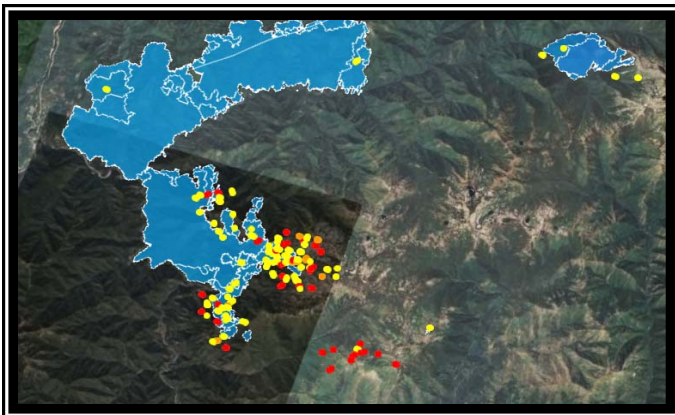
NIMO was able to support and train local Type 3 resources on the Sierra National Forest as a cost-effective alternative to ordering a Type 2 team. The estimated savings was \$250,000 in Type 2 team mobilization.

In California's North Ops, NIMO consolidated a large number of fires and worked for longer periods saving as many as three transitions to other Type 1 or Type 2 teams. At \$250,000 per transition, that's a savings of \$750,000.

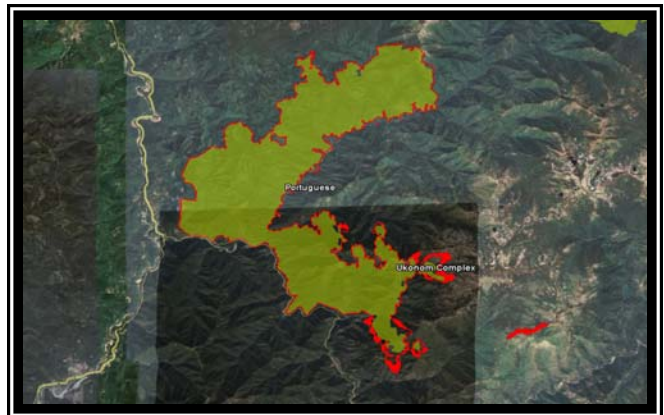
Innovation

Geospatial-based Decision Tool (GDT)

NIMO developed a visual decision-making tool to assist Multi-Agency Coordinating Groups with priority setting for critical resources. It includes a spreadsheet to track critical resources along with mapping products that utilize infrared technology. The application allows viewers to see resources in relation to fire perimeter, fire growth and intensity overlain on Google Earth satellite photos, greatly enhancing their understanding of the current situation. Users have the ability to track progress over time and view the location of individual fires within complexes, acreage and direction of fire growth. The application can easily be replicated and used by geographic areas to conduct MAC briefings, and serve as the information utilized by the MAC in prioritizing fires and allocating scarce resources to the area of greatest need.



Ukonom Complex: Pre GDT, fire used only MODIS dots, no perimeter



Infrared showing active fire perimeter

Leadership

- NIMO is building its own capacity and capability, by expanding their qualifications to serve within Area Command in the future.
- NIMO sponsored an individual to participate in Dialogos' Leadership for Collective Intelligence training. This individual is sharing these leadership concepts with all team members throughout the NIMO program.
- NIMO participated in emotional intelligence training through Mindspring.
- NIMO has been selected to be part of a High Reliability Organization (HRO) study through CAL Berkley to observe the incident management organization in the USA compared to a similar organization in France.
- NIMO assisted the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest in the utilization of fire decision support tools (FSPRO and FARSITE) in the management of on-going incidents. Team members provided advice and counsel to the Forest on the appropriate use of a fire-use module and a long-term fire assessment teams to help manage and monitor fires burning in inaccessible terrain and difficult fuel types.
- NIMO pioneered demonstration projects in the use of video teleconferencing on incidents during the 2008 fire season. Testing was directed at communication between remote camps, the Incident Command Post, Area Command and the hosting Agency Administer office.
- The Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC) approved testing of proposed modifications to the "Interagency Strategy for the Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (2004)" on a limited number of field units during the 2008 fire season. NIMO served on a team that tested the revised policy and use of the Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS) on the Klamath National Forest. A NIMO Information Officer assisted the task group with preparing a communication strategy to convey this policy change to internal agency employees and external partners.

Building Capacity & Capability



A NIMO member coaching the Virginia Dept. of Forestry

NIMO is tasked with increasing capacity and capability of resources by coaching and mentoring traditional and non-traditional partners, incident management teams and agencies personnel in incident management; including guidance in developing new decision tools, providing learn-as-you-go opportunities, building Type 2 & 3 organizations, assisting with complexity analysis, teaching concepts of appropriate management response, coaching for functional skills, researching grant opportunities for training, logistical expertise and demonstrating "non-fire" skills such as staging area/mobilization center operations.

Teams mentored or trained by NIMO in 2007/2008 were:

Type 2 Teams	Type 3 Organizations
(1) Virginia Department of Forestry	(1) Sierra National Forest
(1) South Carolina Forestry Commission	(1) Kentucky Department of Forestry
(2) North Carolina Division of Forest Resources	(3) Alabama Forestry Commission
(4) APHIS Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ)	(1) Phoenix Police and Fire Department All-Hazard
(1) Fire Department of New York	(2) Texas Type 3 All-Hazard IMTs
(1) Arizona State Complex All Hazard IMT	(1) Medford, Oregon

Taskbook and Course Revisions

NIMO advanced or completed more than 250 task books during FY 2007/2008 and assisted with the following:

- 5109.17 Review and Revision
- Review and revision of 25 safety, aviation, logistics and planning Position Taskbooks.
- S-520 Simulation Rewrite and Implementation
- S-620 Area Command Simulation Rewrite

Training

Region 8 Strategic Workforce Plan

Region 8 has made a commitment to build future leaders through a comprehensive “pathway to fire leadership” that entails all facets of fire training, education, qualifications and mentoring. Initial discussions between NIMO and Region 8 fire leadership yielded the framework and commitment to a timeline for developing the program as a basis for leadership development within Fire and Aviation Management. Final products will be completed in FY09.

Leadership in Action

The Leadership in Action is a course under development with the assistance of NIMO and will result in top level “leadership training.”

Type 3 Simulation and Air Center Preparedness Review

NIMO reviewed and applied the five elements of a High Reliability Organization (HRO) to the Type 3 organization in the Upper Colorado River Interagency Fire Management Unit while assisting them through a simulation. The result was positive collaboration and communication among personnel. Interagency participants and NIMO worked together on elements of Type 3 IMT, AMR, ACM and All-Hazard.

Non-Traditional Partnerships

NIMO fostered a continuing partnership with USDA APHIS and Oklahoma Department of Agriculture by assisting with S-420 in Oklahoma City. Four teams from APHIS Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) went through the week-long course in February. As a result of this ongoing program, the State of Texas utilized IMTs from Oklahoma Department of Agriculture for wildfire management this spring when wildland fire IMTs were not available.

Classroom instruction

NIMO served as instructors for:

- “Media & Community Relations” in National Fire Management Leadership
- S-403 Advanced Information Officer
- Rx-510 and S-520
- “S-420 in the Field” and in the classroom
- I-200, I-300 and I-400
- S-404 Safety Officer Class

Fuels Management

Shasta-Trinity National Forest Knob Brush Burn Facilitative Learning Analysis

A NIMO team member conducted a Facilitative Learning Analysis with available personnel involving the planning, preparation and implementation of the Knob Brush Rx Burn. Lessons learned included successful actions that should be repeated, as well as those that will strengthen and improve the Shasta-Trinity National Forest prescribed fire program. NIMO also identified and documented the challenges associated with implementing new authorities in FSM 5140 and the pending policy change that will recognize the interchangeable nature of prescribed fire, wildland fire use and wildland fire within a single fire event.

Landscape-scale Fire Assessment

NIMO developed a concept paper in USFS Region 3 on maintaining cost effective and appropriate treatments in previously burned landscapes to avoid catastrophic fires in the future. Initial discussions with possible host forests have begun and will continue into 2009.

Florida Trails Prescribed Burn

NIMO has been requested to assist the National Forests of Florida with the fuels management of isolated tracks of property throughout the Florida Trail System. These pieces of land are owned by the FS but are 50 to 80 miles outside of the National Forest boundary. NIMO has been provided a Delegation of Authority to work with cooperators and conduct prescribed burns on these lands to keep them maintained. Though these are small tracks of land, the use of NIMO in managing land that the FS is responsible for but that is not in close proximity to a National Forest, allows forest staff to focus on fuels management projects prioritized on the forest during critical burn periods.

Special Projects

Stakeholder Review of National Incident Management System (NIMS) Forms

NIMO personnel worked on recommended changes and modification of current ICS/NIMS forms for all hazard/risk incidents. These team members worked with several contractors, committees, and groups representing the fire community in the development of these forms, the final draft of which were completed the summer of 2008. Several of the new forms are currently under consideration for use on incidents.