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Chapter 08 Interagency Coordination & 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

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 the National Interagency Fire Center (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 Chapter 40 of the *National Interagency Mobilization Guide* online at:
<http://www.nifc.gov/nicc/mobguide/CHAPTER40.pdf>

1 National Wildland Fire Management Structure

2

3 Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC)

4 The WFLC is a cooperative, interagency organization dedicated to achieving
5 consistent implementation of the goals, actions, and policies in the National Fire
6 Plan and the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy. The WFLC provides
7 leadership and oversight to ensure policy coordination, accountability, and
8 effective implementation of the National Fire Plan and the Federal Wildland
9 Fire Management Policy.

10

11 The Council consists of the Department of Agriculture's Undersecretary for
12 Natural Resources and the Environment and the Chief of the U.S. Forest
13 Service; the Department of the Interior's Directors of the National Park Service,
14 the Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Land Management, the
15 Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs and the Chief of Staff to the Secretary of
16 the Interior; the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Fire Administration;
17 the Intertribal Timber Council; the Western Governors Association; the National
18 Association of State Foresters; and the National Association of Counties.
19 Staffing the Council will be coordinated by the Department of Agriculture's
20 Office of Fire and Aviation Management and the Department of the Interior's
21 Office of Wildland Fire Coordination.

22

23 Federal Fire Policy Council (FFPC)

24 The Federal Fire Policy Council carries out the federal component of wildland
25 fire management. The primary responsibilities of the FFPC include establishing
26 national policy guidance; formulating, coordinating, and integrating wildland
27 fire policy; providing policy direction for the formulation of the wildland fire
28 budgets; providing a forum to consider and resolve inter- and intra-departmental
29 policy issues; ensuring that program goals are identified and that results are
30 measured for wildland fire; and maintaining national level fire activity
31 situational awareness.

32

33 The Federal Fire Policy Council is composed of the USDA Deputy Under
34 Secretary – National Resources and Environment; the Chief of the Forest
35 Service and the Deputy Chief of State and Private Forestry; and for DOI the
36 Assistant Secretaries for Policy, Management and Budget, Fish and Wildlife and
37 Parks, Indian Affairs, Land and Minerals Management, and Water and Science;
38 the Bureau Directors of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Land
39 Management, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, and the
40 US Geological Survey; the Deputy Assistant Secretary – Law Enforcement,
41 Security & Emergency Management; the Assistant Administrator of DHS-US
42 Fire Administration; and the Environmental Protection Agency representative.

43

44 Wildland Fire Executive Council (WFEC)

45 The Wildland Fire Executive Council provides coordinated interagency federal
46 executive level wildland fire policy leadership, direction, and program oversight.

1 Members include the Director, USDA FS Fire & Aviation Management; the
2 Director, DOI Office of Wildland Fire Coordination; the BLM Assistant
3 Director, Office of Fire and Aviation Management; the NPS Associate Director,
4 Visitor and Resource Protection; the FWS Assistant Director, National Wildlife
5 Refuge System; the BIA Deputy Director, Trust and Services; the Associate
6 Director, DOI Aviation Management Division; the Administrator, DHS U. S.
7 Fire Administration; and the Chair, NWCG, in an ex officio capacity.

8

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

10 The Interior Fire Executive Council (IFEC) provides coordination and
11 interagency executive level wildland fire policy leadership, direction, and
12 program oversight. IFEC is the focal point for discussing wildland fire policy
13 issues that affect the DOI and provides a forum for gathering the interests of the
14 DOI bureaus to formulate a DOI recommendation and/or position to be taken
15 forward to the Wildland Fire Executive Council (WFEC).

16

17 The IFEC is composed of the Director, Office of Wildland Fire Coordination
18 (OWFC) and the four DOI fire directors and their respective senior executive.
19 Associate members include the Director, Aviation Management Directorate and
20 a representative from USGS.

21

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

23 The OWFC is a Department of the Interior organization responsible for
24 managing and overseeing all wildland fire management activities executed by
25 the bureaus. OWFC coordinates the Department's wildland fire programs
26 within the Department and with other federal and non-federal partners, to
27 establish legally and scientifically based Department-wide policies and budgets,
28 and to provide strategic leadership and oversight, that result in safe,
29 comprehensive, cohesive, efficient, and effective wildland fire programs for the
30 nation consistent with the bureaus' statutory authorities and constraints.

31

32 OWFC has three functional areas:

- 33 • The Budget and Performance Management Division which manages and
34 oversees the DOI Wildland Fire Management financial account and budget
35 operations;
- 36 • The Policy Division which develops wildland fire management program
37 policies, strategies, and plans for wildland fire operations, fuels and biomass
38 coordination, emergency management coordination, science advisory,
39 international cooperation, and strategic planning; and
- 40 • The Enterprise Systems and Decision Support Division which coordinates
41 with Federal and non-Federal partners on inter-departmental/intra-
42 governmental Information Technology systems that support interagency
43 wildland fire business management, fire operations and program
44 management activities and other decision support tools. This functional
45 area also manages the Fire Program Analysis Group (FPA), Wildland Fire
46 Decision Support System (WFDSS), the Integrated Reporting of Wildland-

1 Fire Information Group (iRWIn), and Ecosystem Management Decision
2 Support (EMDS).

3

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

5 The NWCG is made up of the USDA FS; four Department of the Interior
6 agencies: BLM, NPS, BIA, and the FWS; Intertribal Timber Council; U.S. Fire
7 Administration; and state forestry agencies through the National Association of
8 State Foresters (NASF). The mission of the NWCG is to provide leadership in
9 establishing and maintaining consistent interagency standards and guidelines,
10 qualifications, and communications for wildland fire management. Its goal is to
11 provide more effective execution of each agency's fire management program.
12 The group provides a formalized system to agree upon standards of training,
13 equipment, qualifications, and other operational functions.

14

15 **Multi-Agency Management and Coordination**

16

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

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

- 24 • Provide oversight of general business practices between the NMAC group
25 and the Geographic Area Multi-Agency Coordination groups.
- 26 • Establish priorities among geographic areas.
- 27 • Activate and maintain a ready reserve of national resources for assignment
28 directly by NMAC as needed.
- 29 • Implement decisions of the NMAC.

30

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

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

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

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1 National Dispatch/Coordination System

2

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

- 4 • National
- 5 • Geographic
- 6 • Local

7

8 Logistical dispatch operations occur at all three levels, while initial attack
9 dispatch operations occur primarily at the local level. Any geographic area or
10 local dispatch center using a dispatch system outside the three-tier system must
11 justify why a non-standard system is being used and request written
12 authorization from the DOI National Office or USFS Regional Office.

13

14 National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC)

15 The NICC is located at NIFC, Boise, Idaho. The principal mission of the NICC
16 is the cost-effective and timely coordination of land management agency
17 emergency response for wildland fire at the national level. This is accomplished
18 through planning, situation monitoring, and expediting resource orders between
19 the BIA Areas, BLM States, National Association of State Foresters, FWS
20 Regions, FS Regions, NPS Regions, National Weather Service (NWS) Regions,
21 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Regions through the United
22 States Fire Administration (USFA), and other cooperating agencies.

23

24 NICC supports non-fire emergencies when tasked by an appropriate agency,
25 such as FEMA, through the National Response Framework. NICC collects and
26 consolidates information from the GACCs and disseminates the *National*
27 *Incident Management Situation Report* through the NICC website at
28 <http://www.nifc.gov/nicc/sitreprt.pdf>.

29

30 Geographic Area Coordination Centers (GACCs)

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

36

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

42

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

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1 Local Dispatch Centers

2 Local dispatch centers are located throughout the country as dictated by the
3 needs of fire management agencies. The principal mission of a local dispatch
4 center is to provide safe, timely, and cost-effective coordination of emergency
5 response for all incidents within its specified geographic area. This entails the
6 coordination of initial attack responses and the ordering of additional resources
7 when fires escape initial attack.

8

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

13

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

21

22 Local and Geographic Area Drawdown

23

24 Drawdown is the predetermined number and type of suppression resources that
25 are required to maintain viable initial attack (IA) capability at either the local or
26 geographic area. Drawdown resources are considered unavailable outside the
27 local or geographic area for which they have been identified. Drawdown is
28 intended to:

29 • Ensure adequate fire suppression capability for local and/or geographic area
30 managers.

31 • Enable sound planning and preparedness at all management levels.

32 Although drawdown resources are considered unavailable outside the local or
33 geographic area for which they have been identified, they may still be
34 reallocated by the Geographic Area or National MAC to meet higher priority
35 obligations.

36

37 Establishing Drawdown Levels

38 Local drawdown is established by the local unit and/or the local MAC group and
39 implemented by the local dispatch office. The local dispatch office will notify
40 the Geographic Area Coordination Center (GACC) of local drawdown decisions
41 and actions.

42

43 Geographic area drawdown is established by the GMAC and implemented by
44 the GACC. The GACC will notify the local dispatch offices and the National
45 Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) of geographic area drawdown decision
46 and actions.

1 National Ready Reserve (NRR)

2

3 NRR is a means by which the NMAC identifies and readies specific categories,
4 types, and quantities of fire suppression resources in order to maintain overall
5 national readiness during periods of actual or predicted national suppression
6 resource scarcity.

7 NRR implementation responsibilities are as follows:

- 8 • NMAC establishes national ready reserve requirements by resource
9 category, type, and quantity.
- 10 • NICC implements NMAC intent by directing individual GACCs to place
11 specific categories, types, and quantities of resources on national ready
12 reserve.
- 13 • GACCs direct local dispatch centers and/or assigned IMTs to specifically
14 identify resources to be placed on national ready reserve.
- 15 • GACCs provide NICC specific names of national ready reserve resources.
- 16 • NICC mobilizes national ready reserve assets through normal coordination
17 system channels as necessary.

18

19 National ready reserve resources must meet the following requirements:

- 20 • May be currently assigned to ongoing incidents.
- 21 • Must be able to demobe and be enroute to new assignment in less than 2
22 hours.
- 23 • Resources must have a minimum of 7 days left in 14 day rotation
24 (extensions will not be factored in this calculation).
- 25 • May be assigned to incidents after being designated ready reserve, in
26 coordination with NICC.
- 27 • Designated ready reserve resources may be adjusted on a daily basis.

28

29 NMAC will adjust ready reserve requirements as needed. Furthermore, in order
30 to maintain national surge capability, the NMAC may retain available resources
31 within a geographic area, over and above the established geographic area
32 drawdown level.

33

34 National Interagency Mobilization Guide

35

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

42

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1 Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook

2

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

8

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

- 14 • **BLM** - *The IIBMH replaces BLM Manual Section 1111.*
- 15 • **FWS** - *Refer to Service Manual 095 FW 3 Wildland Fire Management.*
- 16 • **NPS** - *Refer to RM-18.*
- 17 • **FS** - *Refer to FSH 5109.34.*

18

19 Standards for Cooperative Agreements

20

21 Agreement Policy

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

26

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

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

35

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

39

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

- 42 • **BLM** - *BLM Manual 9200, Departmental Manual 620 DM, the Reciprocal*
43 *Fire Protection Act, 42 U.S.C. 1856, and the Federal Wildland Fire*
44 *Management Policy and Program Review.*
- 45 • **FWS** - *Service Manual, Departmental Manual 620 DM, and Reciprocal*
46 *Fire Protection Act, 42U.S.C. 1856.*

- 1 • *NPS - Chapter 2, Federal Assistance and Interagency Agreements*
2 *Guideline (DO-20), and the Departmental Manual 620 (DM-620). NPS-*
3 *RM-18, Interagency Agreements, Release Number 1, 02/22/99.*
4 • *FS - FSM 1580, 5106.2 and FSH 1509.11.*
5

6 **Types of Agreements**

8 **National Interagency Agreements**

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

17 **Regional/State Interagency Agreements**

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

22 **Local Interagency Agreements**

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

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

33 **Contracts**

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

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

44 **Elements of an Agreement**

45
46 The following elements should be addressed in each agreement:

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- 1 • The authorities appropriate for each party to enter in an agreement.
- 2 • The roles and responsibilities of each agency signing the agreement.
- 3 • An element addressing the cooperative roles of each participant in
4 prevention, pre-suppression, suppression, fuels, and prescribed fire
5 management operations.
- 6 • Reimbursements/Compensation - All mutually approved operations that
7 require reimbursement and/or compensation will be identified and agreed to
8 by all participating parties through a cost-share agreement. The mechanism
9 and timing of the funding exchanges will be identified and agreed upon.
- 10 • Appropriation Limitations - Parties to this agreement are not obligated to
11 make expenditures of funds or reimbursements of expenditures under terms
12 of this agreement unless the Congress of the United States of America
13 appropriates such funds for that purpose by the Counties of _____, by the
14 Cities of _____, and/or the Governing Board of Fire Commissioners
15 of _____.
- 16 • Liabilities/Waivers - Each party waives all claims against every other party
17 for compensation for any loss, damage, personal injury, or death occurring
18 as a consequence of the performance of this agreement unless gross
19 negligence on any part of any party is determined.
- 20 • Termination Procedure - The agreement shall identify the duration of the
21 agreement and cancellation procedures.
- 22 • A signature page identifying the names of the responsible officials shall be
23 included in the agreement.
- 24
- 25 • *NPS - Refer to DO-20 for detailed instructions and format for developing*
26 *agreements.*
- 27

28 **Annual Operating Plans (AOPs)**

29
30 Annual Operating Plans shall be reviewed, updated, and approved prior to the
31 fire season. The plan may be amended after a major incident as part of a joint
32 debriefing and review. The plan shall contain detailed, specific procedures
33 which will provide for safe, efficient, and effective operations.

34 35 **General Elements of an AOP**

36 The following items should be addressed in the AOP:

- 37 • **Mutual Aid**
38 The AOP should address that there may be times when cooperators are
39 involved in emergency operations and unable to provide mutual aid. In this
40 case, other cooperators may be contacted for assistance.
- 41 • **Command Structure**
42 Unified command should be used, as appropriate, whenever multiple
43 jurisdictions are involved, unless one or more parties request a single
44 agency IC. If there is a question about jurisdiction, fire managers should
45 mutually decide and agree on the command structure as soon as they arrive

1 on the fire; agency administrators should confirm this decision as soon as
2 possible. Once this decision has been made, the incident organization in
3 use should be relayed to all units on the incident as well as dispatch centers.
4 In all cases, the identity of the IC must be made known to all fireline and
5 support personnel.

6 • **Communications**

7 In mutual aid situations, a common designated radio frequency identified in
8 the AOP should be used for incident communications. All incident
9 resources should utilize and monitor this frequency for incident
10 information, tactical use, and changes in weather conditions or other
11 emergency situations. In some cases, because of equipment availability/
12 capabilities, departments/agencies may have to use their own frequencies
13 for tactical operations, allowing the “common” frequency to be the link
14 between departments. It is important that all department/agencies change to
15 a single frequency or establish a common communications link as soon as
16 practical. Clear text should be used. Avoid personal identifiers, such as
17 names. This paragraph in the AOP shall meet Federal Communications
18 Commission (FCC) requirements for documenting shared use of radio
19 frequencies.

20 • **Distance/Boundaries**

21 Responding and requesting parties should identify any mileage limitations
22 from mutual boundaries where “mutual aid” is either pay or non-pay status.
23 Also, for some fire departments, the mileage issue may not be one of initial
24 attack “mutual aid”, but of mutual assistance. In this situation, you may
25 have the option to make it part of this agreement or identify it as a situation
26 where the request would be made to the agency having jurisdiction, which
27 would then dispatch the fire department.

28 • **Time/Duration**

29 Responding and requesting parties should identify time limitations (usually
30 24 hours) for resources in a non-reimbursable status, and “reimbursable
31 rates” when the resources are in a reimbursable status.

32 • **Qualifications/Minimum Requirements**

33 As per the NWCG memorandum *Qualification Standards During Initial*
34 *Action, March 22, 2004* and the PMS 310-1 *Wildland Fire Qualification*
35 *System Guide*:

- 36 ○ The 310-1 qualification/certification standards are mandatory only for
37 national mobilization of wildland fire fighting resources.
- 38 ○ During initial action, all agencies (federal, state, local and tribal) accept
39 each other’s standards. Once jurisdiction is clearly established, then
40 the standards of the agency(s) with jurisdiction prevail.
 - 41 ■ *BLM- During initial attack, all agencies accept each other’s*
42 *standards. When an incident exceeds initial attack and*
43 *jurisdiction has been established, the standards of the*
44 *jurisdictional agency(s) prevail.*
- 45 ○ Prior to the fire season, federal agencies should meet with their state,
46 local, and tribal agency partners and jointly determine the qualification/

- 1 certification standards that will apply to the use of local, non-federal
2 firefighters during initial action on fires on lands under the jurisdiction
3 of a federal agency.
- 4 ○ The Geographic Area Coordinating Group should determine the
5 application of 310-1 qualification/certification standards for
6 mobilization within the geographic area.
 - 7 ○ On a fire where a non-federal agency is also an agency with legal
8 jurisdiction, the standards of that agency apply.
 - 9 ○ The AOP should address qualification and certification standards
10 applicable to the involved parties.
- 11 ● **Reimbursement/Compensation**
12 Compensation shall be as close to actual expenditures as possible. This
13 should be clearly identified in the AOP. Vehicles and equipment operated
14 under the federal excess property system will only be reimbursed for
15 maintenance and operating costs.
 - 16 ● **Cooperation**
17 The annual operating plan will be used to identify how the cooperators will
18 share expertise, training, and information on items such as prevention,
19 investigation, safety, and training.
 - 20 ● **Agency Reviews and Investigations**
21 Annual operating plans should describe processes for conducting agency
22 specific reviews and investigations.
 - 23 ● **Dispatch Centers**
24 Dispatch centers will ensure all resources know the name of the assigned IC
25 and announce all changes in incident command. Geographic Area
26 Mobilization Guides, Zone Mobilization Guides, and Local Mobilization
27 Guides should include this procedure as they are revised for each fire
28 season.
- 29
- 30 ● **Fiscal Responsibility Elements of an AOP**
31 Annual Operating Plans should address the following:
 - 32 ● The level of communication required with neighboring jurisdictions
33 regarding the management of all wildland fires, especially those with
34 multiple objectives.
 - 35 ● The level of communication required with neighboring jurisdictions
36 regarding suppression resource availability and allocation, especially for
37 wildland fires with objectives that include benefit.
 - 38 ● Identify how to involve all parties in developing the strategy and tactics to
39 be used in preventing wildland fire from crossing the jurisdictional
40 boundary, and how all parties will be involved in developing mitigations
41 which would be used if a wildland fire does cross jurisdictional boundaries.
 - 42 ● Jurisdictions, which may include state and private lands, should identify the
43 conditions under which wildland fire may be managed to achieve benefit,
44 and the information or criteria that will be used to make that determination

- 1 (e.g. critical habitat, hazardous fuels, and land management planning
2 documents).
- 3 ● Jurisdictions will identify conditions under which cost efficiency may
4 dictate where suppression strategies and tactical actions are taken (i.e. it
5 may be more cost effective to put the containment line along an open
6 grassland than along a mid-slope in timber). Points to consider include loss
7 and benefit to land, resource, social and political values, and existing legal
8 statutes.
 - 9 ● The cost-sharing methodologies that will be utilized should wildfire spread
10 to a neighboring jurisdiction in a location where fire is not wanted.
 - 11 ● The cost-share methodologies that will be used should a jurisdiction accept
12 or receive a wildland fire and manage it to create benefit.
 - 13 ● Any distinctions in what cost-share methodology will be used if the reason
14 the fire spreads to another jurisdiction is attributed to a strategic decision,
15 versus environmental conditions (weather, fuels, and fire behavior), or
16 tactical considerations (firefighter safety, resource availability) that preclude
17 stopping the fire at jurisdictional boundaries. Examples of cost-sharing
18 methodologies may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - 19 ○ When a wildland fire that is being managed for benefit spreads to a
20 neighboring jurisdiction because of strategic decisions, and in a
21 location where fire is not wanted, the managing jurisdiction shall be
22 responsible for wildfire suppression costs.
 - 23 ○ In those situations where weather, fuels, or fire behavior of the
24 wildland fire precludes stopping at jurisdiction boundaries cost-share
25 methodologies may include, but are not limited to:
 - 26 a) Each jurisdiction pays for its own resources – fire suppression
27 efforts are primarily on jurisdictional responsibility lands,
 - 28 b) Each jurisdiction pays for its own resources – services rendered
29 approximate the percentage of jurisdictional responsibility, but not
30 necessarily performed on those lands,
 - 31 c) Cost share by percentage of ownership,
 - 32 d) Cost is apportioned by geographic division. Examples of
33 geographic divisions are: Divisions A and B (using a map as an
34 attachment); privately owned property with structures; or specific
35 locations such as campgrounds,
 - 36 e) Reconciliation of daily estimates (for larger, multi-day incidents).
37 This method relies upon daily agreed to cost estimates, using Incident
38 Action Plans or other means to determine multi-Agency
39 contributions. Reimbursements can be made upon estimates instead
40 of actual bill receipts.

41
42 For further information, refer to *NWCG Memorandum #009-2009 Revisions to*
43 *the Annual Operating Plans for Master Cooperative Fire and Stafford Act*
44 *Agreements due to Implementation of Revised Guidance for the Implementation*
45 *of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy, April 13, 2009*
46

1 All-Hazards Coordination and Cooperation

2

3 All-hazards incidents are natural, technological, or human-caused incidents that
4 warrant action to protect life, property, environment, and public health or safety,
5 and to minimize disruptions of school activities. Wildland fire is one type of all-
6 hazard incident. All-hazards incidents are managed using a standardized
7 national incident management system and response framework.

8

9 Stafford Act Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance

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

20

21 Homeland Security Act

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

27

28 Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5

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

37

38 National Response Framework

39 Federal disaster relief and emergency assistance are coordinated by the Federal
40 Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) using the National Response
41 Framework (NRF). The NRF, using the National Incident Management System
42 (NIMS), establishes a single, comprehensive framework for the management of
43 domestic incidents. The NRF provides the structure and mechanisms for the
44 coordination of federal support to state, local, and tribal incident managers; and
45 for exercising direct federal authorities and responsibilities. Information about

1 the National Response Framework can be found at:
 2 <http://www.fema.gov/nrf/index.htm>

3

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

5 HSPD-5 directed that the DHS Secretary develop and administer a National
 6 Incident Management System to provide a consistent, nationwide approach for
 7 Federal, State, and local governments to work effectively and efficiently
 8 together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents,
 9 regardless of cause, size, or complexity. To provide for interoperability and
 10 compatibility among federal, state, and local capabilities, the NIMS will include
 11 a core set of concepts, principles, terminology, and technologies covering the
 12 incident command system; multi-agency coordination systems; unified
 13 command; training; identification and management of resources (including
 14 systems for classifying types of resources); qualifications and certification; and
 15 the collection, tracking, and reporting of incident information and incident
 16 resources.

17

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

19 Emergency Support Function (ESF) Annexes are the components of the NRF
 20 that detail the mission, policies, structures, and responsibilities of federal
 21 agencies. They are utilized for coordinating resource and programmatic support
 22 to the states, tribes, and other federal agencies or other jurisdictions and entities
 23 during Incidents of National Significance. Each ESF Annex identifies the ESF
 24 coordinator and the primary and support agencies pertinent to the ESF. The
 25 primary agency serves as a federal executive agent under the Federal
 26 Coordinating Officer to accomplish the ESF mission. Support agencies, when
 27 requested by the DHS or the designated ESF primary agency, are responsible for
 28 conducting operations using their own authorities, subject-matter experts,
 29 capabilities, or resources. USDA-FS is the coordinator and primary agency for
 30 ESF #4 - Firefighting. For ESF #4 operations that occur in the State of Alaska,
 31 the USDA-FS remains the primary agency under the NRF, and works closely
 32 with the Department of the Interior (DOI)/Bureau of Land Management, who
 33 serves as the operational lead for firefighting response in Alaska. See
 34 <http://www.fema.gov/pdf/nrf/nrf-esf-04.pdf> for further information regarding
 35 ESF #4.

36

37 Other NRF USDA-FS and DOI responsibilities are:

ESF Support Annex	USDA 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, & 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
#11 Agriculture and Natural Resources	Support (through USDA)	Primary
#12 Energy		Support
#13 Public Safety and Security	Support	Support
#14 Long-term Community Recovery		Support
#15 External Affairs	Support	Support

1

2 **National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP,**
3 **40 CFR 300)**

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

21

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

23 The *Post-Katrina Emergency Reform Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-295)*
24 amended the Homeland Security Act. This law established the FEMA
25 Administrator as responsible for managing the Federal response to emergencies
26 and disasters, and for reporting directly to the President. The Secretary of
27 Homeland Security is the Principal Federal Official, but has no direct authority
28 for response or coordination.

29

30

1 Presidential Policy Directive-8

2 *Presidential Policy Directive-8 (PPD-8), National Preparedness, March 30,*
3 *2011* is intended to strengthen all-of-Nation preparedness. PPD-8 directs the
4 Secretary of Homeland Security to develop a national preparedness goal and a
5 national preparedness system in coordination and consultation with other federal
6 departments and agencies, state, local, tribal, and territorial governments, private
7 and non-profit sectors, and the public. The national preparedness system will be
8 comprised of:

- 9 • National planning frameworks for the prevention, protection, mitigation,
10 response to, and recovery from national threats. These frameworks will be
11 similar and complementary to the National Response Framework (NRF).
- 12 • Corresponding interagency and agency operational plans.
- 13 • Guidance for the national interoperability of personnel and equipment.
- 14 • Guidance for business, community, family, and individual preparedness.

15 All-Hazards Coordination and Cooperation

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

25 USFS All-Hazards Guiding Principles and Doctrine

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

32
33
34 The following principles encompass the guidelines, roles, and responsibilities
35 established in this doctrine:

- 36 • The intent of Forest Service all-hazard response and support is to protect
37 human life, property, and at-risk lands and resources *while imminent threats*
38 *exist*.
- 39 • Personnel should be prepared and organized to support all-hazard responses
40 by providing trained personnel to utilize their inherent skills, capabilities,
41 and assets -without requiring significant advanced training and preparation.
42 Support to cooperators requiring wildland resources will be consistent with
43 employee core skills, capabilities, and training.
- 44 • As incidents move from the *response phase* to the *recovery phase*, there
45 should be a shift to demobilizing agency resources.

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

- 1 these all-hazard task that wildland employees do not routinely encounter or
2 perform will be identified. This will be done- and be in place- *prior* to task
3 implementation.
- 4 • Agency employees will be provided with appropriate vaccinations,
5 credentials, and personal protective equipment to operate in the all-hazard
6 environment to which they are assigned.
 - 7 • Additional information can be found in the Forest Service Foundational
8 Doctrine for All-Hazard Response:
9 http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/doctrine/conferences/all_hazard_response.pdf

11 **International Wildland Fire Coordination and Cooperation**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

43 Information about United States - Australia/New Zealand support is located in
44 Chapter 40 of the *National Interagency Mobilization Guide* available online.
45 This chapter provides a copy of the arrangements signed between the U.S. and
46 the states of Australia and the country of New Zealand for support to one

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1 another during severe fire seasons. It also contains the AOP that provides more
2 detail on the procedures, responsibilities, and requirements used during
3 activation.

4

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

6

7 **International Disasters Support**

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

- 16 • USG agencies charged with the responsibility to coordinate USG responses
17 to international disaster.
- 18 • The purpose, organizational structure, and operational procedures of a
19 DART.
- 20 • How the DART relates to other international organizations and countries
21 during an assignment. Requests for these assignments are coordinated
22 through the FS International Programs, Disaster Assistance Support
23 Program (DASP).
- 24 • DART assignments should not be confused with technical exchange
25 activities, which do not require DART training.

26

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