

Chapter 04**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Program Organization & Responsibilities****Introduction**

The purpose of the *Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations* handbook is to provide program guidance to ensure safe, consistent, efficient and effective fire and aviation operations. This handbook supplements the policies, objectives, and standards for fire management presented in the *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Manual* and the *Department of the Interior Departmental Manual*. This handbook will be reviewed and updated annually.

Agency Administrator Roles

The Secretary of the Interior, through the Directors of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), National Park Service (NPS) and the Deputy Commissioner of Indian Affairs (BIA) is responsible for wildland fire management activities of the Department (including such activities when contracted for, in whole or in part, with other agencies or tribes) under the statutes cited in *620 DM 1.1*.

Director

The Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service has overall responsibility for the service wildland fire management program. The Director will ensure that all regional fire management activities are formally evaluated.

Chief, National Wildlife Refuge System

The National Wildlife Refuge System under the Chief provides leadership for the wildland fire management program. The National Wildlife Refuge System also formally evaluates all regional fire activities at least every five years. The Assistant Director is authorized to promulgate and approve the *Fire Management Handbook* and other fire related handbooks as needed to provide guidance.

Regional Director

The Regional Director is responsible for the wildland fire management program in the region and for designating a qualified Regional Fire Management Coordinator. The Regional Director, through the Regional Fire Management Coordinator, will provide wildland fire management program support to service lands located within their geographic region. The Regional Director will identify and clarify the roles and responsibilities of other Regional Office staff that might provide oversight to the Fire Management Program.

Project Leader

The Project Leader is responsible for planning and implementing an effective wildland fire management program on service lands under their jurisdiction. The Project Leader, in conjunction with fire management specialists, determines the level of fire management effort required to meet wildland fire management

1 objectives of each unit. The Project Leader will ensure that an approved FMP is
 2 prepared for service lands under their jurisdiction. This would include
 3 appropriate consultation with staff specialists such as the Regional Historic
 4 Preservation Officer or Service Archeologist if appropriate. If the fire
 5 management program warrants, the Project Leader will establish a position to
 6 function as the Fire Management Officer for the field office. Otherwise, the
 7 Project Leader will assign the fire management responsibilities to a staff
 8 member as a collateral duty. A staff member, assigned fire management
 9 responsibilities as a collateral duty, will meet fire management qualification
 10 requirements established by the service. Project Leaders are to ensure that
 11 personnel hired in dedicated, fire funded positions are made available for
 12 dispatch to off-refuge/interagency wildland and prescribed fire management
 13 operations. Project Leaders will meet fire management training requirements
 14 established by the service for their positions.
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Management Performance Requirements for Fire Operations

PERFORMANCE REQUIRED	FWS Director	Regional Director	Project Leader
1. Take necessary and prudent actions to ensure firefighter and public safety.	T	T	T
2. Ensure sufficient qualified fire and non-fire personnel are available to support fire operations at a level commensurate with the local and national fire situations.	T	T	T
3. Ensure Fire Management Officers (FMOs) are fully qualified.	T	T	T
4. Provide a written delegation of Authority to FMOs that provides an adequate level of operational authority. Include Multi-Agency Coordinating (MAC) Group authority, as appropriate.	T	T	T
5. Identify resource management objectives to maintain a current fire management plan (FMP) that identifies an accurate and defensible Normal Year Readiness of funding and personnel.		T	T
6. Develop protection and use standards and constraints that are in compliance with agency fire policies.		T	T
7. Ensure use of fire funds is in compliance with Department and Agency policies.	T	T	T

PERFORMANCE REQUIRED	FWS Director	Regional Director	Project Leader
8. Management teams will meet once a year to review fire and aviation policies, roles, responsibilities, and delegations of authority. Specifically address oversight and management controls, critical safety issues, and high-risk situations such as team transfers of command, periods of multiple fire activity, and Red Flag Warnings.	T	T	T
9. Review safety policies, procedures, and concerns with field fire and fire aviation personnel. Discussions should include issues that could compromise safety and effectiveness during the upcoming season.			T
10. Ensure timely follow-up actions to program reviews, fire preparedness reviews, fire and fire aviation safety reviews, fire critiques, and post-season reviews.	T	T	T
11. Ensure fire and fire aviation preparedness reviews are conducted in all unit offices each year.		T	T
12. Ensure an approved burn plan is followed for each prescribed fire project, including follow-up monitoring and documentation to ensure management objectives are met.		T	T
13. Meet annually with major cooperators and review interagency agreements to ensure their continued effectiveness and efficiency (may be delegated by Regional Level).		T	T
14. Ensure that a Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) is completed and approved on all fires that escape initial attack.			T
15. Ensure reviews are conducted on all fires that require a WFSA. Personally attend reviews on Type 1 and Type 2 fires. (Regional Director may delegate)		T	T

PERFORMANCE REQUIRED	FWS Director	Regional Director	Project Leader
16. Ensure that a Wildland Fire Implementation Plan (WFIP) is completed and implemented for all fires managed for resource benefits.			T
17. Provide management oversight by personally visiting wildland and prescribed fires each year.		T	T
18. Provide incident management objectives, written delegations of authority, and agency administrator briefings to incident management teams.			T
19. Monitor the fire situation and provide oversight during periods of critical fire activity/situations of high risk.	T	T	T
20. Evaluate the need for resource advisors for all fires, and assign as appropriate.			T
21. Convene and participate in annual pre- and post-season fire meetings.	T	T	T
22. Attend <i>Fire Management Leadership Course</i> .		T	T
23. Ensure appropriate investigations are conducted for incidents, entrapments, and serious accidents.	T	T	T
24. For all unplanned human-caused fires where liability can be determined, ensure trespass actions are initiated to recover cost of suppression activities, land rehabilitation, and damages to the resource and improvements.		T	T
25. Certify Wildland Fire Implementation Plan or Wildland Fire Situation Analysis on a daily basis.			T
26. Complete Go/No-Go checklist for prescribed fire.			T
27. Ensure there is adequate direction in fire management plans to identify fire danger awareness with escalating fire potential.			T
28. Ensure compliance with National and Regional Office policy and direction for prescribed fire activities and ensure that periodic reviews and inspections of the prescribed fire program are completed.	T	T	T

PERFORMANCE REQUIRED	FWS Director	Regional Director	Project Leader
29. Review Prescribed Fire Plans and recommend or approve the plans depending upon the delegated authority. Ensure that the Prescribed Fire Plan has been reviewed and recommended by a qualified technical reviewer who was not involved in the plan preparation.		T	T

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2 **Fire Management Staff Roles**

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4 **National Office**

5 **Service Fire Management Coordinator (SFMC)**

6 The Service Fire Management Coordinator is the Chief of the Fire Management
 7 Branch in the National Wildlife Refuge System, and is the Service
 8 representative at the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC). The SFMC,
 9 through *Service Manual 621 FW 1*, is delegated authority by the Director to
 10 represent the Service on the National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (MAC
 11 Group). The SFMC is responsible for implementing the decisions of the MAC
 12 Group as they affect U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service areas. The decisions of the
 13 MAC Group include the prioritizing of incidents nationally and the allocation or
 14 reallocation of firefighting resources to meet national priorities.

15

16 The Fire Management Branch is responsible for providing technical direction
 17 and coordination of fire management planning, policy development, and
 18 procedures servicewide.

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20 **Regional Office**

21 **Regional Fire Management Coordinator (RFMC)**

22 The RFMC provides coordination, training, planning, evaluation, and technical
 23 guidance for the region and is available to provide assistance for intra-agency
 24 and interagency wildland fire management needs. The RFMC will meet
 25 qualification requirements established by the service for the position. The
 26 RFMC, through written delegation by the Regional Director, is delegated
 27 authority to represent the region on the Geographic Multi-Agency Coordinating
 28 Group (GMAC Group). The RFMC is responsible for implementing the
 29 decisions of the MAC Group as they affect U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service areas.
 30 The decisions of the GMAC Group include the prioritizing of incidents and the
 31 allocation or reallocation of firefighting resources to meet wildland fire
 32 management priorities.

33

34 **Refuge Fire Management Officer (FMO)**

35 Fire Management Officers will be assigned where an individual refuge wildland
 36 fire management program requires wildland fire management expertise. An
 37 FMO may be assigned to provide wildland fire management support to a group

1 of refuges (zone or district) when individually each refuge does not warrant a
 2 fulltime FMO. These are dedicated fire funded positions, and as such are a
 3 regional and national resource. The FMO may be called upon to assist in both
 4 intra-agency and interagency wildland fire management needs. The FMO will
 5 meet qualification standards established or adopted by the Service for the
 6 position.

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8 **Fire Management Staff Performance Requirements for Fire Operations**

PERFORMANCE REQUIRED	Fire Director	RFMC	FMO
1. Maintain safety first as the foundation for all aspects of fire and fire aviation management.	T	T	T
2. Ensure completion of a job hazard analysis (JHA) for fire and fire aviation activities so mitigation measures are taken to reduce risk.			T
3. Ensure work/rest and R&R guidelines are followed during all fire and fire aviation activities. Deviations are approved and documented.	T	T	T
4. Ensure that only trained and qualified personnel are assigned to fire and fire aviation duties.	T	T	T
5. Develop, implement, evaluate, and document fire and fire aviation training program to meet current and anticipated needs.	T	T	T
6. Establish an effective process to gather, evaluate, and communicate information to managers, supervisors, and employees. Ensure clear and concise communications are maintained at all levels.	T	T	T
7. Develop and maintain an open line of communication with public and cooperators.	T	T	T
8. Ensure that the fire and fire aviation management staff understand their role, responsibilities, authority, and accountability.	T	T	T
9. Based on allocated funding level, provide a safe, effective, and efficient fire protection and use program.	T	T	T
10. Organize, train, equip, and direct a qualified work force. An Individual Development Plan must be provided for incumbents who do not meet new standards. Establish qualification review committees.	T	T	T

PERFORMANCE REQUIRED	Fire Director	RFMC	FMO
11. Take appropriate action when performance is exceptional or deficient.	T	T	T
12. Ensure fire and fire aviation policies are understood, followed, and coordinated with other agencies as appropriate.	T	T	T
13. Monitor to recognize when complexity levels exceed program capabilities. Increase managerial and operational resources to meet the need.	T	T	T
14. Initiate, conduct, and/or participate in fire management related reviews and investigations.	T	T	T
15. Provide for and personally participate in periodic site visits to individual incidents and projects.	T	T	T
16. Utilize the incident complexity analysis to ensure the proper level of management is assigned to all incidents.		T	T
17. Review and evaluate performance of the fire management organization and take appropriate actions.	T	T	T
18. Ensure incoming personnel and crews are briefed prior to fire and fire aviation assignments.	T	T	T
19. Ensure a Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) is completed and retained for all fires that escape initial attack.		T	T
20. Monitor fire season severity predictions, fire behavior, and fire activity levels. Take appropriate actions to ensure safe, efficient, and effective operations.	T	T	T
21. Ensure that adequate resources are available to implement fire management operations.	T	T	T
22. Provide fire personnel with adequate guidance, training and decision-making authority to ensure timely decisions.		T	T
23. Ensure a written, approved burn plan exists for each prescribed fire project.		T	T
24. Ensure all escaped prescribed fires receive a review at the proper level.	T	T	T
25. Ensure effective transfer of command of incident management occurs and oversight is in place.	T	T	T

PERFORMANCE REQUIRED	Fire Director	RFMC	FMO
26. Develop and maintain agreements, annual operating plans, and contracts on an interagency basis to increase effectiveness and efficiencies	T	T	T
27. Provide the expertise and skills to fully integrate fire and fire aviation management into interdisciplinary planning efforts.	T	T	T
28. Work with cooperators to identify processes and procedures for providing fire safe communities within the wildland urban interface.	T	T	T
29. Develop, maintain, and annually evaluate the FMP to ensure accuracy and validity.		T	T
30. Ensure budget requests and allocations reflect Normal Year Readiness in the FMP.	T	T	T
31. Develop and maintain current operational plans, e.g., dispatch, pre-attack, prevention.	T	T	T
32. Ensure that reports and records are properly completed and maintained.	T	T	T
33. Ensure fiscal responsibility and accountability in planning and expenditures.	T	T	T
34. Assess, identify, and implement program actions that effectively reduce unwanted wildland fire ignitions and mitigate risks to life, property, and resources.		T	T
35. Effectively communicate the “natural role” of wildland fire to internal and external agency audiences.	T	T	T
36. Complete trespass actions when unplanned human-caused fires occur.		T	T
37. Ensure compliance with National and Regional Office policy and direction for prescribed fire activities and ensure that periodic reviews and inspections of the prescribed fire program are completed.	T	T	T

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1 **Delegation of Authority**

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3 **Delegation for Regional Fire Management Coordinators**

4 In order to effectively perform their duties, a RFMC must have certain
5 authorities delegated from the Regional Director. This delegation is normally
6 placed in the regional office supplement to agency manuals. This delegation of
7 authority should include:

- 8 • Serve as the Regional Director's authorized representative on geographic
9 area coordination groups, including MAC groups.
- 10 • Coordinate and establish priorities on uncommitted fire suppression
11 resources during periods of shortages.
- 12 • Coordinate logistics and suppression operations regional-wide.
- 13 • Relocate agency pre-suppression/suppression resources within the region
14 based on relative fire potential/activity.
- 15 • Correct unsafe fire suppression activities.
- 16 • Direct accelerated, aggressive initial attack when appropriate.
- 17 • Enter into agreements to provide for the management, fiscal, and
18 operational functions of combined agency operated facilities.
- 19 • Suspend prescribed fire activities when warranted.
- 20 • Give authorization to hire Emergency Firefighters in accordance with the
21 DOI Pay Plan for Emergency Workers.
- 22 • Approve emergency fire severity funding expenditures not to exceed the
23 agency's annual authority.

24

25 **Zone/District Fire Management Officer**

26 In order to effectively perform their duties, the FMO must have certain
27 authorities delegated from the Agency Administrator(s). A sample "Delegation
28 of Authority" can be found in Appendix FWS 01 at the end of this chapter.

APPENDIX FWS -01

Delegation for Zone/District Fire Management Officer

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4 The Fire Management Officer for the Arizona Fire District (including; Buenos
5 Aires NWR, San Bernardino NWR, Leslie Canyon NWR, Imperial NWR,
6 Cibola NWR, Bill Williams NWR, Kofa NWR, Havasu NWR, Alchessay-
7 Williams Creek Fish Hatchery Complex) is delegated authority to act on my
8 behalf for the following duties and actions:
- 9
10 1. Provide direction, supervision and leadership to District Fire Management
11 Staff outlined in the attached organization chart.
12
 - 13 2. Coordinate with and provide timely and accurate reports to Project Leaders,
14 Deputy Project Leaders and Appropriate Refuge Managers, on all activities
15 of the district and personnel.
16
 - 17 3. Responsible for Fire Budget coordination and oversight to assure the fiscal
18 guidelines are adhered to within the District.
19
 - 20 4. Coordinate all prescribed fire activities for the district including requests and
21 oversight of funding for Hazardous Fuel and WUI projects.
22
 - 23 5. Assure personnel participating in prescribed fire and wildfire operations are
24 fully qualified.
25
 - 26 6. Request and Oversee distribution of Severity and Emergency Pre-
27 suppression Funding for District Fire and Aviation.
28
 - 29 7. Ensure all district incidents are managed in a safe and cost-effective manner.
30
 - 31 8. Oversee the recruitment and hiring of district fire personnel.
32
 - 33 9. Responsible for representing the Arizona Fire District in all matters related
34 to the Wildland/Prescribed Fire Management Program with local cooperators
35 and on the Southeast Zone and Central West Zone Boards.
36
 - 37 10. Coordinate district fire and prevention activities and provide appropriate
38 program direction and guidance.
39
 - 40 11. Provide for management of property records for equipment and supplies
41 purchased with program allocations.
42
 - 43 12. Coordinate, preposition, send and order fire and aviation resources in
44 response to current and anticipated district, regional and national fire
45 conditions.
46

- 1 13. Hire emergency firefighters in accordance with Department of Interior “Pay
2 Plan for Emergency Workers.”
3
- 4 14. Manage “Red Card” system within the District.
5
- 6 _____
7 Buenos Aires NWR Refuge Manager Date
8
- 9 _____
10 _____
11 San Bernardino/
12 Leslie Canyon NWR Refuge Manager Date
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- 14 _____
15 _____
16 Imperial NWR Refuge Manager Date
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- 18 _____
19 _____
20 Cibola NWR Refuge Manager Date
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- 22 _____
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24 Bill Williams River NWR Refuge Manager Date
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- 26 _____
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28 Kofa NWR Refuge Manager Date
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- 30 _____
31 _____
32 Havasu NWR Refuge Manager Date
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- 34 _____
35 _____
36 Alchey-Williams Creek Complex Manager Date
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- 38 _____
39 _____
40 FWS Region 2 Fire Management Coordinator Date
41
- 42 _____
43 _____
44 Arizona Fire Management District FMO Date
45