



ROCKY MOUNTAIN COORDINATING GROUP

Bureau of Indian Affairs (Southwest, Rocky Mountain and Great Plains Regions)
Bureau of Land Management (Colorado and Wyoming)
Fish and Wildlife Service (Mountain/Prairie Region)
Forest Service (Rocky Mountain Region)
National Park Service (Intermountain and Midwest Regions)
State Agencies in Colorado, Wyoming, South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas

January 24, 2013

Rocky Mountain Area Coordinating Group

Charter

Name

The name of this group is the Rocky Mountain Area Wildfire Coordinating Group, hereinafter referred to as the RMCG.

Mission

The Rocky Mountain Coordinating Group (RMCG) is established to promote the safe management of wildland fire and all-risk incidents (within limits of respective statutory authorities) through interagency cooperation, communication and coordination in the Rocky Mountain Area (RMA). The RMA is defined as that area inside the Rocky Mountain Region of the National Forest System and includes all or portions of the States of Colorado, Wyoming, South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas.

Purpose

- RMCG serves the line officers of the Rocky Mountain Area Fire Executive Council (RMA-FEC) and implements RMA-FEC decisions.
- RMCG initiates actions to improve coordination and integration of state, tribal, and federal wildland fire programs while recognizing individual agency missions.
- RMCG provides geographic area leadership in implementation and communication of policy, standards, guidelines, and qualifications for wildland fire program management.
- RMCG serves as a clearinghouse and provides a forum for discussion of short and long-term wildland fire management issues and related resolution.

Functions

- Promotes individual agency/state and collective meeting of standards, guidelines, training and certification in interagency wildland fire operations.
- Coordinates wildland fire programs across the area.
- Responds to RMA-FEC wildland fire policy, program guidance, and direction.
- Ensures coordination among fire, resources, aviation, and other related program areas.
- Identifies and resolves interagency incident management issues.
- Recruits, develops, and sustains, high reliability Incident Management Teams (IMTs) to meet RMA geographic area needs in accordance with the 2008 RMA Succession Strategy adopted by the FEC (RMA Executive Group, August 15, 2008) including but not limited to:
 - More formal support for and use of sub-geographic area IMTs; and
 - Recruitment from non-traditional sources (FEMA, State OEM's, etc.).
- Facilitates efficiencies in interagency fire management and all-risk activities at all levels, including, but not limited to:
 - Type I and II Incident Commander and Team approval;
 - Oversight to the Rocky Mountain Area Coordination Center (RMACC);
 - Activation of the geographic area Multi-Agency Coordination Group (GMAC);
 - Oversight and approval of the RMA Mobilization Guide; and
 - Oversight to RMCG Standing Committees.
- Serves as the point of contact for the National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC) and the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC).
- Utilizes the RMACC as a central source of information and assistance for conducting wildland fire management and all-risk management activities.
- Recognizes outstanding contributions and/or performance in the areas of interagency wildland fire management and all-risk management.
- Reviews RMCG charter annually and makes updated recommendations to the RMA Fire Executive Council.
- Supports the National Response Framework, as well as the National Incident Management System (NIMS) as required.
- Facilitates efficiencies and cooperation in the following areas:
 - Implementation of current fire management initiatives;
 - Fuels and smoke management;
 - Community assistance;
 - Firefighter capability;
 - Restoration and rehabilitation;
 - Prevention and education;
 - Aviation operations;
 - Long-term fire management operations and planning;
 - Training;
 - Wildland Fire Operations; and
 - Communication Systems

Guiding Principles

- Safety is the core value and consideration throughout all RMCG activities.
- Wise and efficient use of funds is an essential consideration in planning and implementing actions to meet individual and collective RMCG objectives.
- Interagency communication, coordination, and cooperation are vital to the effective and efficient use of the area's wildland fire management resources. Actions are based on the leader's intent as expressed by RMA-FEC.
- Trust and integrity are inherent to the success of RMCG. Deliberations are open and transparent.
- Differences in member organizations' responsibilities, missions, and capabilities are recognized and mutually respected.
- Responses to change are through a deliberative process.
- Member accountability for all actions contributes to excellence.

Membership and Organization

The RMCG will be composed of representatives appointed by the respective agency administrator from each of the agencies listed below. Membership consists of one representative from each the following organizations:

- Wyoming State Forestry Division
- Kansas State Forest Service
- South Dakota Division of Wildland Fire
- Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control
- Nebraska State Forest Service/Nebraska Emergency Management Agency
- Southwest Region, Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Rocky Mountain Region, Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Great Plains Region, Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Bureau of Land Management, Colorado
- Bureau of Land Management, Wyoming
- Mountain-Prairie Region, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Intermountain and Midwest Regions, National Park Service
- Rocky Mountain Region, U.S. Forest Service

Additional non-decision-making subject matter experts may also be asked to participate on an as-needed basis. Such invitations must be coordinated through the appropriate delegated RMCG representative(s) and the Chair.

RMCG officers will include a Chair and Vice-Chair. Each will serve a one-year term. The rotation of the Chair will follow the rotation list in the RMCG Operating Plan. The Vice-Chair will be the representative from the next agency in line, and will assume the Chair position as it becomes vacant. Terms will be based on a calendar year with succession occurring at the annual January meeting. Interim vacancies will cause the rotation of the Chair and Vice-Chair to move accordingly.

A Business Manager for RMCG will be hired/retained pending availability of funds. The USFWS will host the position and provide administrative supervision/services. Funding for salary will be provided on an interagency basis.

Operating Guidelines and Procedures

The RMCG shall have an Operating Plan (Attachment 1) to provide protocols and procedures for conducting RMCG business. The Plan provides operating details for many sections of this Charter, and is updated regularly.

Given RMCG is a coordination entity, decisions will be determined through consensus.

Where there are two or more representatives from individual RMCG member agencies and states, a unified agency and/or state position is preferable in the decision making process. Representatives will convey their viewpoints in the consensus-based decision process or, as needed and agreed to, through a peer representative of a sister agency or state.

Responsibilities

Chair: The chairperson is responsible for: calling meetings, seeking agenda items and setting the agenda; managing the meetings and/or appointing a facilitator; managing conference calls; and tracking follow-up on all action items. He/she will also sign appropriate RMCG documents/correspondence representing all member agencies. In addition, the Chair will represent RMCG at Rocky Mountain Area Fire Executive Council Meetings, Geographic Area Coordinating Group Advisory Council (GACGAC), and other meetings and events as appropriate. When the Chair is absent from the RMCG meetings, the Vice-Chair shall assume the full authority and responsibility of the Chair.

Vice-Chair: The Vice-Chair is responsible for serving as Chair in his or her absence and for performing delegated duties. Additionally, the Vice-Chair will be in charge of the Awards Program, and will coordinate the Spring Fire Management Meeting agenda for the year he/she is Vice Chair. The Vice Chair will also attend GACGAC meetings with the Chair.

Business Manager: The Business Manager will take RMCG-related direction from the Chairperson. Recurring duties will include recording and distributing meeting minutes; maintaining annual RMCG calendar and action-log; ensuring website is up-to-date; managing meeting and workshop logistics including pre-work, facilities locations and contracts; and maintaining official RMCG files and records. This position will also manage logistics of the awards program.

RMACC Manager: The manager serves as a technical subject matter expert with respect to mobilization and also serves as a facilitator for RMCG meetings.

Members: Members actively participate in RMCG. Additionally, each member serves as a liaison to sub-geographic dispatch centers and to standing committees as assigned. Liaisons are the main communication link between RMCG and the center/committee group. They are expected to be informed on center/committee issues and concerns, attend meetings, provide RMCG guidance as necessary, and provide feedback and information to RMCG.

Chair, RMA Fire Executive Council: The designated Chair, RMA-FEC, will meet with RMCG at their annual winter meeting to review IMT selections and provide the Executive Council's expectations (leaders' intent) for the year.

Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (MAC): The purpose of the MAC group is to prioritize incidents/resource use during periods of high incident frequency (typically Preparedness Levels 4 - 5). Each member agency will be represented on the Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (MAC) through a delegation of authority from their agency administrator. Although MAC group members can be RMCG members, coordination issues usually addressed by RMCG will not typically be handled by the MAC.

Duty Officer: In the absence of a MAC Group (typically at Preparedness Levels 1 – 3), RMCG will provide a Duty Officer to work with the RMACC Center Manager on a rotational basis. The duties of the RMCG Duty Officer are listed in the current RMA Mobilization Guide.

Conflict of Interest

RMCG members are expected to express opinions on different issues based upon their professional knowledge and the interests of the Agency they represent. However, biased opinions concerning issues which may affect the personal interests of the member are considered unprofessional and may conflict with the best interests of the Interagency fire community as a whole (Conflict of Interest).

Therefore, members are expected to abstain or recuse themselves from any issue in which they have a Conflict of Interest. This would include, but is not limited to, participating in an investigation or deliberation; establishment of an adverse policy; and/or drafting of corrective action regarding: 1) any group of which they are a member, including RMA Incident Management Teams; 2) their personal fire qualifications or eligibility to participate in an activity; and/or 3) the qualifications, eligibility or participation of any person with whom they have a close personal relationship.

Members who do not remove themselves from these situations may be required to do so by the majority of the RMCG membership.

Meetings and Reports

The RMCG shall confer monthly or as necessary to conduct business. Three meetings each calendar year will be held at locations to be determined by the member organizations through their representatives. The Group shall also meet upon the call of the Chair at a location to be determined by the Chair. The Chair shall submit necessary reports and have minutes prepared for each meeting and distributed to the members.

Monthly meetings shall focus on program coordination and incident management team oversight. Three times each year, meetings shall focus on standards, guidelines, and training and certification issues in interagency wildland fire operations. A quorum for conducting business shall be a minimum of two-thirds of the members.

Permanent Standing Committees

Interagency Standing Committees are established through RMCG direction. Issues and concerns of mutual interest will be assigned to the appropriate committee by RMCG. The RMCG will provide direction, oversight, and a Liaison to each Standing Committee. RMCG will dissolve any committee when determined it is no longer effective or needed.

Each Committee will have a charter with a mission and a purpose statement. Committee charters will be modified and/or approved by the RMCG and are an appendix to this charter. Committees will elect a Chairperson. Minutes of meetings will be taken and distributed to Committee members, the RMCG Business Manager, and Chairs of other Standing Committees.

Approved Committees:

1. Incident Business Management
2. Information/Education
3. Operations
 - Subcommittee - Incident Management Teams (IMT)
4. Training
5. Fire Program Analysis (FPA)
6. Geospatial Technical
7. Aviation
8. National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS)

Task Groups

RMCG and Committees may appoint Task Groups. A Task Group shall sunset upon completion of its assignment.

Expenses

Except as outlined above for hosting meetings, the costs of salary, travel, per diem, and operating expenses for the RMCG, Committee, and Task Group members will be borne by each agency. Member agencies will contribute to the costs of operations of RMA Teams, RMCG, RMACC, the Business Manager, special equipment, and awards within the limitations of their respective fiscal authorities and protocols. RMCG will evaluate alternatives to cover costs of special projects.

This Charter is effective on the date of approval by the Rocky Mountain Area Fire Executive Council and shall remain in effect until revised or revoked by RMA-FEC.

Approved:



Chair

Rocky Mountain Area
Fire Executive Council