



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

June 24, 2012

To: Rocky Mountain Area Local Multi-Agency Coordinating Groups

From: Chair, Rocky Mountain Coordinating Group

Subject: **Initial Attack Strategy Guidance for Local Area Multi-Agency Coordination Groups (LMAC) – Planning Level 4 and 5**

The Rocky Mountain Geographic Area (RMA) is currently experiencing a very high level of fire activity. The RMA has gone from a Preparedness Level (PL) of 4 to a PL-5 today. A Geographic level Multi-Agency Coordinating (MAC) Group has been established as per our Mobilization Guide requirements. Dispatch Zone Local Multi-Agency Coordination (LMAC) Groups should already be meeting to review and use processes for prioritizing fire fighting resources within your areas.

Initial Attack capability remains a very high priority for the Geographic Area MAC right below safety of firefighters and the public. Attached to this letter is direction from the RMA MAC to LMAC's regarding our expectations for maintaining critical initial attack capabilities within each Dispatch Zone for the remainder of this high fire activity level.

Questions may be addressed by Rocky Mountain Coordination Group Dispatch Zone Liasons; Rocky Mountain Coordinating Group Vice Chair, Ken Kerr (303-957-8802); or RMA MAC Coordinator at (303-445-4329).

Sincerely,

 Bob Jones
Chairperson, Rocky Mountain Coordinating Group

CC: RMCG Representatives
RMCG Business Manager
RMCG Committee Chairs

**Rocky Mountain Area Multi-Agency Coordination Group (RMAMAC)
Initial Attack Strategy Guidance for Local Area Multi-Agency Coordination Groups
(LMAC)**

Background:

RMMAC is in PL 5 as of June 24, 2012. IA across the GACC is moderate to heavy with multiple IMT's assigned at Type 3, 2, 1 complexity levels. There appears to be momentum for this level of IA activity to increase stressing Geographic Area and National resources.

Issue: RMCG and RMA MAC are interested in a strategy regarding maintaining IA capability to assure fluid management of constrained IA resources within and among zones, the GACC and IA associated tasking of the IMT's. There are a finite number of T1 IHC and T2 IA crews within the GACC that require management to meet IA and incident needs. The T 2 IA crew's transportation capability is variable.

Rocky Mountain MAC Group Considerations:

- What is a Zone's and or the GACC's initial attack capability? Have supplemental resources been engaged?
- Why is investing IA resources into a particular incident a sound decision? Is this commitment a tasking or full commitment to the incident? Is this supported by incident MAPs?
- Can certain IA resources operate from a pool, module or task force and be assigned to priority missions or work instead on one incident for the duration of that incident?
- Where is the next threat of increased fire activity likely to occur and what resources are needed to preposition for the threat?
- RMACC will ramp up with additional staffing as per the draw down level in the RMCG Mobilization Guide as well as space needs including potential for establishing mobilization centers for supporting IA crews
- What are sources of funding for prepositioning of resources?

Summary Scenarios

RMA MAC expectation for LMACS is:

- Dispatch Zones meet staffing requirements for IA from agency unit staffing and/or supplemented by severity requests.

AND/OR

One or more of the following on a case by case basis

- IMT's are tasked with both incident and IA responsibilities for a defined geographic area within a zone.
- IMT's are tasked with incident and not with IA. IA responsibility is retained by agency unit in zone.
- IMT's are tasked with incident and not with IA but are responsible to provide resources as determined and identified as ready reserve. Those resources are identified in the IAP for dispatch within the zone or GACC. IA is retained by agency unit in zone.

RMA MAC Intent to LMAC's

- Aggressive initial attack while always providing for safety is still the best way to effectively prevent large, costly, and dangerous wildfire.
- Decisions must reflect the goal of using available IA resources to manage the fire situation in the most effective, efficient, and safest means possible over the season.
- Key to success will be priority setting and allocating the IA resource to maintain capability in zones, prepositioned resource and for periods of engagement in extended attack until relieved based on interagency RMMAC priority and allocation decisions.
- Within these priorities, mobilization, turnaround times and potential effectiveness will also be factored into allocation with IMT. IA assets may be diverted to higher priority incidents. It is important that initial attack incident commanders provide as much accurate information as available to facilitate rapid assessment and decisions on priorities.
- RMA MAC and LMAC's must commit to making decisions on prioritization and preposition of IA resources with full utilization of Predictive Services tools including the Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS), intelligence analysis, and predictive services to evaluate potential values at risk and the probability of success. WFDSS Risk assessment processes are required to add clarification in determining resource allocation.
- Allocating IA resources to projected long-duration fires or those that have minimal probability of early containment will be based on planning efforts that include prioritized management action points (MAP). Processes will be in place to mobilize or demobilize resources as MAP critical thresholds or trigger points are approached or objectives are met.
- As determined, the agency or RMMAC will centralized management and control of critical IA resources or assets. Resources may be organized in a module or task force concept with the goal of accomplishing priority MAP's, interagency objectives on multiple fires and returning forces to IA responsibility.