

2023 BTNF Forest and Zone Duty Officer SOP

I. Introduction

Forest and Zone Duty Officers are key fire managers that serve as on-call leadership/supervision for wildland fire response. They have the responsibility to provide oversight and support to personnel engaged on emergency incidents (Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations). All Duty Officers are given an annual Delegation of Authority from the Forest Supervisor and are expected to implement the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) in this document. Visiting Duty Officers are also expected to follow these SOP's while on Forest.

Duty Officers are responsible to oversee daily wildland fire preparedness for their respective unit and to implement the full range of management actions for new incidents within Bridger-Teton NF). Duty officers are selected based on their qualifications, experience, and knowledge of fire operations.

The Bridger-Teton NF recognizes two levels of Duty Officer:

- Forest Duty Officer
- Zone Duty Officer

II. Goals and Objectives

Goal: This plan has been developed to standardize operating procedures for Duty Officers at the Forest and Zone level on the Bridger-Teton National Forest.

Objectives:

1. Describe duties and responsibilities for Forest and Zone Duty Officers.
2. Ensure that coordination among Zones, Forest Staff, Grand-Teton NP, Teton Interagency Dispatch Center, High Desert District BLM, Wyoming State Forestry, Teton/Sublette/Lincoln county rural fire departments and adjacent dispatch areas occurs during wildland fire management operations.

III. Roles and Responsibilities

It is important for Duty Officers to maintain a high level of situational awareness to ensure that effective command/control is established and functioning at all levels on the Forest. Sharing fire management resources is required at all levels to meet higher priority needs and requests. Some requests include orders such as Support, Preposition, Severity, FEMA requests and others.

A cornerstone to effective command/control is the constant two-way flow of information between fire management, agency administrators, interagency cooperators, Teton Interagency Dispatch Center, and fire resources.

A. Forest Duty Officer (FDO)

1. Provide oversight for the Forest's execution of Fire and Aviation management activities, Teton Interagency Fire Danger Operating Plan and other pertinent policy and guidelines.
2. The FDO is responsible for briefing and coordinating with the Forest Supervisor, the Deputy Forest Supervisor or their Acting and District Rangers.
3. FDO's serve as primary contact during initial and extended attack operations on the Bridger-Teton National Forest as well as within the dispatch area by providing coordination between Zone Duty Officers, Grand Teton NP Duty Officer and TIDC

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4. Provide fire information updates to Regional FAM Duty Officer or FAM director/assistant and Great Basin Coordinating Center.
5. Provide initial information and updates to Regional FAM Duty Officer for all fires that are unstaffed or do not have direct perimeter control tactics being implemented.
6. Monitor and provide input to local area Preparedness Level determination in conjunction with Grand Teton NP duty officer and the TIDC Center Manager. The Forest Duty Officer with the Grand Teton National Park Duty Officer will jointly decide the availability for out of area use of the interagency helicopters or county SAR requests.
7. Conduct a thorough assessment of the current fire situation on the forest. Prioritize and implement actions of all suppression resources on the Bridger-Teton National Forest and support interagency cooperators within the TIDC dispatch area. Monitor initial attack draw-down levels based on the Teton Interagency Fire Danger Operating Plan and adjust as necessary to address fire workload.
8. The FDO will monitor prescribed fire operations (conditions, multiple ignitions, and contingency force availability) to confirm that the Forest is meeting appropriate staffing levels.
9. Order additional fire resources on ABC Miscellaneous, Fire Support P-codes or Severity Requests to backfill and supplement initial attack capability for the Forest in coordination with Grand Teton NP Duty Officer.
10. Host fire suppression resources as requested by the Regional FAM Duty Officer and Great Basin Coordination Center such as Great Basin Support, Large Fire Support, NICC Support and others. Coordinate with Zone Duty Officers for possible staging locations.
11. Conduct safety and operational in-briefings for incoming initial attack and staged resources when necessary.
12. Review complexity analysis's completed by the District Rangers, Zone DO's and Incident Commanders for incidents that escape initial attack. As a group, make a recommendation to the Forest Supervisor for the mobilization of a Complex, NIMO, Type 1, 2, or 3 Incident Management Teams.
13. For incidents that exceed extended attack on the Bridger-Teton NF, serve as the advisor to the Forest Supervisor during large fire operations involving Complex, type 1 and type 2 Incident Management Teams or National Incident Management Organization assigned incidents.
14. Ensure IMT in-briefings are facilitated and participate where needed.
15. The Forest Duty Officer will work with assigned Incident Commanders and Zone Duty Officers to provide fire management safety oversight, broad operational guidance, and logistics support.
16. Provide technical review of WFDSS documents requiring Forest Supervisor approval.
17. Ensure all serious injuries and accidents are communicated to the Forest Supervisor, Forest Safety Officer and Regional FAM Duty Officer.

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18. Keep fire information officers informed of the current and expected fire activity, fire danger conditions, and fire restriction decisions.
19. Monitor fire danger conditions, coordinate with Zone Duty Officers and interagency partners for implementation of Fire Restrictions as appropriate. Assist in coordinating fire restrictions conference calls with BTNF Forest staffs and interagency partners.
20. Monitor use of aerial retardant and report misapplications to agency administrators and resource specialists.
21. Ensure appropriate specialists, biologist and/or archeologist are aware of fire suppression activities and seek guidance on threatened and endangered species or sensitive areas to reduce impacts.
22. Transition of Forest Duty Officers shall be communicated to the Forest Supervisor, District Rangers, District Zone Officers, and TIDC.
23. Duty Officer conference/TEAMS calls will be scheduled and facilitated by the Forest Duty Officer with Zone Duty Officers, Forest Aviation Officer, Grand Teton NP Duty Officer and TIDC.
24. A fully qualified Forest DO will be assigned to Forest DO trainees. Forest DO trainees will remain in communication with a qualified Forest DO. Qualified Forest DO's will provide guidance and assistance to the trainee.
25. Individuals that have been delegated authority by the Forest Supervisor as a Forest Duty Officer may cover as a Zone Duty Officer if current and qualified but cannot perform both levels simultaneously.
26. Approve and ensure communication of the need to have extended staffing or have resources brought in early utilizing fire support codes, ABC misc. codes and Fire Severity Staffing codes. Communication of staffing changes during the day will be made by TIDC via text messages and radio announcements.
27. FDO will Provide guidance on aircraft use when requested by Incident Commanders and approve any off-Forest use.

B. Zone Duty Officers (ZDO)

1. Coordinate the efforts of the District personnel to provide safe and effective initial attack within BTNF protection areas, consistent with the Fire Management Plan and the Teton Interagency Fire Danger Operating Plan .
2. Coordinate with local jurisdictional entities that have a current response agreement or understanding.
3. Ensure a thorough risk assessment of the current fire situation is occurring. Evaluate hazards such as snag patches, terrain, weather etc.... to determine appropriate initial response to incidents. Monitor initial attack draw-down levels based on the Teton Interagency Fire Danger Operating Plan and adjust in concert with the FDO as necessary to deal with fire workload.

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4. Evaluate all unplanned wildfires for fire management objectives outlined within the fire management plan. Any fire recommended for anything other than full suppression management will be reviewed by the Forest Duty Officer and approved by the District Ranger and Forest Supervisor.
5. Keep District Ranger and Forest Duty Officers updated on incidents and provide current fire size-up information in a timely manner. Continue communications until the incident is contained.
6. Coordinate with Forest Duty Officer to order additional fire resources on Fire Support Codes, ABCD Miscellaneous or Severity Requests to backfill and supplement initial attack capability for the District.
7. Ensure an Incident Organizer is completed and archived on every Type 3, 4, and 5 fires.
8. Ensure fire management work/rest guidelines are followed.
9. Conduct safety and operational in-briefings for incoming initial attack and staged resources. Provide resources in-briefing packets, maps, and clone radios.
10. Zone Duty Officers are responsible to ensure WFDSS documentation for incidents that exceed or are expected to exceed initial attack and for fires that have management objectives that are less than full suppression.
11. At a minimum, Zone Duty Officers will monitor unstaffed wildfires and update the District Ranger and Forest Duty Officer. An Incident Commander will be assigned to all wildfires whenever suppression actions are taken.
12. In coordination with Initial Attack Incident Commanders, Zone Duty Officers will complete an Incident Complexity Analysis for incidents that are escalating to ensure appropriate incident commanders are assigned or ordered.
13. Ensure that all suspected human caused fires are investigated at the appropriate level.
14. Serve as the zone's primary contact with TIDC for on unit resources assigned off-unit and out of area resources assigned to the zone. Monitor the Teton Interagency Fire Danger Operating Plan for Forest and zone draw down levels.
15. The Zone Duty Officer will work with assigned Incident Commanders to provide fire management safety oversight, broad operational guidance, and logistics support as outlined by the District Ranger.
16. For incidents that are escalating, a complexity analysis will be completed by the Incident Commander, District Ranger, and Zone Duty Officer. The results will be communicated to the Forest Supervisor and Forest Duty Officer for a final decision for ordering the appropriate Incident Management Team.
17. Maintain communication with TIDC, Forest Duty Officer, and suppression resources on the zone.

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18. Transition of Zone Duty Officer to another must be communicated to District Rangers, Forest Duty Officer, zone fire modules, and TIDC. Incident Commanders for staffed fires will be notified of changes in Zone Duty Officer coverage.
19. Report all serious injuries and accidents to the District Ranger, Forest Safety Officer and Forest Duty Officer.
20. Ensure that the Zone's resource status page is up to date by 1000, during fire season.
21. A fully qualified Zone DO will be assigned to Zone DO trainees. Zone DO trainees will remain in communication with a qualified Zone DO. Qualified Zone DO's will provide guidance and assistance to the trainee.
22. Recommend and ensure communication of the need to have extended staffing or have resources brought in early utilizing fire support codes, ABC misc. codes and Fire Severity Staffing codes.
23. Communicate with Forest DO prior to making fire resources available for off dispatch area assignments.
24. Ensure cost-tracking is accomplished (or started for growing incidents) for each wildland fire on the zone and fire reports are completed then entered into the INFORM database within 10 days of declaring the fire out.

C. Dispatch Supervisor

1. Dispatches appropriate resource response using closest forces concept regardless of agency or fire protection area.
2. Serve as primary contact during initial and extended attack operations within the TIDC dispatch area. Provide coordination between all Duty Officers and dispatchers.
3. Keep Forest and Zone Duty Officers updated on escalating incidents and provide current fire size-up information in a timely manner. Continue communications until the incident is controlled.
4. Monitor and post Preparedness Levels following guidelines established in the Teton Interagency Fire Danger Operating Plan.
5. Coordinate with the Forest DO on resource orders and support the Teton Interagency Fire Cache.

IV. Duty Officer Qualifications

The Bridger-Teton National Forest is a High Complexity Forest as defined by the Interagency Fire Program Management guidelines. In accordance with the Forest Service manual direction, FSM 1230 and 5100, individuals performing as Duty Officer (DO) must meet the minimum National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) qualifications. The NWCG qualification requirements for Duty Officers are as follows:

Forest DO: DIVS -and- ICT3 or RXB2 -OR- ASGS -and- ICT3 (Currency not required)

Forest DO Trainee: Be qualified as a Zone DO.

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Zone DO: DIVS -and- ICT3 or RXB2 -OR- ASGS -and- ICT3 (Currency required)

Zone DO Trainee: Must be fully qualified in at least one of the minimum NWCG qualifications and have an open position task book for the remainder and may only be supervised by an individual serving as Zone DO and not the Forest DO.

It is recommended that trainee Forest and Zone Duty Officers spend enough time with an experienced duty officer to shadow and be mentored to the roles and responsibilities listed earlier. Trainees, at either level, will not be qualified until they meet the line officer expectations and are recommended for qualification by the appropriate line officer.