



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

April 1, 2013

To: Rocky Mountain Area Incident Commanders

From: Chair, Rocky Mountain Area Fire Executive Committee

Chair, Rocky Mountain Coordinating Group

Subject: 2013 Incident Commander Expectations

Thank you for your commitment to the Rocky Mountain Area (RMA) as an Incident Commander (IC).

The Rocky Mountain Coordinating Group (RMCG) is responsible for maximizing cooperation, coordination and operational capabilities to enhance fire management programs for all agencies in the RMA. Our Incident Management Teams (IMTs) are an important part of an interagency operational capability that meets our member agency's objectives. The leadership you will provide to your IMT is greatly appreciated.

An individual's service on a RMA IMT is a discretionary function of RMCG that is not only based on incident qualifications, but on other factors (past performance, expectations of future performance, ethical conduct, appearance of propriety, etc.). RMCG expects the highest standards of professionalism and leadership within our IMTs and expects our ICs (and team members) to adhere to the following principles, in addition to their employing agency's standards:

Communication

- Always feel free to communicate with RMCG – please share experiences, personal thoughts, suggestions, and alternatives so that we can strive to continually improve our teams.
- Ensure that any public interaction by you is a positive reflection of all RMA Agencies.

Safety

- Fire fighter and public safety must be the first priority.
- Ensure that all actions are deliberate and planned and that carelessness or unsafe actions are at or near zero.
- Promote safe working and driving practices at all times.
- Monitor cumulative fatigue of team members and follow work/rest guidelines.

Personnel

- Respond to emergency incidents within and outside of the RMA with highly skilled and qualified personnel.
- Be flexible and willing to configure your IMT to meet the objectives of the host agency/agencies for any type of incident.
- Ensure that recruitment and training of new IMT members is a priority; pay particular attention to shortage positions and succession planning.
- Broaden experience and develop bench strength in your Command and General Staff by striving to follow RMCG policies regarding length of time an IMT member can occupy a position and promoting the use of current Federal, state and local agency employees/cooperators.
- Promote a team attitude that supports handling long term stressful incident situations by frequent positive and supportive IMT member interaction and camaraderie.
- Identify and mentor IMT members which have performance, leadership, and/or team cohesion issues. Do not ignore, delay action or pass-on these issues – our experience has shown that this will only create greater problems in the future.
- Meet with RMCG at least annually to review performance and identify problems for management solution.

Leadership

- Demonstrate professionalism at all times - on incidents, between incidents, and at public functions where you are representing RMA Agencies.
- Be personally committed to and responsible for your IMT's performance.
- Ensure that your actions are fair and all individuals and agencies are treated equally; RMCG has zero tolerance of discrimination of any kind.
- Deal with problems at the lowest level to ensure corrections are initiated at the first opportunity, but do not hesitate to communicate and seek assistance with RMCG for longer-term concerns.

Business Practices

- All incident team members will conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner.
- Incidents involving unprofessional employee conduct will be referred immediately to the employee's local agency administrator by the Incident Commander. At the same time, the Incident Commander will notify the Chair of the RMA Operations Committee and the agency's Operations Committee representative.
- All team members will refrain from any activity or conduct that allows them to enhance their personal financial status in relation to actions taken on an incident.
- In the event that it appears that a team member has engaged in activity that results in the enhancement of their financial interest, the matter will be immediately referred to the RMCG membership which will immediately refer the matter to the agency hosting the incident and the home agency of the individual(s) involved. The agencies investigating will submit their findings to RMCG for consideration and possible action.

Host Agency Contact

- Make contact with Agency Administrators upon the initial order for an IMT.
- Adhere to the Delegation of Authority to accomplish agency/agencies missions and desired incident management objectives.

- Understand and respect the host Agency's mission and authorities.
- Please brief with Agency Administrators on a daily basis and immediately notify them of any serious accident, injury, or fatality that may occur.
- Fully participate in any reviews, after action reviews and investigations that may involve incidents that occur when you are in charge.
- Obtain an evaluation before departing all assignments and forward to the RMA Operations Committee Chair.

Personal Conduct

- Your personal conduct during your service to the host Agency, or in any other public forum, is a direct reflection upon all RMA fire management resources, each participating Agency, and RMCG itself. We expect this reflection to be positive at all times.
- Your IMT's conduct also has the same reflection upon the professionalism of others. Monitor your IMT member's behavior and take necessary action where appropriate.
- Please refer to the attached "Fire Chief's Code of Ethics" and share this with your IMT.

RMCG knows that the job of IC is a voluntary job that can be very demanding and often goes without deserved acknowledgement. We want you to know that we appreciate your commitment to helping people in need and thank you again for your continued commitment and long standing dedication to Incident Management.

Received by: _____

Date: _____

Fire Chief's Code of Ethics

Developed by the International Association of Fire Chiefs

- Recognize that we serve in a position of public trust that imposes responsibility to use publicly owned resources effectively and judiciously.
- Do not use a public position to obtain advantages or favors for friends, family, personal business ventures or ourselves.
- Use information gained from our positions only for the benefit of those we are entrusted to serve.
- Conduct your personal affairs in such a manner that we cannot be improperly influenced in the performance of our duties.
- Avoid situations whereby our decisions or influence may have an impact on personal financial interests.
- Seek no favor and accept no form of personal reward for influence or official action.
- Engage in no outside employment or professional activities that may impair or appear to impair our primary responsibilities as fire officials.
- Comply with local laws and campaign rules when supporting political candidates and engaging in political activities.
- Handle all personnel matters on the basis of merit.
- Carry out policies established by elected officials and policy makers to the best of our ability.
- Refrain from financial investments or business that conflicts with or is enhanced by our official position.
- Refrain from endorsing commercial products through quotations, use of photographs or testimonials, for personal gain.
- Develop job descriptions and guidelines at the local level to produce behaviors in accordance with the code of ethics.
- Conduct training at the local level to inform and educate local personnel about ethical conduct and policies and procedures.
- Have systems in place at the local level to resolve ethical issues.
- Orient new employees to the organization's ethics program during new employee orientation.
- Review the ethics management program in management training experiences.
- Deliver accurate and timely information to the public and to elected policymakers to use when deciding critical issues.