

Cody Interagency Dispatch Center

2019 Year End Report



Banjo
Wind River/Bighorn Basin District BLM
Worland, WY

Cooperating Agencies in The Cody Dispatch Zone



Wind River/Bighorn Basin District - WBD

Shoshone National Forest - SHF

Bighorn National Forest - BHF

Wind River Agency - WRA

Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area - BIP

Wyoming State Forestry Division - CDS

Big Horn - BHX, Fremont - FRX, Hot Springs - HOX, Johnson - JOX, Park - PAX,
Sheridan - SHX, and Washakie – WAX Counties

https://gacc.nifc.gov/rmcc/dispatch_centers/r2cdc/

The Cody Interagency Dispatch Center experienced a below average fire season for wildland fires and acres burned within the zone. The year began with cold winter conditions bringing above average snow pack into the higher elevations of the Shoshone and Bighorn National Forests. Throughout the spring, and into early June, the zone received slightly above normal precipitation from afternoon wetting rains. Fuels cured out mid-July and critical fire danger began early August. In September, the dispatch zone received a mix of snow and rain showers, which moderated fire danger indices. All remote automated weather stations were placed into freeze status by early November. The year rounded out with multiple agencies implementing pile burning into late December.

The first wildfire of the year began January 27th, on the Shoshone National Forest, for 5.2 acres. The final fire of the year started November 5th, on the Shoshone National Forest, for .1 acres. The total number of wildfires in the Cody Dispatch Zone was 175, which was lower than our five-year average of 214 fires. A total of 13,080 acres burned across the dispatch area, with the Shoshone National Forest owning most of those acres.

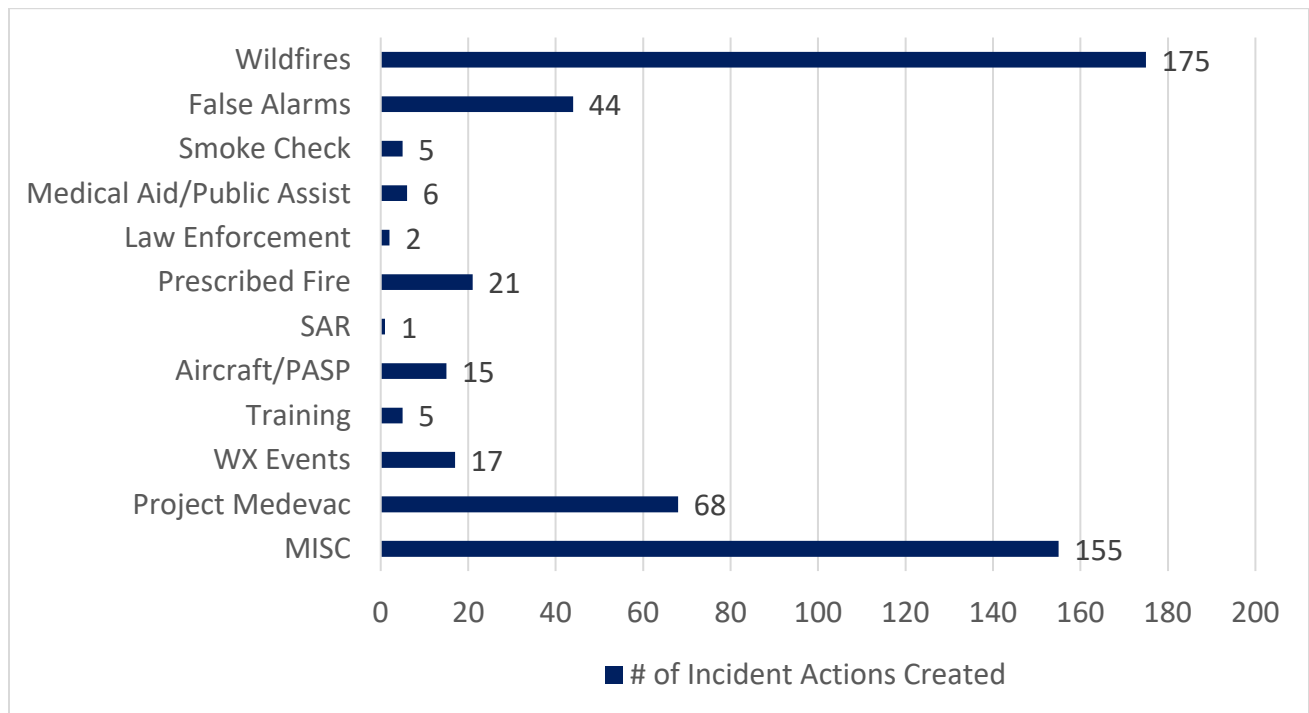
Cody Dispatch supported one type 2 incident management team on the Shoshone National Forest. The Fishhawk fire started on the south side of the North Fork Highway and grew to 11,180 acres in the timber. Evacuations were ordered but thankfully no structures were lost.

The two Cody Dispatch zone seat bases, located in Greybull and Riverton, provided a little over 10,000 gallons of retardant to support local and neighboring incidents. A zone Unit Aviation Manager position was filled in March and brought in additional aviation oversight to the area.

In early March, Cody Dispatch began mobilizing resources to support local and out of area fires. Agencies within the Cody Dispatch zone supported incidents in the Rocky Mountain, Great Basin, Northern Rockies, Pacific Northwest, Southwest, Southern Area, North and South Operations California, and Alaska geographic areas. For the first time in Cody Dispatch history, we mobilized an interagency type 2 initial attack crew to Canada for a two-week assignment. The dispatch center learned a great deal about international travel, and the required back ground checks needed for the firefighters.

Incident Actions

Cody Dispatch created 533 Incident Actions to support wildfire management responses, prescribed fire support, medical aid, public assist, search and rescue, resource flight following, weather events, law enforcement, and miscellaneous training scenarios.



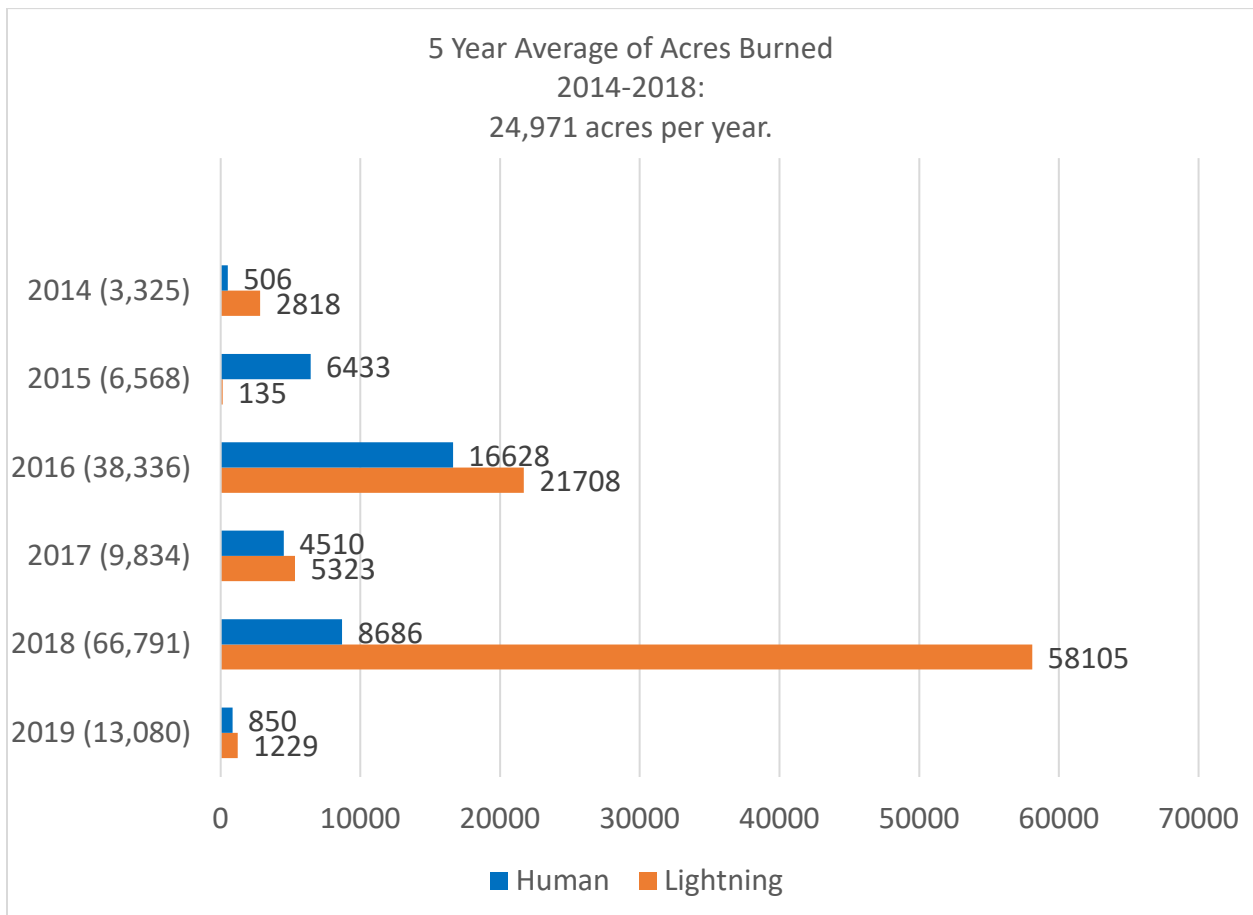
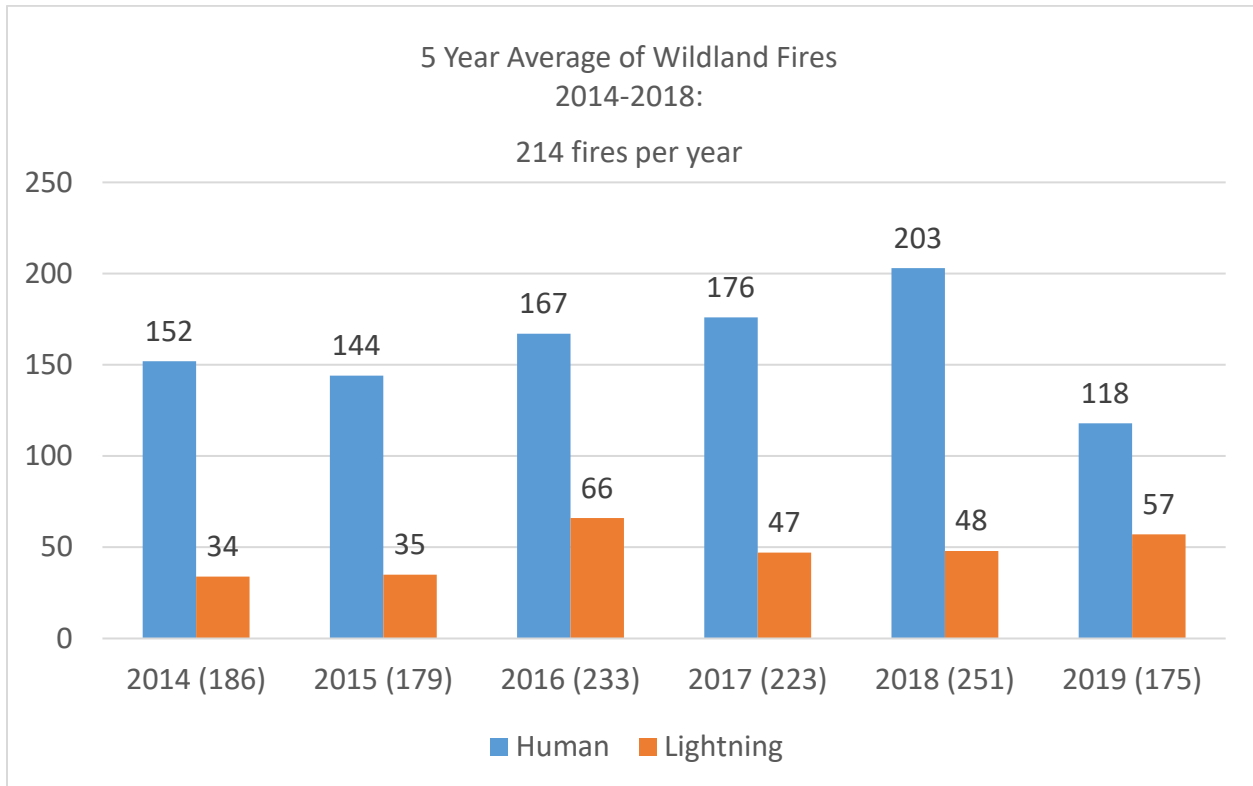
Fire Statistics

- 175 – Wildfires
- 13,080 – Acres Burned
- 533 – Incident Actions
- 1,289 – Resource Orders Filled
- 10 – Days Expanded Dispatch was Staffed
- 14 – Detailed Dispatchers
- 15 – Nights Staffed (24-hour service)
- 5 – Days Cody Dispatch was at PL3 (9/4 - 9/8/2019)

Agency Break Down

UNIT	HUMAN		LIGHTNING		TOTAL	
	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres
BHF Bighorn NF	2	.5	2	4.1	4	4.6
BIP Bighorn Canyon National Rec. Area	0	0	0	0	0	0
SHF Shoshone National Forest	7	5.8	9	11,224.6	16	11,230.4
WBD Wind River/Bighorn Basin District	18	336.8	32	850.7	50	1,187.5
WRA Wind River Agency	58	273	3	14.1	61	287.1
WAAL WY Bureau of Reclamation	1	.1	0	0	1	.1
CDS Wyoming State Forestry Division	1	.1	3	60.3	4	60.4
BHX Big Horn County	7	132.1	1	13.4	8	145.5
FRX Fremont County	11	71.5	1	2.5	12	74
HOX Hot Springs County	0	0	0	0	0	0
NAX Natrona County	3	.3	0	0	3	.3
PAX Park County	1	4.6	5	27.7	6	32.3
WAX Washakie County	9	25.9	1	31.6	10	57.5
TOTAL	118	850.7	57	12,229	175	13,079.7

5 Year Averages



Large Fire Summary

Incident Name	Start Date	Cause	Final Acres	Unit	Complexity	IC/IMT
Brokenback	7/11	L	43	WBD	4	Tucker
Corbin	7/11	L	164	WBD	3	Matthiesen
Banjo	7/11	L	159	WBD	3	Matthiesen
Lick Creek	7/30	L	4	BHF	4	Bocek
Koehler	8/4	L	100	WBD	4	Morgan
Nowater	8/7	L	191	WBD	3	Bryson
17 Mile	8/17	H	116	WRA	3	Wells/Haslam
Buddy Basin	8/19	H	61	WRA	4	Rothleutner
Buffalo Creek	8/21	L	136	WBD	5	Lloyd
Hubble Draw	8/25	H	146	WBD	4	Richards
Bomber Lake	8/28	L	68	SHF	4	Bonenberger
West Nostrum	8/30	L	7	WRA	4	Smith
Fishhawk	9/2	L	11,180	SHF	2	Haydon – RMA IMT2
Stink Water	9/3	L	47	PAX	2/3	Haydon – RMA IMT2



Fishhawk
Photo taken from Mt. Washburn Look, YNP



Nowater
Photo taken by Washakie County



Bomber Lake
Photo taken by ATGS Isaac Shinkle

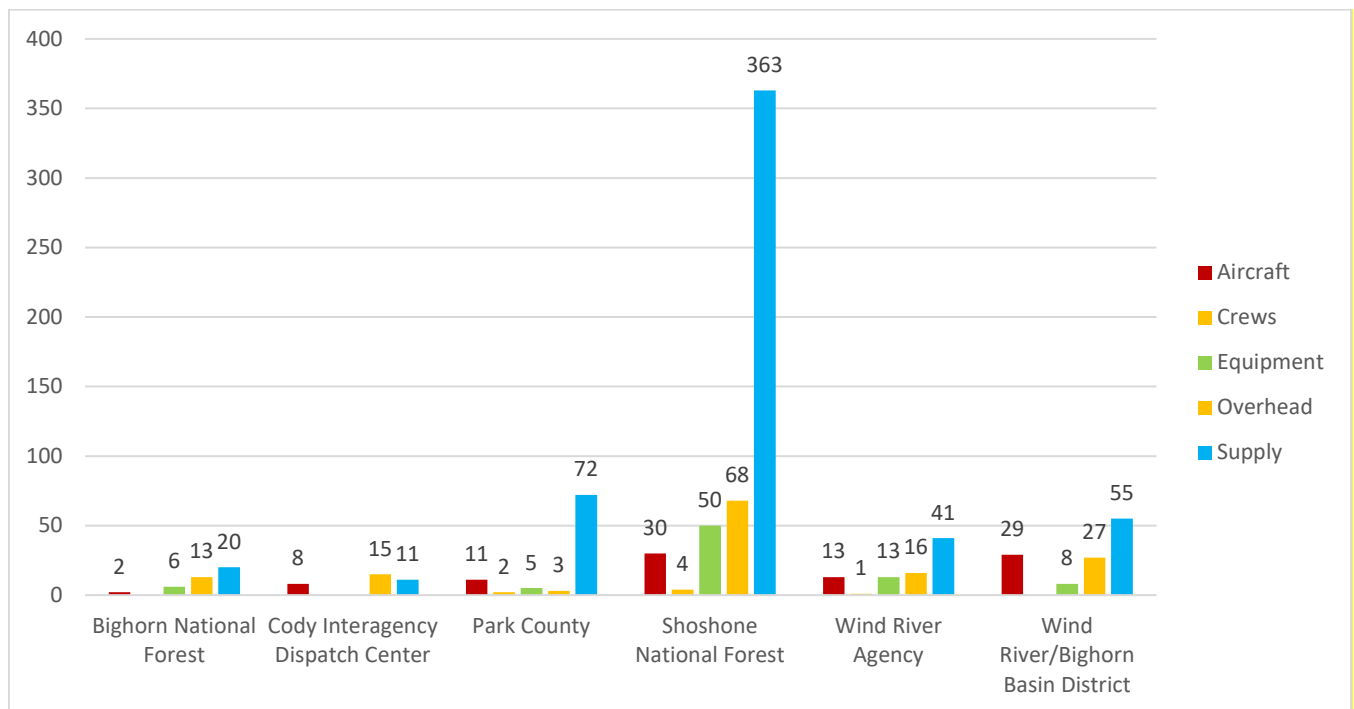
Resource Orders

Internal Requests by Provider

Provider	Total Requests	Filled Internal	Cancelled	UTF
CDC - RMA Prepo	54	42	12	0
BHF	35	34	1	0
PAX	110	104	2	4
SHF	470	438	20	12
WRA	157	149	7	1
WBD	187	170	16	1
TOTAL	1,013	937	58	18

The above chart includes all aircraft, crews, equipment, overhead, and supply requests created by Cody Dispatch in 2019.

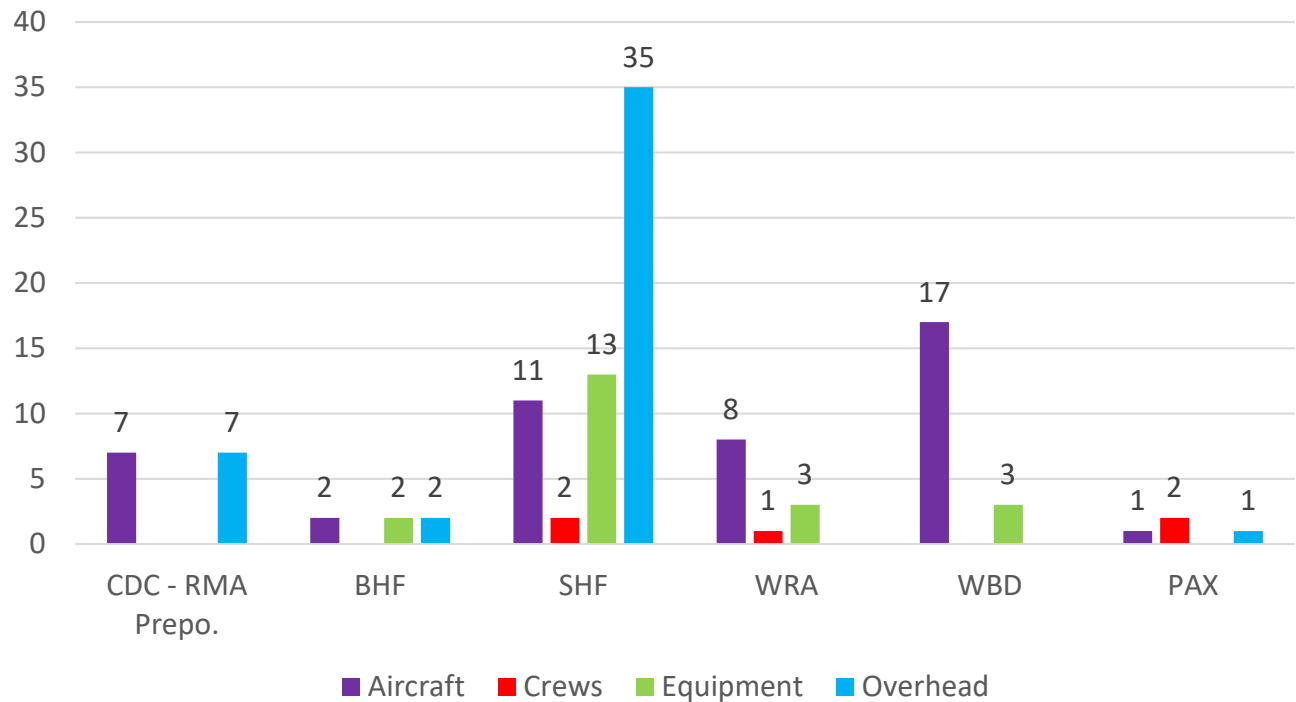
Filled Internal Requests



The graph above shows the actual filled resource orders by provider

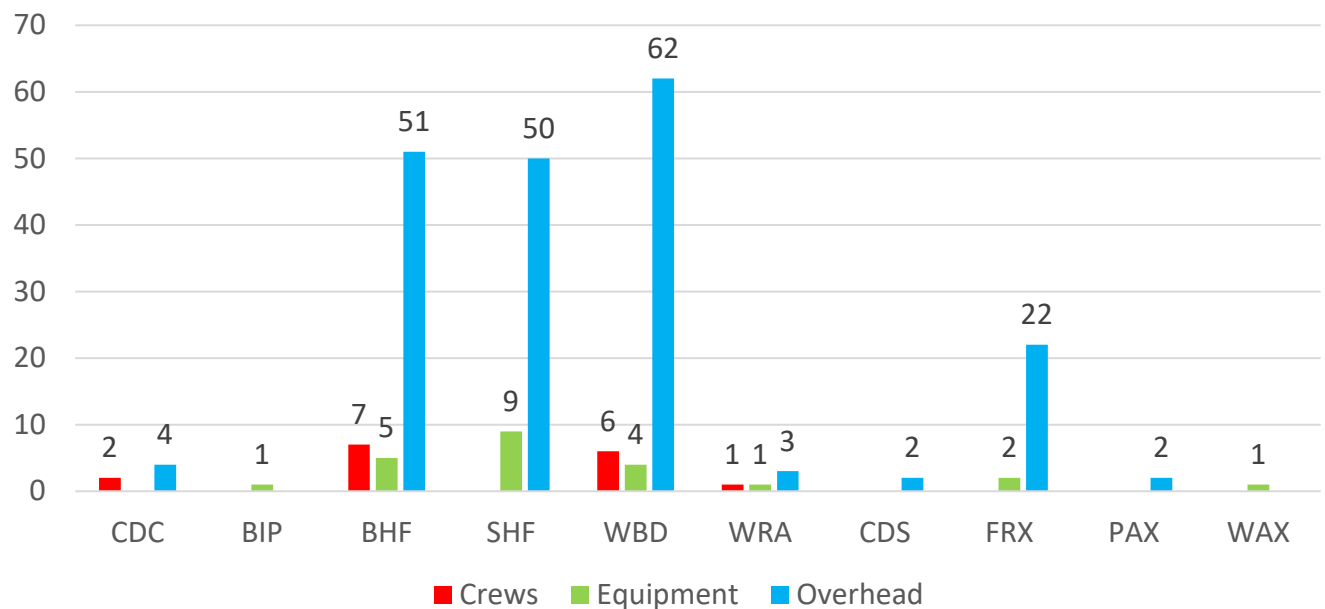
Incoming Resources by Provider

Out of area resources, brought into the CDC zone, to support our local fires.

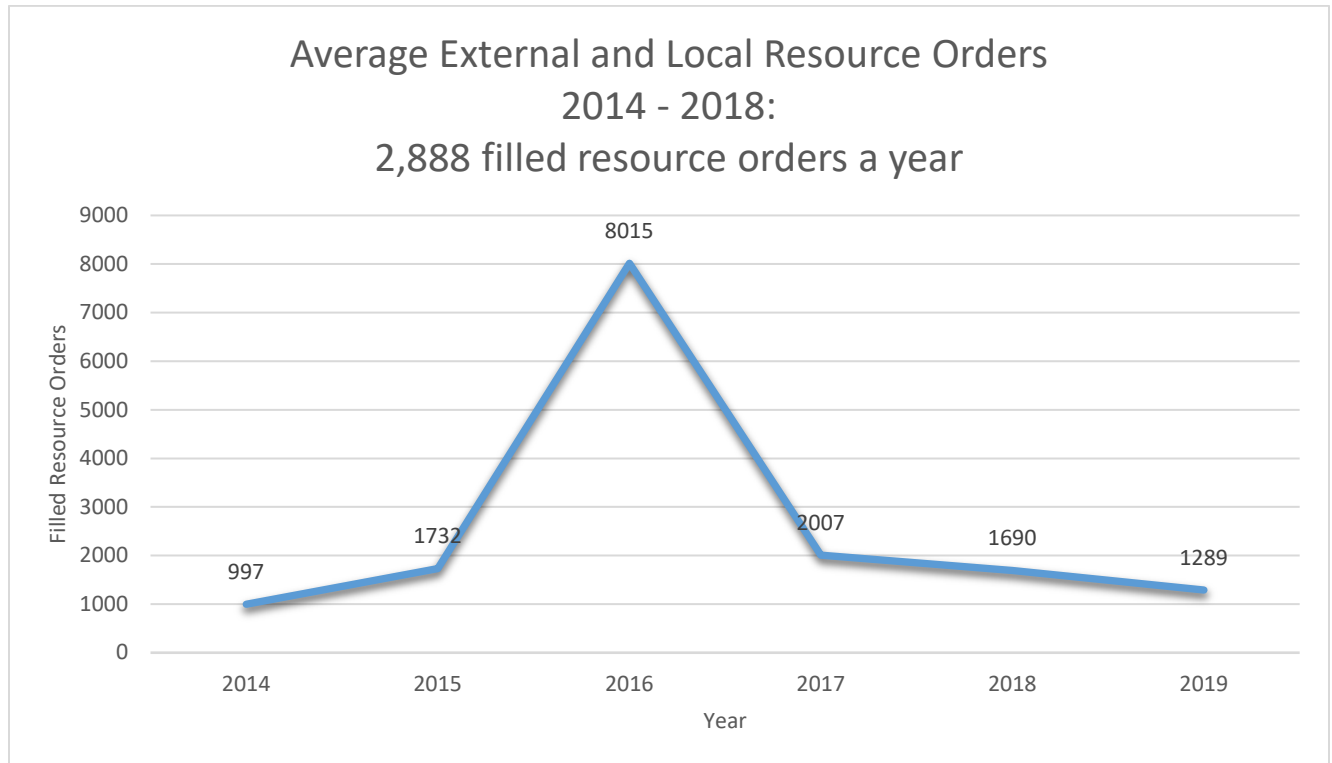


Non-Local/Out of Area Filled Dispatch Requests

Sent local CDC resources out of the zone to support Rocky Mountain Area & National efforts.



5 Year Average - Resource Orders filled by Cody Dispatch



Challenges/Lessons Learned

- Dispatch Staffing Shortages
 - Although Cody Dispatch was fully staffed with 6 (based on organizational chart) this fire season, there continues to be a critical need for additional dispatch help. The Cody Dispatch workload continues to increase each year and the fire seasons run much longer. The current organizational chart staffing does not keep up with the growing frequency and complexities of the fires we're supporting on a regular basis. It is difficult to provide local 7-day coverage, have a work-life balance, and offer training opportunities for staff development when you may only have 2-3 people working in the center a day. If a dispatcher can take a fire assignment elsewhere, the remaining local staff have to cover their shifts. This causes more conflict in work-life balance, fatigue, and many times causes issues with work to rest guidelines.
 - During the fire season, Cody Dispatch may only have 2-3 dispatchers working a day to track 5 federal agencies resources/personnel, coordinate with seven county 911 dispatch centers/volunteer firefighters, make extreme weather event notifications, publish fire indices, monitor weather conditions, deal with medical emergencies, public assists, produce intel products such as 209's/Sit Report, provide logistical and tactical support to emerging and ongoing fires, process ROSS orders, make logistical travel for people responding to fires outside of the dispatch zone, deal with radio issues, process requests called in by phone, participate in many agency specific conference calls/meeting, coordinate with the

local steering committee, brief duty officers and FMO's on incident needs, assist the public on where to find fire information or who to talk to at the local level, etc. Often dispatch staff is unable to take a 30-minute lunch break, or they eat at their console, due to the constant needs from the field and ongoing fires. With added positions into the dispatch center, this would alleviate some of the stress and burn out in the dispatch center.

- Continuing to find after hours help from local agencies and nearby militia is a struggle. Many militia have expressed they do not want to work overtime, nor staff all night at dispatch to answer the radio or phone in case there is an emergency. This forces us to place a regular dispatcher on night shift until we can order in help or the fire is contained. Again, we are then down a position during day shift when most of our fires start.
- Looking for help at the national level is difficult, as there are not a lot of qualified dispatchers in the system. Recruitment and retention continue to be an issue within the dispatch community. It's easy to say, "Order in more dispatch help," but often dispatch requests are unable to fill. Local dispatchers are then pressured to work 14+ hours a day, for 13 days straight, with one day off the majority of the season. This leads again to burn out and retention issues.
- The time it takes to recruit and fill vacancies for federal agencies is exhausting. With various federal Human Resources, applicants are getting frustrated with the lack of communication and explanation as to why they did or did not make a cert list.
- As an interagency dispatch center, we have two federal agencies (BLM & FS) networks wired into the facility. Challenges occur when network updates are pushed out. Often these updates change radio program settings, computer profiles become disabled, and critical software is removed.
- This past summer, Cody Dispatch found out ordering a neighboring federal agency short haul/search and rescue helicopter was more difficult than we originally thought. A forest service employee had accidentally sent an emergency spot device signal. We could not get in contact with the employee via radio or phone to confirm the emergency. Cody Dispatch contacted the neighboring federal agency dispatch center to request their short haul/search and rescue helicopter. Cody Dispatch was not aware of a specific process the neighboring unit utilizes when requests for their rescue helicopter are made. Due to unfamiliarity with this process, a delay in notification to the helicopter staff, agency administrator and search and rescue coordinator occurred. Cody Dispatch assumed the neighboring dispatch center made notifications to mobilize the helicopter, while the neighboring dispatch center thought the request was occurring directly to the agency administrator and short haul/search and rescue coordinator. The employee ended up being found soon after the request for the short haul helicopter was made. An AAR was conducted to ensure processes are more streamlined in the future. Cody Dispatch, and the local forest service unit, have updated emergency plans to reflect the requesting agency administrator must contact the sending unit agency administrator to make a request for the short haul/search and rescue helicopter. At the same time, Cody Dispatch will contact the neighboring dispatch center to inform them about the mission request and preload an aircraft knee board.

Strengths

- Interagency coordination and cooperation have resulted in excellent partnerships across the dispatch zone. This year a Unit Aviation Manager was hired to provide aviation oversight to the dispatch zone. The position is responsible for setting up the two seat bases, coordinating with seat managers, briefing incoming aircraft managers, and providing aviation training. The position is sponsored by the BLM and FS.
- Cody Dispatch continues to represent and support the dispatch community at the local, geographical, and national level with staff participating on the Rocky Mountain Coordinating Groups Dispatch and Training Committees. Additionally, staff is primary members on the National Coordination System Committee and National Computer Automated Dispatch Committees under the National Wildfire Coordinating Group.



Chuckegg
Bighorn Basin Interagency T21A Crew
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada



Nowater
Wind River Agency Sho-Rap T2 crew