

Illinois Interagency Dispatch Center
http://gacc.nifc.gov/eacc/dispatch_centers/ILC/index.htm
2011 End of the Year Report



**United States Forest Service
Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie
Golconda Jobcorps
United States Fish and Wildlife Service
United States National Park Service
Illinois Department of Natural Resources**



2011 Year End Report

2011 was a year of continued achievements along with many changes. This was Molly and Jennifer's first full year working side by side and much was accomplished. Molly finally buckled and got an exterminator in to spray monthly for the spiders, mice, frogs, and snakes, and to Jennifer's delight the populations of those 4 species have diminished considerable (in the building anyhow). Our Forest Fire Management Officer took a new position on the Huron Manistee in Michigan, one of our Engine Captains took an Assistant FMO position in Mississippi, and the Forest's fire program re-organized some to make the program more sustainable, productive, efficient, and cost effective. So by the end of the year we had some new folks in place, a new program organization to work within, and plenty of dedicated, experienced, professionals to work alongside.

Individually, Jennifer, Diana and myself accomplished a great deal on the National, Regional and local level. Molly ended her tenure as the Dispatch Working Team Chair but joined the EA Training Working Team, she was also selected as the 2010 Dispatcher of the Year, and even though the Dispatch Taskforce she participated on completed their project, she continues to pursue improvements on a National level to the casual hiring program. Jennifer was selected as the Eastern Area WildCad representative in April, was able to get the new ILC webpage up and running, and worked hard at obtaining a new server for our wildcad program as well as for other dispatch centers in the Eastern Area. Diana was able to get the base format for our new webpage working properly and worked closely with Jennifer in bringing that project to completion, she assisted the Eastern Area Coordination Center in getting their WildCad program up and running, became FFT2 qualified and fulfilled her 90 days of wildland fire experience to further her dispatch career.

Together Molly and Jennifer visited 911 centers to help foster cooperation and collaboration with the fire department dispatchers, worked together to create scenario's for 1st ever Eastern Area ROSS practice sessions which not only assisted other ESD/EDRC's in the region, but provided our own folks opportunity to come into the dispatch center and hone their skills. Molly was able to take a fire assignment filling in for her old Center in Colorado while Jennifer filled in on the Alleghany NF for 2 weeks as their Initial Attack Dispatcher supporting both the Alleghany and Monongahela National Forests in mobilizations and Diana spent 3 weeks at the Eastern Area Coordination Center working on her ESD taskbook.

The first wildland fire of the season was a mutual aid with Williamson County in February (which is about the same time as last year's first fire) and was about 150 acres. The last wildland fire, as well as the largest fire we supported in 2011, was the 1475 acre fire on the Pere Marquette State Park. The dispatch center mobilized 7 FS and 1 FWS overhead to assist in building fire line for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources through some of the most rugged and dangerous landscape in Illinois. The first agency to get their prescribed fire program off the ground was Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie in January, while due to the very wet fall, the last few prescribed fire acres reported on the National Sit Report was in November by both the Shawnee National Forest and Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge.

The Dispatch Center made great strides in many areas. Even though ILC generated close to the same number of Incident Actions (352) as 2010 (361) we still were way above the 208 average. With that said, we made a few changes in the WildCad program to where we can break down the Incident Actions into more accurate categories. For example we are now able to show more accurately which counties we provide more mutual aid assistance to (see graph). We also worked closely with various individuals within the Illinois Department of Natural Resources in the development of a process designed to gather real time reporting of their prescribed fire acres on a National level (National Situation Report). In 2010 we basically had to wait until the end of the year to report any DNR prescribed fire projects, but in 2011 we reported 85 for 4716 acres before year's end, which only covered one region for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Our goal is to slowly work the kinks out and incorporate another district in 2012.

The dispatch center also made strides in the quest of providing Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie wildland and prescribed fire dispatching. In 2011 the process began however we ran into some radio snafus and had to abandon the implementation for the time being. This is an area which ILC and Midewin TGP want to get up and running so our goal is to have it all fully functional in 2012.

One of the things I am most proud of is we developed and brought our new website on line which matched many of the Western centers format making it easier for our resources as well as visiting resources to find their needed information. Jennifer and Diana worked very hard with the GACC and another dispatcher from Cody Dispatch in Wyoming to get our site up and running. Not only does the site provide a great deal of safety and fire information, it looks awesome and brings us in line with other National centers.

http://gacc.nifc.gov/eacc/dispatch_centers/ILC/index.htm

ILC housed a National Radio Cache system this year which we mobilized twice during the late summer activities, once to Massachutes and once to Minnesota (via Michigan-slight error on FedEx's part-Grand Rapids Minnesota vs Grand Rapids Michigan). The center also supported EACC throughout the summer with purchasing supplies as well as securing motel rooms for some of their incoming support resources until their new personnel were able to secure purchase authority.

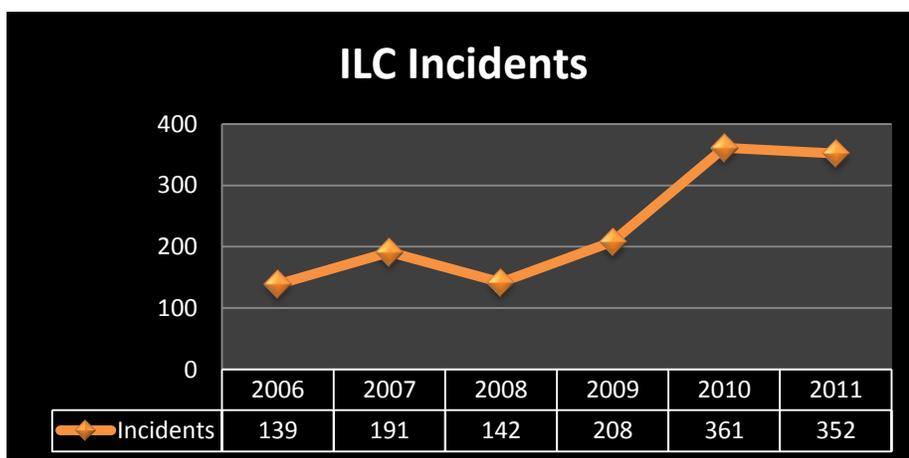
All in all 2011 was a great year for us here at the Illinois Interagency Dispatch Center. We have a great team that compliments one another, we work well with our many cooperators as well as the GACC and NICC, and we have been able to showcase our strengths which are teamwork and cooperation. With continued support from managers in allowing for our participation on a regional and national level, I believe we have and will continue to build a reputation for our center, for our resources we mobilize, and for our continued efforts in making each and every mobilization a cost effective, efficient, and safe one.

Molly, Jennifer, Diana

ILC WORKLOAD AND ACTIVITY

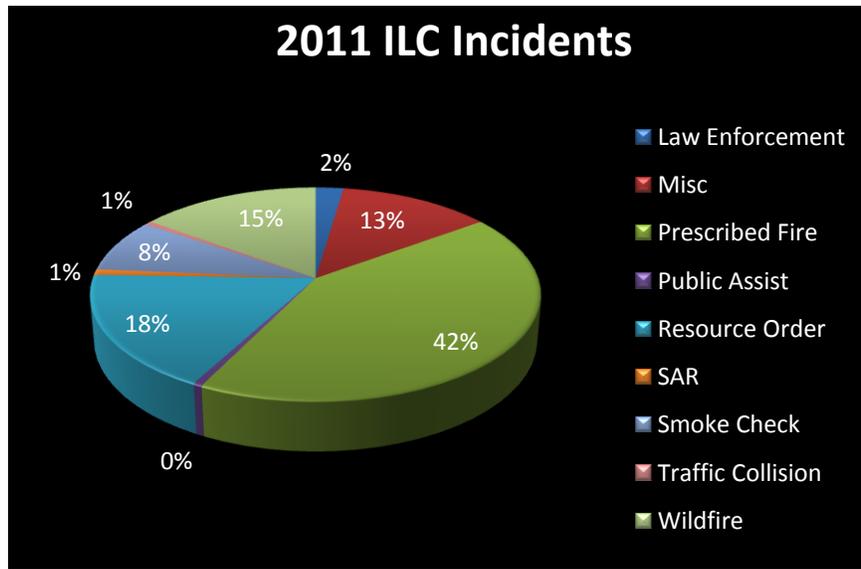
The dispatch centers workload for 2011 was very steady. When national preparedness levels go up, so does the workload for the center and 2011 was the first time since 2008 that the Preparedness level went up to a Level 4. The Southern Area was extremely busy this year and being one of their neighbors, therefore having some of the closest resources available, our center was busy providing needed resources.

You will notice in the graphs below, that even though the center does become more active with mobilizations when National activity increases, it was local prescribed and wildland fire activities in 2011 which created the majority of our workload. 18% of our workload was in mobilizations while 57% was addressing wildland and prescribed fire activities for all our agencies and agency partners. When things are broken down even further, it was a variety of activities, other than fire, which we provide the most support to. The State of Illinois support increased a great deal this year mainly due to the increased Prescribed Fire reporting. In 2011 the Forest Service also provides the majority of national mobilizations whether it was Equipment or overhead resources.

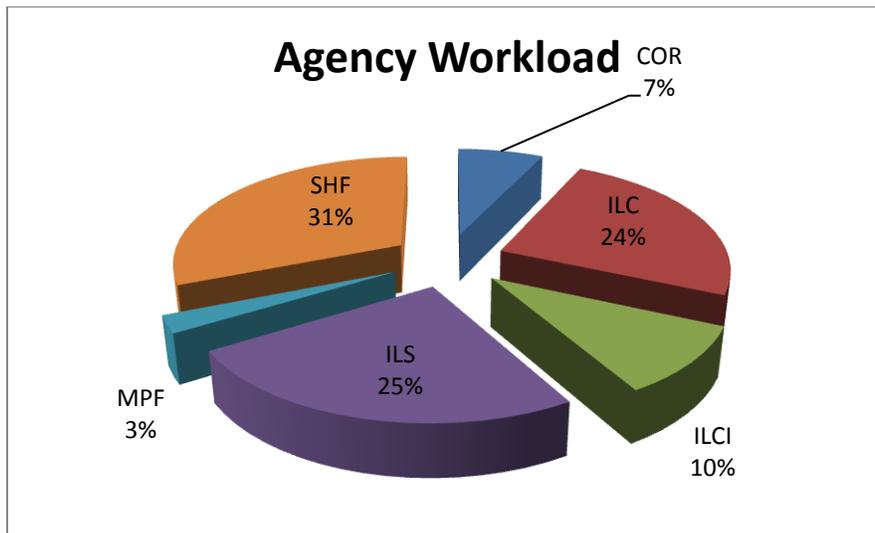


The above graph shows ILC's workload activity since 2006

This graph show the breakdown of incidents types which ILC generated in 2011.



Breakdown of agency workload generated by ILC in 2011



WILDLAND FIRE/PREScribed FIRE ACTIVITIES

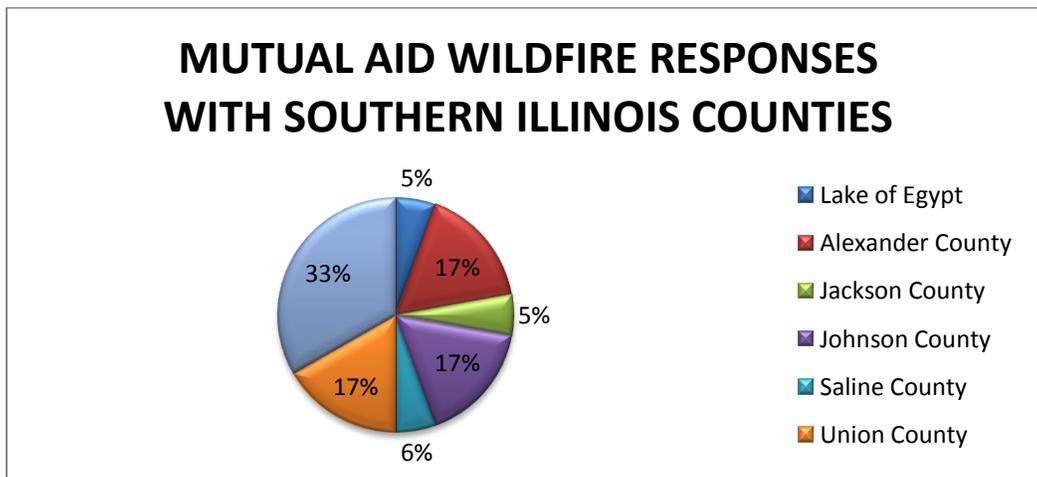
As noted above, wildland and prescribed fire activities were the brunt of our 2011 workload. You can see on the graph below, the Federal Partners were about average for wildfires in 2011. IL State fires do not get submitted from the various units until after the calendar year, therefore on the graph below instead of the usual all inclusive number of State fires (which we did not have the total by the time this report was completed), we decided to note the wildland fires which ILC was involved with, which basically are fires which occurred on State Park, State Conservation, or State Natural Area lands. Therefore, the total number of Illinois fires for this report is much smaller than previous years.

Over the past few years, ILC has also been providing suppression resources to our mutual aid partners in Southern Illinois. Keeping track of all mutual aid requests per county is a new element we added to the WildCad this year. It is a goal every year at ILC to remind local 911 centers of our presence and what equipment we have on hand to help assist in wildland suppression efforts. We have seen throughout the last few years a positive response from the counties on notifying our dispatch center of fires as well as asking for assistance. We hope to see even more cooperation in 2012.

Wildland Fire

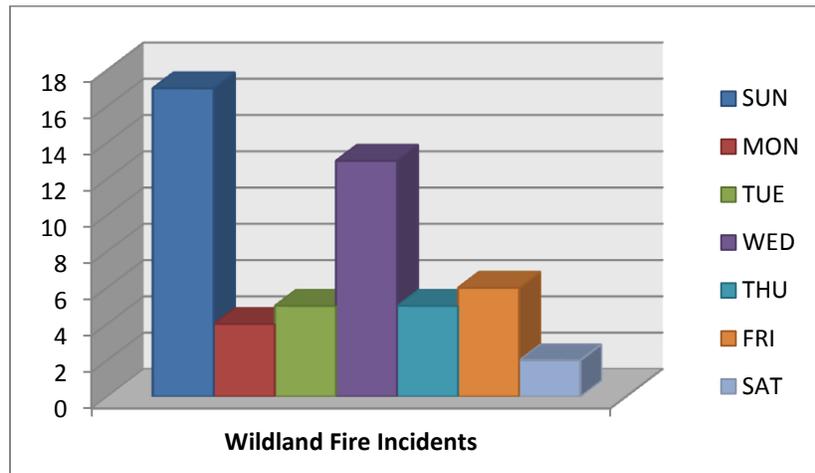
Wildland Fire Activity 2006 - 2011

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Forest Service	20	32	6	38	57	31
Illinois DNR	34	93	63	260	17	5
Fish & Wildlife Service	7	4	4	8	11	3
Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie	4	3	4	1	1	1

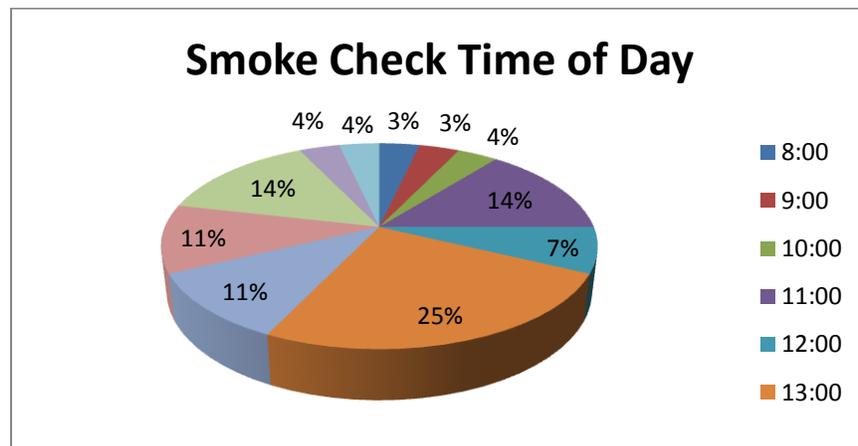


Southern Illinois Counties/ Fire Protection District where mutual aid requests for 2011 were initiated

ILC once again, with the use of WildCad, was able to determine the most likely day and time of day a wild fire may occur. These reports are great little tools which dispatchers as well as fire manager can use during fire season as well as planning prescribed fire activities. We just have not yet been able to determine where the fire will occur. As you can see, Sundays and Wednesdays are the busy days for wildland fires and 1300 is the most likely time a fire will occur.



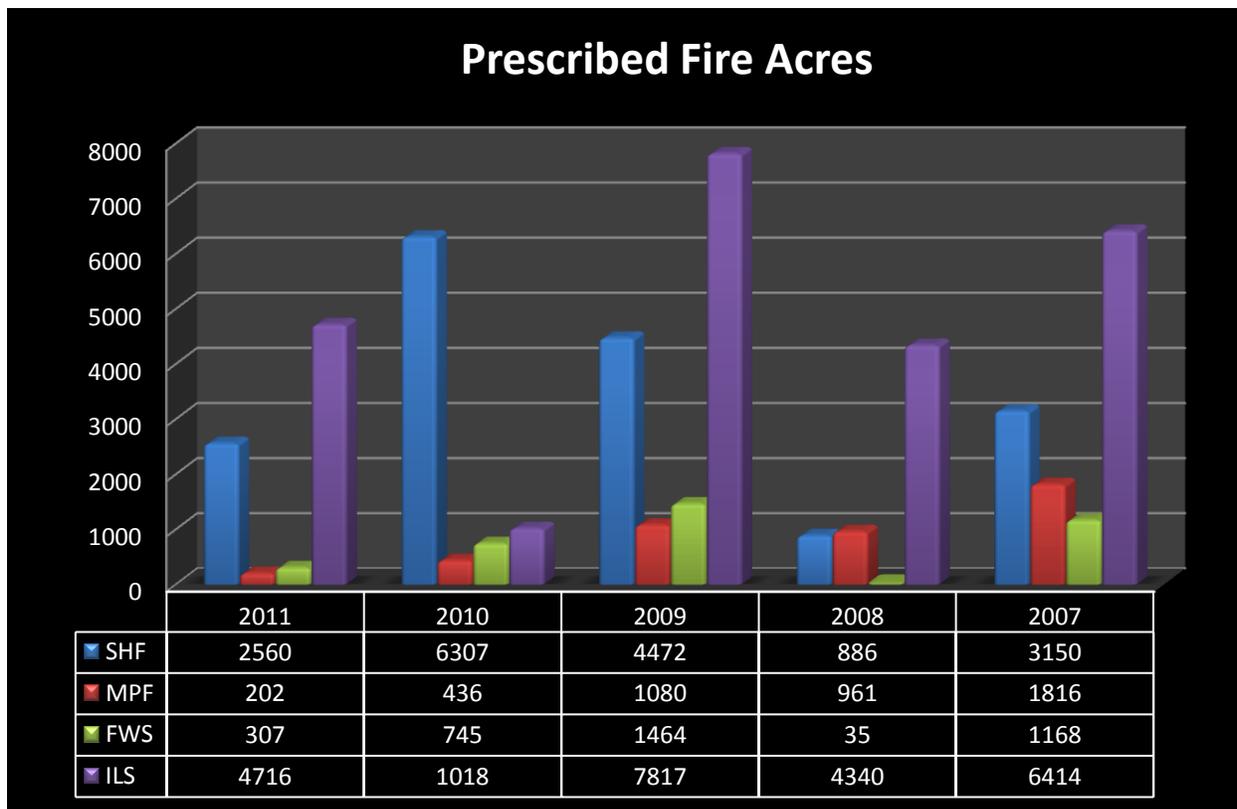
Days of the Week (above) and Time of Day (below) where wildland fire reports were called into ILC



Prescribed Fire

On the prescribed fire activity, the State of Illinois is our biggest workload, especially with the new process of DNR reporting their activities, however ILC does not actively participate in the prescribed fire activities for the state like we do with the Forest Service and Fish and Wildlife Service. ILC provides all the radio communications, agency notifications, resource tracking, and national reporting of all SHF/COR/CYR prescribed fire activities for the DNR we do their reporting and notification to the Air Quality Board.

Even though 2011 was one of the wettest years on record in Illinois and especially Southern Illinois, prescribed fire activity was still the dispatch centers biggest work load. All agencies got burn projects completed, however the accumulated acres were all a bit lower than the average.



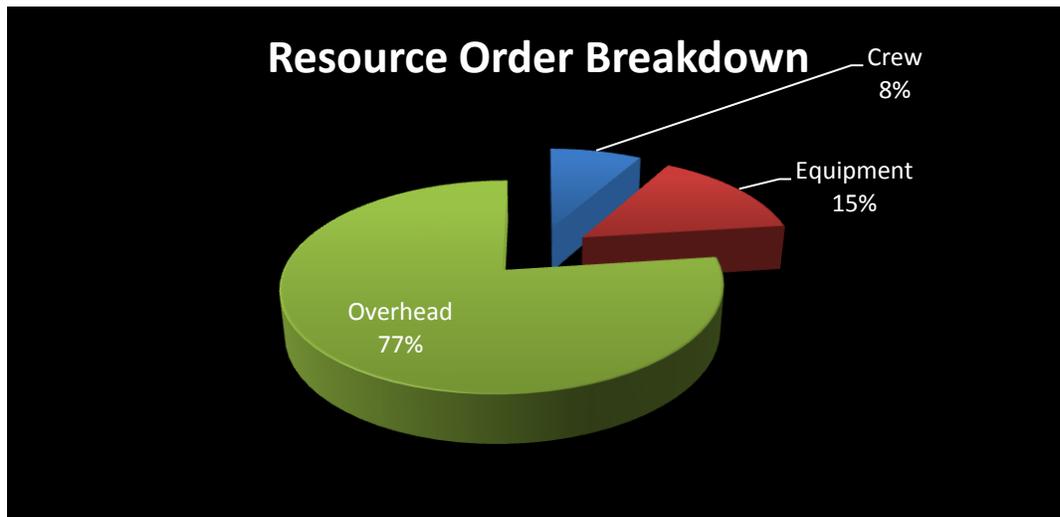
Prescribed fire acres per agency from 2007 to 2011

MOBILIZATIONS

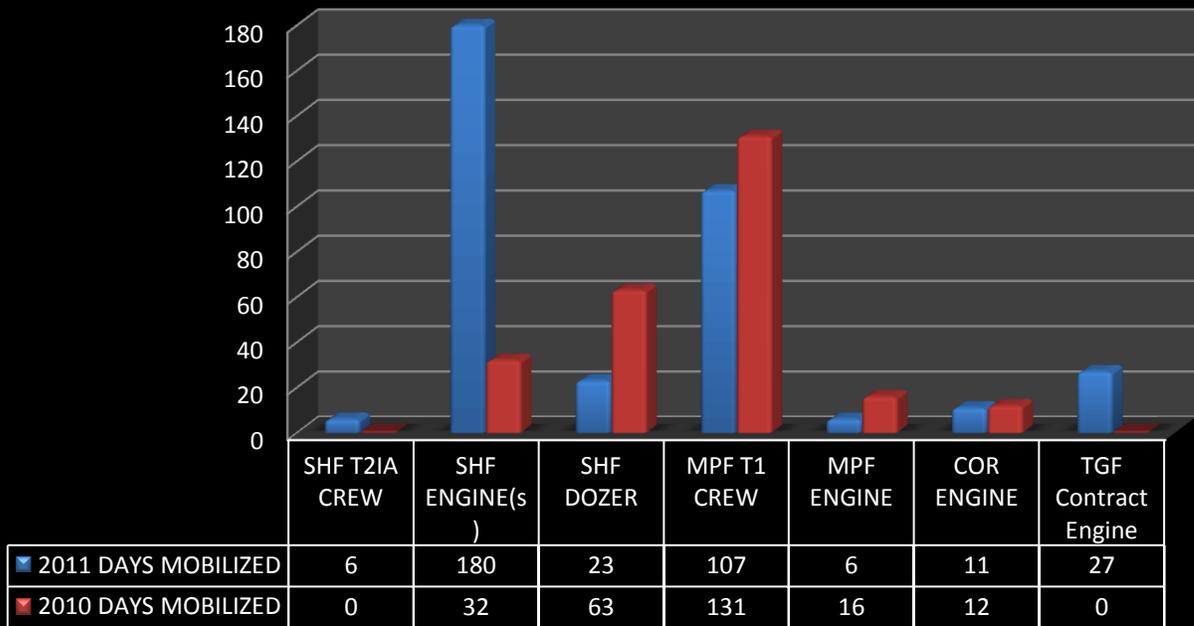
Resource mobilizations typically keep us busy during the summer and late spring months. 2011 was an extremely busy year for the Southern Area. Fires from Georgia and North Carolina all the way to Western Texas lasted almost the entire summer. Arizona also had its share of fires, however they were shorter lived than what areas like Texas endured. Being one of the closest Eastern Area units to the Southern Area, ILC and all its cooperators were able to mobilize a large number of resources to assist the needs of these States.

As you will see by the below graphs, overhead resource orders are still our biggest workload when it comes to mobilizations, however 2011 saw an increase in engine mobilizations and rotations of personnel throughout the summer.

As early as March, ILC was sending SHF and COR engines to MO and TX. Mobilizations continued throughout the summer with many of the engines having multiple deployments to the Pains Bay fire in NC as well as the Honey Prairie Fire in GA. Total days which agency equipment (Engines/Dozers) spent on incidents nationally was 247. Our overhead mobilizations began in earnest in January sending COR employees to the MS Oil Spill (yes that was still going on). Mobilization of single resource overhead continued with mobilizations of FWS, SHF, NPS, and MPF employees to wildland fires, hurricane cleanup, and accident investigations. ILC mobilized Midewin Hotshots numerous times throughout the summer and we were also able to mobilize our Type 2 crew (with assistance from Michigan) to Massachusetts for Hurricane Irene support. All in all agency individuals (including equipment and crew personnel) were mobilized for 3924 days, which in the long run is savings to each agencies budget.



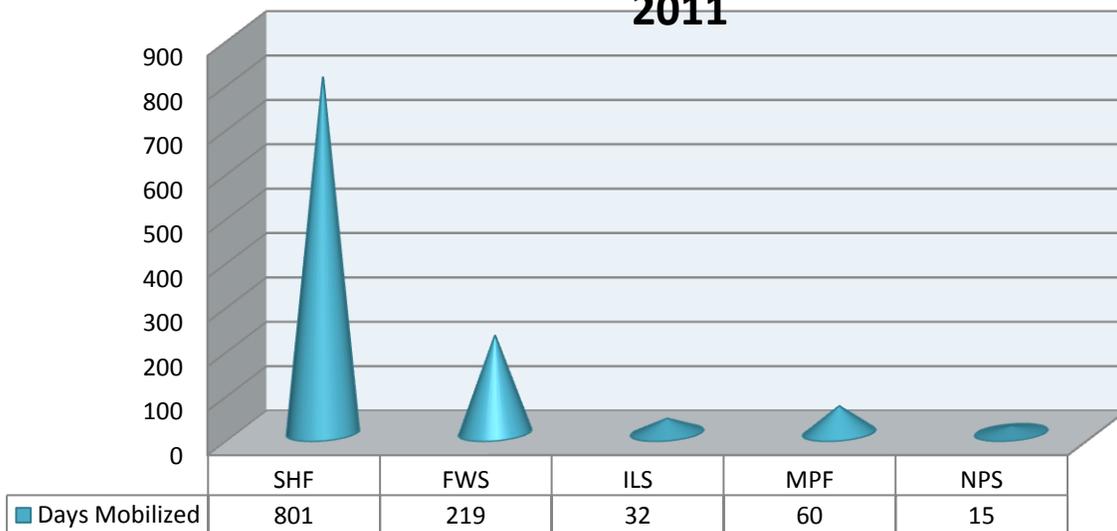
2011 Equipment and Crew Mobilization

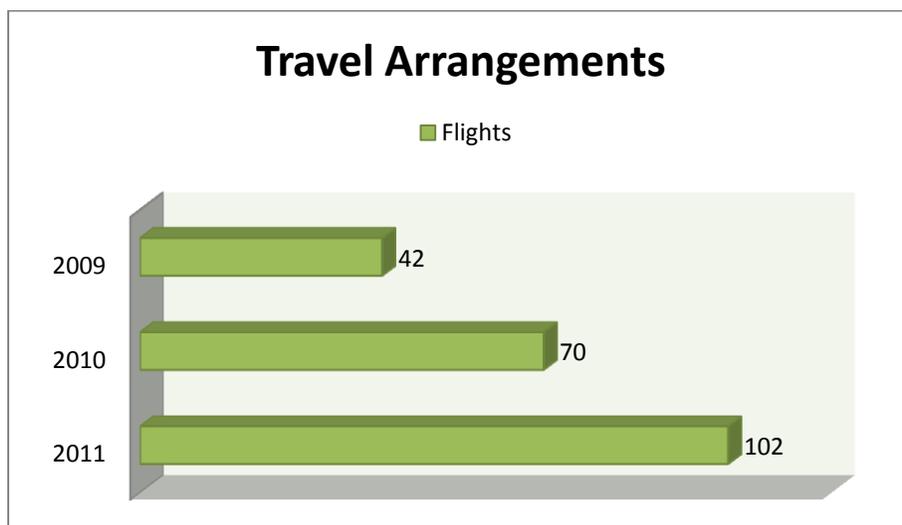


Comparison of 2010 and 2011 equipment and crew mobilizations

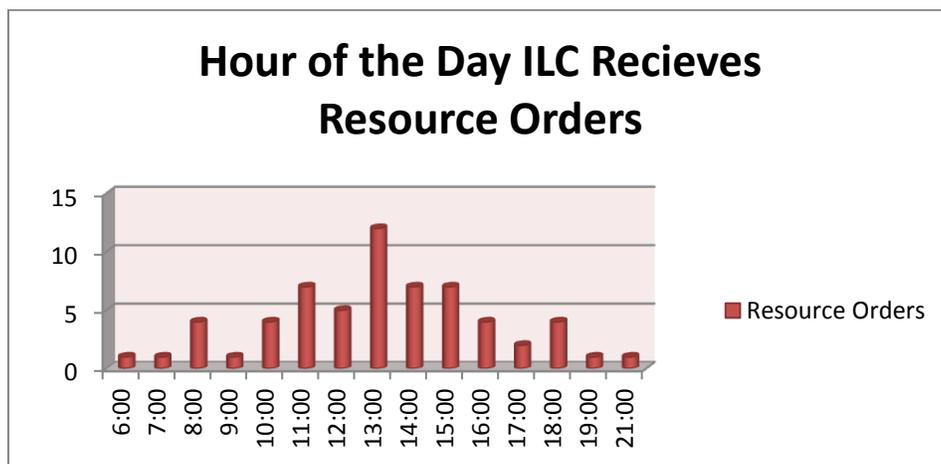
Overhead Mobilization Days

2011





Arranging flights for crews, team members and miscellaneous overhead can be very time consuming. ILC made every effort to meet the date and time needed for the incidents but with limited flights as well as over booked aircraft, there were constant obstacles. However when all was said and done, we did meet most of the incidents date and time needs even though we did have a few travel legs that mirrored the movie: Planes, Trains and Automobiles.



Ever wonder when you are going to get that call for a resource order? ILC fields calls on a daily basis especially during western fire season from employees anxiously awaiting a resource order. Orders for assignments come in at all hours of the day, but the above graph shows a stand-alone timeslot when 2011 orders were received.

No matter what time of day we receive the order, resources are expected to be ready to go at a moment's notice. ILC is proud of the fact that we meet the times and dates needed of the incident as best we can and work very hard at making sure individuals mobilizing understand and support the requesting unit's needs.

Something we thought we would address with the below graphs, which may help dispatch and fire managers with their focus on training is the breakdown of ICS position orders. You will see on the graph that the majority of our deployments are within the operations section. There is however a great need for resources in other ICS sections such as planning, finance, logistics and dispatch. All agencies, which ILC mobilizes for, have individuals who may not be interested or physically able to participate in positions which require arduous qualifications but they could participate in the other sectors with just a little bit of training, explanation, and coaxing. I believe we have a pool of individuals who want to participate in wildland fire/all risk incidents but just don't know how their skills can be utilized or how to go about getting involved.

With budgets the way they are, and the budget savings in salaries which is evident from 2011 mobilizations, it is up to fire managers to find those folks and work with them to train them up in the positions which there is a need for. Then it is up to us here in Dispatch to mobilize and get them out on assignments. Something we are happy to do.

