

# Region Four McCall Smokejumpers



## User Guide

### **Mission**

Smokejumpers provide Fire Managers with a qualified, skilled, and mobile resource for initial and extended attack on wildland fires.

## Purpose of This Guide

- To inform Fire Managers and Dispatch Offices about the McCall Smokejumper program.
- Increase awareness of smokejumper utilization:
  - Initial and Extended Attack
  - Para cargo
  - Pre-positioning (Spike Base)
  - How to order smokejumpers.
  - What to expect when a Fire Manager utilizes Smokejumpers.



# Contents

<b><u>Program Overview</u></b>	<b>1</b>
Smokejumper Bases	
Aircraft Performance	
Availability:	
Fire Suppression	
Prescribed Fire and Other Land Resource Projects	
Mobility	
Qualifications:	
Fire Suppression	
Prescribed Fire	
<b><u>Smokejumper Utilization</u></b>	<b>3</b>
Initial and Extended Attack	
Project Fire	
Para-cargo	
Pre-positioning / Spike Base	
Rescue	
<b><u>Ordering Smokejumpers</u></b>	<b>5</b>
Response time	
Initial Attack	
Pre-positioning (Spike Base)	
Reinforcement Jumpers (Boosters)	
Overhead Assignments or Special Projects	
<b><u>Smokejumper Operational Procedures</u></b>	<b>7</b>
Get Away Time	
The Spotter (Mission Coordinator)	
Jump Spot Selection	
Parachute Operations	
Incident Commander / Jumper In Charge	
Logistical Support	
Demobilization	
Debriefing	
<b><u>Contacts and Phone Numbers</u></b>	<b>10</b>
<b><u>Appendix A</u></b>	<b>11</b>
ROSS Example for ordering IA Load of Smokejumpers	

# Program Overview

## Smokejumper Bases

Nationally the target number of smokejumpers is 450, based in the following locations:

Location	Personnel	Agency	Region
McCall, Idaho	70	USFS	R-4
Grangeville, Idaho	30	USFS	R-1
Missoula, Montana	70	USFS	R-1
West Yellowstone, MT.	25	USFS	R-1
Winthrop, Washington	30	USFS	R-6
Redmond, Oregon	40	USFS	R-6
Redding, California	40	USFS	R-5
Fairbanks, Alaska	65	BLM	Alaska
Boise, Idaho	80	BLM	Great Basin



## Aircraft Performance

Smokejumpers use a variety of aircraft to accomplish fire and fire support operations. McCall Smokejumpers commonly use the following aircraft:

Aircraft	Cruise Speed	Range
Twin Otter	170 mph	450 miles
Sherpa	170 mph	500 miles

## Availability

During peak fire season seventy jumpers provide seven-day coverage. McCall Smokejumpers are traditionally trained in April and May and are available for fire assignment by the 1<sup>st</sup> of May. McCall Smokejumper availability gradually decreases to thirty-five after the peak fire season (usually the end of September).

McCall Smokejumpers are available for prescribed fire and other land resource Projects. During fire season availability of smokejumpers depends on national resource needs. Pre and post fire season, smokejumpers may be available to assist with Land Resource/Fire Management projects.

## Mobility

Smokejumpers are a highly mobile, shared national resource. The McCall Smokejumpers utilize three aircraft during peak fire season. Both USFS and BLM smokejumper bases commonly share resources to boost personnel and aircraft numbers where needed during periods of increased fire activity. Smokejumpers can also rapidly deploy by helicopter or drive to a fire location utilizing pre-packaged equipment and supplies.

## Qualifications

McCall Smokejumpers are highly experienced and qualified wildland firefighters. Firefighters that are selected as smokejumpers have a wide variety of experience including engines, helitack, and hotshots. McCall Smokejumpers are targeted to obtain the training and skills necessary to become qualified at the Crew Boss and Incident Commander Type 4 level. Smokejumper Squadleaders and Foremen are required to qualify as Division Group Supervisor and Incident Commander Type 3. Many smokejumpers have ICS qualifications beyond those targeted. All smokejumpers are trained annually in basic first aid and C.P.R. 30% of the jumpers are Emergency Medical Technicians.

# Smokejumper Utilization

## Initial Attack and Emerging Fires

Smokejumpers are most effective when used to rapidly initial attack new fires and when large numbers of firefighters are needed on emerging fires. Travel by fixed wing aircraft and parachute is often the quickest method of staffing a fire. Smokejumpers can also be quickly deployed via helicopter or truck. Although smokejumpers are frequently used in remote wilderness or roadless areas, smokejumpers can often reach a roaded or urban interface fire faster than resources that drive. Smokejumpers are self-sufficient for 48 hours, reducing logistical demands on a Fire Manager. Using smokejumpers for the following situations can greatly increase a fire managers options:

Initial Attack - When a new fire start needs aggressive suppression action.

Multiple Fires - When multiple fire starts have all local resources committed to initial attack.

Emerging Fire – Securing adequate resources in a timely manner can make the difference between an extended attack fire and an escaped fire. Smokejumpers can establish a Type 3 team coordinating operational objectives, managing arriving resources, and if necessary facilitate a smooth transition to an Incident Management Team.

Smokejumper configurations for initial attack, multiple fires, and emerging fires:

- 8 jumpers, Twin Otter, standard load.
- 10 jumpers, Sherpa, standard load.

When placing a request for smokejumpers it will be necessary to state the number of jumpers ordered, otherwise a standard load configuration will be dispatched. If a request cannot be filled with one aircraft, two aircraft with eight jumpers each may be dispatched.

## Large Fire Incident

Smokejumpers can be effectively utilized on large fire incidents filling many resource needs.

Type I crew - Smokejumpers can be dispatched as a 20-person crew. Smokejumpers may also be requested to parachute into remote portions of a large fire. Jumpers will arrive self-contained for 48 hours.

[Helispot construction](#) -Smokejumpers can parachute into remote locations of an incident to construct helispots.

[Overhead](#) - Many incident command positions such as Task Force Leader, Division/Group Supervisor, Safety Officer, and Air Tactical Group Supervisor can be readily filled by smokejumpers.

## **Para Cargo**

Smokejumper aircraft are a fast, efficient, and economical way to resupply any incident. The McCall Smokejumper Base has a cache of pumps (Mark III, Hale Frye, and Shindawa 25) and hose, chain saws, water, and fresh food packaged for parachute delivery. Any items that we do not have can be ordered from the nearby Payette National Forest Warehouse. We also stock 100 person camps that can be used to establish a well organized spike camp on a project fire. Fresh food orders can be placed through dispatch and we will procure the food, package, and deliver. Fresh food orders are more economical than M.R.E.'s and definitely improve moral on a longer duration fire.

## **Spike Base & Pre-Positioning**

Pre-positioning gives a fire manager the option of having smokejumpers available at a local airport for initial attack use. A spike base can be established when fire activity is expected to last more than one day. When fire activity is predicted, pre-positioning enhances a Fire Manager's available initial attack resources. If the predicted fire weather does not develop, the smokejumpers may be released. The following important information will help you in your decision to pre-position smokejumpers:

[Duration](#) - Pre-positioning smokejumpers can be from one day or until fire activity subsides.

[Airport facilities](#) - A facility must have Jet A fuel. Runway length must be 2500 feet for a Twin Otter. For extended operations, basic sanitation and secure storage space will be needed.

[Supervision & Coordination](#) - The McCall Smokejumper Base will provide Overhead for spike base operations. Smokejumper overhead will work directly with the local Fire Manager and the local Dispatch office. Coordinating smokejumper utilization, logistical needs, and daily operations are the responsibility of the smokejumper Spotter.

[Booster Smokejumper Crews](#) - If additional smokejumpers are needed they can be ordered through normal dispatching procedures. Smokejumpers are a national resource and depending on local availability, booster orders may be filled by another region.

[Resupply](#) - Fire packs and necessary supplies can be driven or flown from McCall. Logistics for resupply is managed by the McCall Smokejumpers.

[Support Vehicles](#) - Vehicles will be needed for smokejumper retrieval and for daily travel. The McCall Smokejumper Base can supply vehicles.

[Travel & Per Diem](#) - Smokejumpers are self-sufficient and can pay for their own meals and lodging while on per diem. Pre-positioning is considered a fire assignment and the ordering unit or the Region will cover cost of per diem, overtime, and aircraft cost. The smokejumper unit will pay the base salary.

## **Rescue Jumps**

The McCall smokejumper program has certified Emergency Medical Technicians. All of our aircraft carry a fully equipped trauma kit, oxygen kit, and Sked litter to provide for basic patient care. In the unfortunate event requiring a rescue, the McCall smokejumpers can provide a fast response to provide medical attention and helispot construction should extrication be necessary. For regular government employees, your local dispatch office can request smokejumpers. The local sheriffs department must request the use of smokejumpers for the public.

## **Ordering Smokejumpers**

The protocol for ordering McCall Smokejumpers is dependent upon the user's geographical location. Smokejumpers may be ordered for initial attack, pre-positioning, booster smokejumpers, overhead assignments, and for special projects.

### **Initial Attack Smokejumpers**

There are a number of dispatch centers in close proximity to McCall having direct order access to the Payette Dispatch Center enabling them to order smokejumpers under a number of initial attack and mutual assist agreements. Dispatch centers that have direct order access are: Boise Dispatch Center, Central Idaho Interagency Fire Center, Grangeville Dispatch, Blue Mountain (La Grande) Dispatch Center, South Central Idaho Dispatch Center, and Vale Dispatch Center.

Orders for initial attack smokejumpers going directly to Payette Dispatch will either be accepted in a Resource Order format or simply accepted with the information needed for an Aircraft Dispatch Form. If a Resource Order is used it



should be on an Aircraft Order with the request number being an A -"#", and read "IA load of smokejumpers" (See Appendix A). The information needed for a smokejumper mission is essentially the items found on the header of a standard Resource Order. The most important items are latitude and longitude, frequencies, contacts, other aircraft in the area, and management codes. Payette Dispatch will prompt the ordering unit for any additional information needed.

Units located in the Great Basin lacking initial attack agreements with Payette Dispatch must place orders for smokejumpers through the Great Basin Coordination Center (GBCC). Orders for initial attack smokejumpers shall be on an Aircraft Resource Order. The request number will be an A -"#", and read "IA load of smokejumpers". Once the smokejumper aircraft is airborne, Payette Dispatch will contact the ordering dispatch center with the estimated time enroute.

Units outside the Great Basin without initial attack agreements with Payette Dispatch need to place orders through their local dispatch center following the protocol defined above. The local dispatch center will place the order with their geographical coordination center which will then process it through the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC). NICC will then place the order with GBCC, who in turn will forward it to Payette Dispatch.

If you have any questions, please call Payette Dispatch (see page 10).

### **Pre-positioning**

Any unit experiencing heavy initial attack demands exceeding what the local units' resources can meet, may request to pre-position a load of smokejumpers and their aircraft. If initial attack activity is expected to continue a spike base can easily be established. The requesting unit needs to order a smokejumper aircraft with a load of jumpers as an Aircraft Request.

All orders to establish a spike base will be processed through the GBCC in concurrence with NICC. Once Payette Dispatch receives the order, Dispatch and/or the Smokejumper unit will contact the requesting unit directly to identify any additional needs. The Smokejumper Spotter will work directly for the local Dispatch Center / Fire Manager and follow local protocol associated with initial attack dispatching and incident staffing needs.

### **Reinforcement Jumpers (Boosters)**

Orders for additional smokejumpers will be placed on a standard Overhead Resource Order with an "O" number for each smokejumper requested processed through normal dispatch channels. Reinforcement smokejumpers do not come with smokejumper aircraft. If initial attack needs exceed one aircraft, an additional aircraft may be ordered through established dispatch procedures using an aircraft request.

## Overhead Assignments or Special Projects

If a unit needs additional help with fire overhead, Rx burning, or a special project they can order McCall Smokejumpers. When smokejumpers are on their funded tours, they are committed to suppression but available for prescribed fire or other types of projects when suppression is not a priority. In the off-season smokejumpers may be available for prescribed fire and other projects. **The requesting unit should contact the smokejumper operations desk or Payette Dispatch directly to determine if the required numbers of personnel are available.**

## Smokejumper Operational Procedures

Get Away Time - When Payette Dispatch receives a request for smokejumpers the fire buzzer is sounded. Smokejumpers are suited and airborne within 15 minutes. A non-standard request may increase the getaway time.



The Spotter / Mission Coordinator -The Spotter / Mission coordinator consists of a two-person team sharing the responsibility of delivering smokejumpers to an incident in a safe and efficient manner.

Communication - Once airborne, the smokejumper spotter will inform Payette Dispatch of an estimated time of arrival to the incident. The spotter will also contact the ordering unit as soon as radio communication can be established. The spotter will be using the call number for that aircraft (i.e. Jumper 41) for flight following and subsequent communication. All communication between the smokejumper aircraft and the requesting unit is the primary responsibility of the spotter.

Fire Size Up - Upon arrival over the fire, the spotter will notify the requesting unit and provide the following information:

- ✓ A thorough fire size up.
- ✓ Staffing recommendations.
- ✓ Additional resources needs (i.e. air tankers, helicopter with bucket, etc.).

If multiple aircraft are responding to the incident the spotter can serve as a temporary Fire Traffic Area coordinator, or Air Attack if the spotter is a qualified ATGS.

Jump Spot Selection - The spotter and jumper-in-charge will select the jump spot based on wind, topography, ground hazards, and fire behavior. Jump spots are

often on steep slopes and can be dense timber. Smokejumpers are well trained to safely parachute into these types of jump spots. Occasionally smokejumpers have not been considered due to misconceptions of what constitute a suitable jump spot. The Smokejumper Spotter can usually find a jump spot within a reasonable distance of the fire.



A suitable jump spot.

Parachute Operations - Once a jump spot is selected, wind indicators are released at jump altitude (1500 feet above ground level) to determine wind direction and speed. If conditions are favorable the ordering unit will be notified, and the jumpers will begin to exit the aircraft. Round jumpers exit at 1500 feet AGL and square jumpers exit at 3000 feet AGL. Once the required numbers of smokejumpers are on the ground, the aircraft delivers para cargo. The smokejumper aircraft will remain in the area until communication is established between the jumper in charge and the ordering unit.

Incident Commander / Jumper-In-Charge - Communication will be established with the appropriate contact as soon as possible. The Incident Commander will give a more detailed fire size up and confirm if they have adequate resources. If the smokejumpers are reinforcements, the jumper-in-charge will establish communication with the incident commander.

Logistical Support – Smokejumpers arriving on a fire are self-sufficient for 48 hours. If an assignment will be longer than 48 hours the smokejumpers will need to be resupplied with food and water. The McCall Smokejumper Base can readily provide the resupply if requested.

Demobilization – The smokejumper I.C. will coordinate the demobilization time with the ordering unit. Smokejumper demobilization can be achieved in a variety of ways:

*Pack Out* -Smokejumpers can carry their gear to the nearest reasonable pick up point. Smokejumper gear is typically 100+ pounds. If additional gear i.e. pumps and hose were used on the fire another option should be considered for demobilization.

*Long Line* – All smokejumpers are qualified in long line operations. Smokejumpers can send most of their gear out by long line and hike to the nearest pick up point.

*Pack string* – Smokejumpers can pack their gear to an accessible trail to be carried out by a pack string.

*Helicopter* – A helicopter can be used to retrieve smokejumpers and their gear. Jumper gear can be shuttled internally but may require more than one load depending on the number of jumpers and type of helicopter.

*Vehicle* – Smokejumpers can be transported back to the jump base or to a suitable airfield to be retrieved by either contract or smokejumper aircraft. Vehicles can be provided by the local unit or by the jump base. It is important to remember that the jumpers will have a large amount of gear. Typical vehicle requirements:

2 SMJs.....1 pickup.

4 to 6 SMJs...1 pickup and suburban or van.

8 to 12 SMJs..2 pickups and suburban or van.

Debriefing – The McCall Smokejumpers want your feedback to continually improve operations, and to better meet your needs. When appropriate and convenient a debriefing is encouraged.

## Contacts and Phone numbers

### **McCall Smokejumpers**

605 S. Mission St.  
McCall, Idaho 83638  
208-634-0378 Operations Desk  
208-634-6944 DO Cell Phone (24hrs)  
208-634-0390 Administration  
Fax 208-634-0385

### **Payette Dispatch**

605 S. Mission St.  
McCall, Idaho 83638  
Phone 208-634-2757  
Fax 208-634-5782

### **Great Basin Coordination Center**

401 Jimmy Doolittle Rd.  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84116  
Phone 801-531-5320  
Fax 801-531-5321



Hybrid Load of jumpers and extra cargo

# Appendix A

## ROSS Example for ordering an IA Load of Smokejumpers

Resource Ordering and Status System (ROSS) - \*\*\* PROD v2.16.5.4 \*\*\*

File Administration Resource Incident Request Travel Status Window Help

IL IN > [ID-SIS-000019] Herrick OF REQ IR PR MP RS TL RE ! Ø

New Request - [ID-SIS-000019] Herrick ANN NICHOLSON @ID-PAC R ? X

**Select Item to Request**

Catalog Pre-Orders

Catalog Aircraft

Category Aircraft Groups

Item Name

Item Code Keyword

Catalog Item	Code
Load, Rappeller, Initial Attack	
Load, Smokejumper, Initial Attack	

There are no reminders for this catalog item. View

**Select Features**

Available Features Requested Features

**Select Inclusions and Exclusions**

None  Federal Only  Host Agency Only

Non-Federal Only  State Only

Contractor Not Acceptable

Portal-to-Portal Acceptable

**Enter Request for Load, Smokejumper, Initial Attack**

# Requests \* 1 Block [1 - 999999] (SG) Default Block

Next Number 1 View Issued #'s

Need Date/Time \* 06/07/2016 15:39 MST

Deliver To \* Herrick

Navigation Instructions

Financial Code

Special Needs

Reporting Instructions

Incident Ordering Contact

Request Contact \*

Configuration Option Catalog Item with Configuration

**Request(s) Created**

Requested Item  Named Request

S	NR	Request	Requested Item	Code	Need Date/Time	Qty
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Action Go To