



**MILES CITY INTERAGENCY DISPATCH CENTER  
ANNUAL OPERATING PLAN**

**Between the**

**STATE OF MONTANA  
Department of Natural Resources and Conservation  
Eastern Land Office  
Southern Land Office**

**And the**

**STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA  
State Division of Wildland Fire**

**And the**

**USDI  
Bureau of Land Management  
Eastern Montana/Dakotas District  
Miles City Field Office  
North Dakota Field Office  
South Dakota Field Office**

**Fish and Wildlife Service  
Mountain-Prairie Region  
Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge**

**Bureau of Indian Affairs  
Northern Cheyenne Agency**

**And the**

**USDA  
Forest Service  
Custer Gallatin National Forest  
Ashland Ranger District  
Sioux Ranger District**

2018-2021

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## AUTHORITY

This Annual Operating Plan (AOP) is developed under the authority stated in the *Montana Cooperative Fire Management Agreement*.

This AOP is hereby made and entered by and between the **State of Montana**, Department of Natural Resources & Conservation, Eastern Land Office, and Southern Land Office; **State of South Dakota**, State Division of Wildland Fire, hereinafter referred to as the “**State**,” the USDI, **USFWS**-Mountain-Prairie Region, Charles M. Russell Refuge; USDA, **USFS**-Custer Gallatin National Forest, Ashland Ranger District and Sioux Ranger District; USDI, **BLM**-Montana & Dakotas, Eastern Montana/Dakotas District; and USDI, **BIA**-Rocky Mountain Region, Northern Cheyenne Agency, hereinafter jointly referred to as the “**Federal Agencies**.” The Federal Agencies and the State may hereinafter jointly be referred to as the “**Agencies**.”

This AOP will be reviewed annually by May 1 for currency, and will remain in effect until it is terminated by mutual consent of all Agencies involved, or superseded by an updated AOP. By signing the *Miles City Division of the Northern Rockies Coordinating Group-Eastern Zone AOP*, signators will approve this AOP.

## PURPOSE

Due to the intermingled surface management agencies within the Eastern Montana Fire Zone (EMFZ), this AOP defines Miles City Interagency Dispatch (MCC) operational procedures as outlined in the *Montana Statewide Operating Plan*, *Miles City Division of the Northern Rockies Coordinating Group-Eastern Zone AOP*, and the *Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations, Chapter 19 and Appendix P*.

This AOP documents agreement to details regarding:

- Standards and services MCC will provide,
- Roles and responsibilities of MCC personnel,
- Operating procedures and Agency considerations, and
- Agency Contributions to MCC.

## PROTECTION AREAS WITHIN MILES CITY DISPATCH AREA

It is mutually advantageous that Federal Agencies, States and Counties work in close cooperation with each other. The agencies have similar yet distinct wildland fire protection responsibilities on adjoining Federal, State and private lands in the EMFZ. The EMFZ is defined by the BLM-Miles City Field Office boundary and Harding County, South Dakota.

**BLM – Miles City Field Office:** The BLM provides wildland fire protection on BLM jurisdictional lands. The BLM is the Protecting Agency of USFS-Custer Gallatin National Forest (CGF) lands within the Ashland Ranger District and Sioux Ranger District as defined in the *Montana Statewide Operating Plan* and acknowledges guidelines as agreed upon in the *Miles City Division of the Northern Rockies Coordinating Group-Eastern Zone AOP*. In addition, the BLM is the Protecting Agency for Affidavit lands (aka Fee Basis Fire Protection lands) located within and around the CGF lands and Bureau of Reclamation Lands (BOR) located along the Yellowstone River. These fires will be dispatched by MCC. The BLM-Miles City Field Office (MCD) is the jurisdictional agency for BLM lands in Montana within the dispatch boundary.

**BLM – South Dakota Field Office:** In South Dakota the Volunteer Fire Departments (VFDs) are the Protecting Agency on BLM lands in the following counties, excluding Harding County: Butte, Perkins, Lawrence, Meade, Pennington, Haakon, Stanley, Custer, Fall River, Brule and Jackson. The volunteer fire departments (VFDs) are dispatched by Great Plains Interagency Dispatch Center located in Rapid City, South Dakota. The BLM-South Dakota Field Office (SDD) is the jurisdictional agency for the BLM lands in the SDD boundary, including Harding County.

**BLM – North Dakota Field Office:** In North Dakota the VFDs are the Protecting Agency on BLM lands. These fires will be dispatched by the affected county dispatch. The BLM-North Dakota Field Office (NDD) is the jurisdictional agency for the BLM lands in the NDD boundary.

**USFS – CGF Ashland Ranger District & Sioux Ranger District:** The USFS is the Jurisdictional Agency, and the BLM is the Protecting Agency for all forested lands within the CGF Ashland and Sioux Ranger Districts, located in Montana and South Dakota. Fuels treatment, Fire Prevention and Restriction coordination remain with the CGF as the jurisdictional agency.

Refer to *Miles City Division of the Northern Rockies Coordinating Group-Eastern Zone AOP, Appendix E* for further guidance.

**FWS – Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge (CMR):** The FWS is the Protecting and Jurisdictional Agency on FWS lands. Fires located south of the Missouri River in Garfield and McCone counties will be dispatched by MCC.

Refer to *Miles City Division of the Northern Rockies Coordinating Group-Eastern Zone AOP, Appendix D* for further guidance.

**BIA – Northern Cheyenne Agency (NCA):** The Northern Cheyenne Agency of the BIA provides fire protection for natural resource values on the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation. The Tribe has jurisdictional responsibility in conjunction with the BIA. NCA has its

own local dispatch center that handles initial attack fires. MCC provides aircraft flight following, expanded dispatch, and logistical support for the NCA.

**MT DNRC – Eastern Land Office (ELO) and Southern Land Office (SLO):** In Montana, the Counties are the Protecting Agency for State and private lands in each county. These fires will be dispatched by the affected county dispatch.

Upon request, the DNRC provides wildland fire suppression assistance to the Counties under the terms of the *County Cooperative Fire Management Agreement* between each County and corresponding Land Office. County Commissioners or County Fire Wardens have the authority to make assistance requests to the appropriate DNRC Land Office. Evaluation of the county situation and approval of the request is the responsibility of the affected Land Office. The DNRC Area Manager and Fire Program Manager will determine the resources authorized for the initial support action. Fires that require DNRC assistance will be dispatched by MCC.

The DNRC is responsible for mobilization of Local Government Forces for wildland fire suppression. The Eastern Land Office will utilize MCC for ordering resources.

**Treasure County** is in the SLO land office and BLM-Miles City Field Office boundaries. Initial attack resources and large incidents for BLM will be dispatched by Billings Dispatch Center (BDC). The Billings Field Office FMO will coordinate all actions for suppression on BLM lands with the Miles City Field Manager. BLM acres and mapping will be reported to MCC for the fire reporting system.

**Big Horn County** is in the SLO land office boundary and a small portion of the BLM-Miles City Field Office boundary. Incidents for the BLM within the Miles City Field Office boundary will be dispatched by MCC. Coordination with SLO and BLM will occur. If an incident for the county goes beyond initial attack and SLO is assisting the county, that incident will be dispatched by BDC in most instances. BDC & MCC will coordinate for those county fires requiring SLO assistance that occur within the Miles City Field Office boundary to determine the appropriate dispatch center.

**Daniels, Sheridan, Roosevelt and eastern half of Valley Counties** are under NELO land office and within the Miles City Field Office boundaries. The Fort Peck BIA reservation contains private lands that are protected by the counties. If an incident for the county goes beyond initial attack and NELO is assisting the county, the incident will be dispatched by Lewistown Dispatch Center (LEC).

**SD Division of Wildland Fire (SDWF):** In Harding County, South Dakota the Harding County VFDs are the Protecting Agency of State and private lands.

Upon request, the SDWF provides wildland fire suppression assistance to the County. MCC provides extended attack and logistical support for the SDWF in Harding County.

**Harding County:** The State of South Dakota reimburses Harding County VFDs for fire suppression on State and privately owned “forested” lands in South Dakota. These fires will be dispatched by Harding County.

When Harding County VFDs assist in suppression of fires on USFS and BLM lands within the EMFZ, the State of South Dakota will pay the Harding County VFDs. The State of South Dakota will in turn send a bill for reimbursement to the BLM. These fires will be dispatched by MCC.

Refer to *Miles City Division of the Northern Rockies Coordinating Group-Eastern Zone AOP, Appendix F* for further guidance.

**County and Municipal Jurisdiction:** The Counties are the Protecting Agency for State and private lands within their respective jurisdiction under the DNRC County Cooperative Fire Management Agreement with the State of Montana. Each county is dispatched through its respective 911 dispatch center. Individual county operations plans are the specific framework for implementation of the DNRC County Cooperative Fire Management Agreement, and are located in the DNRC offices.

Requests for assistance are made directly from County Fire Wardens or County Commissioners to DNRC. In instances of a single large fire or multiple fires that may locally impact critical suppression resource drawdown levels, a request for State assistance will be made by the Board of County Commissioners. The agency requesting resources is responsible for the cost of ordered resources unless utilized through the reciprocal fire use agreement. Designated county entities must formally request state assistance before any expenditures can be made by the State. Specific needs will be coordinated through the County Fire Wardens. Assistance may include organized crews, overhead, associated support facilities, engines (with crews), helicopters, air tankers, and Incident Management Teams.

## Maps

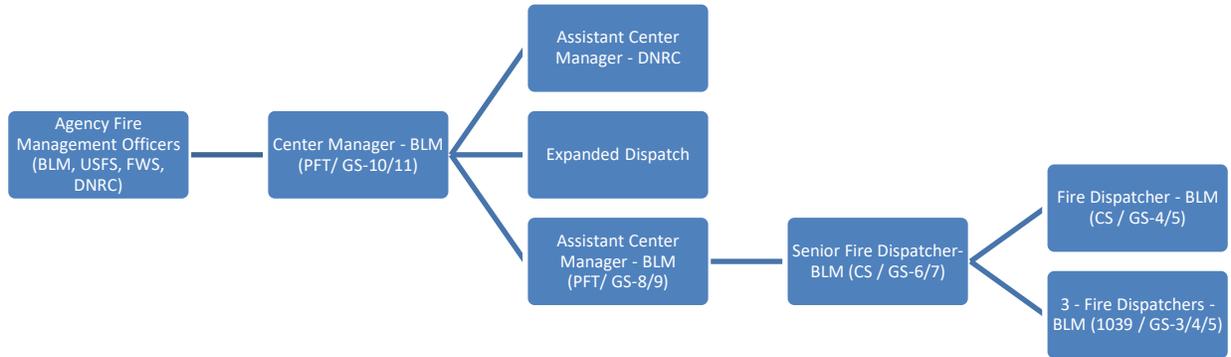
Refer to Appendix A for the MCC dispatch boundary map.

## DISPATCH ORGANIZATION & OPERATIONS

MCC shall serve as the dispatch office to provide logistical support to incidents in the MCC dispatch area. MCC utilizes resources to meet anticipated and existing incident, preparedness, severity, wildland fire, and prescribed fire needs regardless of geographic location or agency affiliation.

The MCC Center Manager has delegated authority as identified by the signatories of the *Miles City Division of the Northern Rockies Coordinating Group-Eastern Zone AOP*. The delegated authority is outlined within this plan and establishes policies and procedures for mobilization of personnel, equipment, supplies, and aircraft in the MCC dispatch area, the Northern Rockies region, and nationally.

## Table of Organization



## Roles & Responsibilities

### Center Manager

The Center Manager's primary purpose is to direct, plan, organize, supervise, coordinate, and manage personnel and operational activities of an initial attack dispatch center and expanded dispatch organization by providing coverage during daily operations and emergency situations with the other federal, state, tribal, county, and local cooperators.

- Implements goals and objectives in support of fire program management.
- Supervises and develops employees.
- Develops and executes operating plans and action guides for efficient and cost-effective mobilization to emergency situations.
  - Provide local, geographic and national mobilization and demobilization support.
  - Provide preparedness dispatch support services.
  - Provide suppression, fuels, and prescribed fire support services.
  - Provide aviation dispatch support services.
- Ensures activities directed by the initial attack dispatch center are conducted safely.
- Manages incident and administrative intelligence.

### Assistant Center Manager

An Assistant Center Manager's primary purpose is to ensure an initial attack dispatch center is operational by providing coverage during daily operations, while establishing priorities, allocating resources, overseeing the mobilization and reassignment of wildland fire suppression resources necessary to support initial attack and logistical support emergency operations.

- Becomes Acting Center Manager in the absence of the Center Manager.
- Provides direction and oversight of all initial attack dispatch center operations.
- Develops, updates and implements operating plans, action guides, and standard operations procedures.
- Compiles and disseminates incident and resource statistical information to participating agencies and cooperators.

## Senior Fire Dispatcher

The Senior Fire Dispatcher coordinates aviation dispatch operations, determines appropriate resource response to incidents, and serves as a fire dispatcher in support of fire suppression activities by receiving fire reports, determining location, land status and current fire information.

- Becomes Acting Assistant Center Manager in the absence of the Assistant Center Manager.
- Performs and directs others in all functional areas of initial attack dispatching.
- Updates operating plans, action guides, and standard operations procedures.
- Organizes and reviews completed records of all orders and actions taken to ensure adherence to established operating procedures.

## Fire Dispatcher

A Fire Dispatcher receives fire reports, determines location, land status, and current fire information, and dispatch personnel, equipment, aircraft and/or supplies according to pre-defined plans or in response to resource orders from the field.

- Anticipates needs based upon the status of fire suppression activities and makes recommendations regarding orders.
- Maintains resource status and communication logs.
- Gathers information for the development and maintenance of the dispatch mobilization guide and internal dispatch operating procedures.
- Collects, processes, and submits incident information to support fire operations (i.e. fire reports and spot weather requests).

## Duty Officer

A Duty Officer (DO) shall be available as scheduled to MCC and provide operational oversight of unit incident activities. The DO will be a Fire Management Officer or their delegate(s) and adhere to the roles and responsibilities as outlined in the *Interagency Standards for Fire & Fire Aviation Operations*, Chapter 2 and the *Miles City Division of the Northern Rockies Coordinating Group-Eastern Zone AOP*.

## Expanded Dispatch Coordinator/Supervisory Dispatcher

The Coordinator or Supervisory Dispatcher works for the Center Manager and is capable of performing all functional areas (equipment, supplies, crews, overhead, and intelligence) within the organization.

- Attends briefings as requested and facilitates shift briefings within expanded dispatch.
- Develops cost-effective organization to meet present and future needs.
- Ensures staffing and scheduling integrity of the organization.
- Provides guidance and supervision as necessary to all functional areas.
- Facilitates the orderly, safe, and cost-effective mobilization and demobilization of resources.
- Interprets policies, procedures, agreements, contracts, and mobilization plans.
- Directs the flow of resource order information in the dispatch organization.
- Makes recommendations on resource priorities.
- Directs established priorities to the functional areas.
- Provides for the disposition of all records associated with expanded dispatch operations.
- Communicates pertinent information to supervisor, co-workers, and incident personnel.

## Expanded Support Dispatcher

Works in Expanded Dispatch for the Supervisory Dispatcher and is capable of performing one or more of the functional areas (equipment, supply, crew, overhead, and intelligence) within the organization.

- Obtains briefing from Supervisor.
- Ensures resource orders and related forms are processed to completion.
- Applies procedures outlined in mobilization guides.
- Operates telecommunications systems.
- Supervises support dispatch trainees and dispatch recorders.
- Prepares functional resource status summaries.
- Ensures resource tracking and status systems are maintained.
- Communicates pertinent information to Supervisor, co-workers, and incident personnel.

## **Procedures for Each Functional Area**

MCC adheres to guidance for each functional area as outlined in the *National Mobilization Guide*, *Northern Rockies Interagency Mobilization Guide*, and *Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook*.

### Aircraft

All aircraft ordering and flight following will be conducted through the MCC aviation desk. Refer to the *MCC Aviation Desk SOPs* for detailed information regarding flight following and ordering procedures.

### Logistics

Orders for heavy equipment (e.g. dozer, grader, pumper-cat) and water-handling equipment (e.g. engine or water tender) during initial attack will be filled with the closest resource, including agency resources, federally-contracted resources on a Dispatch Priority List (DPL), or hired under an incident-only EERA. MCC is not required to utilize DPL equipment during initial attack as per the VIPR agreements. MCC does not have to exhaust all DPLs prior to establishing incident-only EERAs.

For off-district engine assignments, Agencies shall maintain their availability in IROC. MCC will strive to provide ample opportunity to all agencies for resource assignments.

MCC will request trainee orders when qualified, overhead orders are placed to MCC for off-district assignments. If an NRCC priority trainee has not been assigned to the qualified order, MCC will request a trainee order to be filled by a local agency.

Agency employees will be utilized prior to hiring administratively-determined (AD) employees. AD employees will be hosted by MCC with the approval of the BLM Fire Management Officer (FMO). All training and travel for ADs must be approved by the FMO.

## Intelligence

MCC will post a daily intelligence report to the dispatch center's website from May 1-September 1. This report will include Agency Duty Officers, fire weather forecasts, lightning map, etc.

Status of initial attack resources within the zone and dispatched by MCC will be updated and posted via WildWeb. Fire activity reported to MCC will be posted via WildWeb.

Other duties include finalizing BLM fire reports, acquiring GIS data for fire perimeters, submitting fire activity in the SIT Report and ICS-209 system.

## Expanded Dispatch

Expanded dispatch organizes and addresses the increased volume of business resulting from complex incident activity and relieves initial attack dispatch of incident support responsibilities. Functional breakdown of the expanded dispatch organization includes equipment, crews, overhead, and supplies.

Refer to the *MCC Expanded Dispatch Operating Guide* for detailed information.

## **Training & Qualification Requirements**

Dispatchers are hired based on criteria as outlined in the *PMS 310-1 National Incident Management System Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide, Interagency Fire Program Management (IFPM) Qualifications Standards & Guide*, and criteria as dictated by each agency's human resources department.

Dispatch personnel are cross-trained for all functional areas (i.e. aircraft, crews, overhead, equipment, supplies) in order to provide coverage for daily operations. This includes all applicable computer programs (i.e. IROC, WildCAD, and AFF).

Dispatchers serving as an Aircraft Dispatcher shall adhere to *Interagency Aviation Training (IAT)* guidance as a supplement to the *PMS 310-1* guidance.

## **Dispatch Center Staffing Plan**

MCC operational hours are Monday-Friday 0800-1630, unless dictated by wildland fire activity, prescribed fire, or non-wildfire administrative operations (i.e. wildlife/resource surveys). MCC will be staffed seven days per week when contractual requirements dictate (i.e. exclusive-use aircraft) or as mandated by fire management.

MCC will be staffed during the following instances:

- Fire resources are responding to a smoke report outside of normal business hours.
- Fire resources remain on the fireline during the night.
- Fire resources have not made it to an improved highway when returning to station.

At minimum, one qualified Aircraft Dispatcher (ACDP) must be present in MCC during aircraft operational periods when aircraft are present in the zone.

During non-business hours, one dispatcher will be designated to carry the “on-call” cell phone (a.k.a. dispatch duty officer). This dispatcher must be available to answer the phone at any hour and return to work within 30 minutes or less for smoke reports that require federal response.

Shift limitations and day off requirements shall be followed as outlined in the *National Mobilization Guide, Interagency Standards for Fire & Fire Aviation Operations*, and *Interagency Agency Incident Business Management Handbook*.

## **Procedures for Dispatch of Resources Off-District**

MCC must first consider Federal and State resources, then cooperators (e.g. Volunteer Fire Departments), then contracted (e.g. Dispatch Priority List) resources for off-district assignments.

Resources may be available at local, regional or national levels in the *Interagency Resource Ordering Capability (IROC)*.

- All resources will be set to “Available-Local” at minimum.
- Agencies/resources must maintain their own *IROC* status via *IROC Web-status* to be considered for off-district assignments. Resources will not be contacted, unless set to either “Available-GACC” or “Available-National.”

At times more than one resource with the same qualification may be stasured as available to the GACC or National. MCC will place the off-district order with the resource that was stasured available at the earliest date.

MCC provides logistical support for off-district assignments for those entities (e.g. BIA, USFS, FWS and Volunteer Fire Departments) listed within the zone.

## **DAILY DUTIES**

Detailed procedures in this section may be found in the MCC Helpful Hints of standard operating procedures.

## **Administrative Check In/out Protocols**

The BLM shall follow guidance outlined in the *Check-Out and Check-In Policy for the Eastern Montana/Dakotas District and the Miles City Field Office*.

- Check Out: Prior to leaving the office employees are required to check out in the electronic “MT In/Out Board.”
- Radio Check: All field-going employees are required to do a radio check with MCC to ensure the radio is operable upon leaving the office.
- Check In: Field-going employees that will not return to the office prior to 1630 must check-in no later than 1615. MCC will document the estimated return time in the “MT In/Out Board.” It is the employee’s responsibility to notify their supervisor when they return.

Other Agencies in the zone manage their own administrative check in/out protocols.

## Fire Personnel Check In/out Protocols

All agencies, except BIA, in the zone will communicate with MCC for all project work or wildland fire mobilizations.

- Radio Check: Fire personnel shall do radio checks and relay the resource call sign and staffing every morning.
- Check Out: When leaving a station or incident, the resource call sign and destination will be relayed to MCC.
- Check In: Fire personnel need to check themselves back in via radio or phone upon arriving to a duty station, incident, or RON location.

## Dissemination of Intelligence Information

MCC posts the *Miles City Interagency Daily Information Briefing* to the Miles City Dispatch webpage for public dissemination.

## Verification of Initial Attack & Suppression Resources

MCC posts initial attack resources' status to *WildWeb* for public dissemination. Resources include BLM, USFS and FWS, except the BIA, which is managed by Northern Cheyenne Dispatch (NCAC).

- Resources must contact MCC daily to be considered “available” for incident responses.

Additional suppression resources' statuses are maintained in *IROC*. These resources include BLM, USFS, FWS, DNRC, SDWF equipment, aircraft or overhead along with DPL contracted equipment.

- MCC shall contact each agency in the spring to verify the number and type of equipment and aircraft.
- If an agency adds or removes a piece of equipment from their fleet, that agency must notify MCC to remove the resources in *IROC*.
- MCC is not responsible for verifying overhead as these are automatically uploaded in *IROC* via the federal *Incident Qualification & Certification System (IQCS)* and the state *Incident Qualification System (IQS)*.

## Preparedness Level Establishment & Verification

Preparedness levels are based on burning indices, number of fires and ignition potential as outlined in the *Eastern Montana Fire Zone's Fire Danger Operating Plan*. MCC verifies the zone's preparedness level daily and posts this information to the *Miles City Interagency Daily Information Briefing*.

## Procedures for Recording Radio Traffic and Key Events

MCC dispatchers will record all information in *WildCAD*. Information includes radio and phone conversations, as well as pertinent office conversations (e.g. Duty Officer's direction).

- Incident specific information will be recorded in each Incident's Log.
- General information will be recorded in the Daily Log.

- Dispatch specific information will be recorded on Whiteboards (i.e. Duty Officers, Off-District Availability, etc.).

Key events that require follow-up shall be recorded on *General Message* forms in addition to being documented in *WildCAD*. These events may include orders for sack lunches, detail requests from fire management, etc.

*Change of Shift Briefing* forms shall be completed for additional information that needs to be shared amongst dispatchers when there is a need for day or night shift changes.

All radio communication is automatically recorded to an electronic media storage device and archived.

## **INITIAL ATTACK/RESPONSE PLAN ELEMENTS**

### **Preplanned Dispatch Plans & Procedures**

MCC will coordinate the movement of agency resources in the MCC dispatch area boundaries. MCC plans and executes a safe, rapid mobilization/demobilization program to minimize fire costs, commensurate with values at risk, and consistent with all agencies' resource management objectives.

“Initial response plans, also referred to as run cards or preplanned response plans, specify the fire management response (e.g. number and type of suppression assets to dispatch). Fire Management Officers will ensure that initial response plans are in place and reflect agreements and annual operating plans.” *Interagency Standards for Fire & Fire Aviation Operations*, Chapter 10.

Dispatch run-cards are pre-loaded in MCC's *WildCAD* and established from the *Eastern Montana Fire Zone's Fire Danger Operating Plan*. MCC will dispatch federal resources (BLM, USFS, FWS) as recommended in the *WildCAD* program, while maintaining the “closest forces” concept.

### **Management Notification of Reported Incidents**

MCC coordinates smoke reports, confirmed fire notifications, and project or incident locations among Federal, State and County entities. Each smoke report or fire notification is documented and communicated through the following notification procedures.

#### Internet via *WildWeb* for Public Access

All smoke reports and wildland fire incidents reported to MCC are documented in MCC's *WildCAD* system. Information from *WildCAD* is posted on the internet to *WildWeb* (<http://www.wildcad.net/WildCADWeb.asp>) in adherence to BLM-Montana State Office IM MT-2013-093. Fire Management and the public are encouraged to use *WildWeb* to get real-time updates on incidents within the dispatch zone at <http://www.wildcad.net/WCmt-mcc.htm>.

Information posted to *WildWeb* includes approximate locations of each smoke report, including County impacted. Confirmed fires reflect latitude and longitude, legal land description, county, and distance from the closest town.

### Notification to County Sheriff's Offices or Fire Wardens

For each smoke report or fire notification, MCC contacts the corresponding County Sheriff's Office or Fire Warden. All wildland fire incidents requiring Federal response are reported to the Counties, even if County response is not required.

It is the County's responsibility to notify County Commissioners of wildland fire activity.

### Text Messaging to Federal & State Fire Management & Public Information Officers

MCC sends fire notifications for fires requiring Federal or State response. Only Federal or State Fire Management and Public Information Officers will receive these text notifications. Text messages are for informational purposes only and serve as an initial notification including the general area of the fire (i.e. Carter County, 20 miles SW of Miles City, etc.).

**Dispatch will contact individuals via phone call when additional actions are warranted.** Standard operating procedures will still be utilized to contact Agency Duty Officers and wildland fire resources about fires in their response areas.

### Notification to Neighboring Federal Agencies or Dispatch Centers

For fires that occur along Federal surface management boundary lines (e.g. NCA) or in close proximity to Federal dispatch center boundaries, MCC will provide a courtesy call to notify Federal agencies and dispatch centers that may be impacted by a confirmed wildland fire incident.

### Notification from EMFZ Duty Officer to Jurisdictional Agency Duty Officer

The EMFZ Duty Officer will notify the jurisdictional agency's duty officer for fires that impact U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and Bureau of Indian Affairs lands.

## **Procedures for Identifying Preparedness Levels**

Refer to the *Eastern Montana Fire Zone's Fire Danger Operating Plan*.

## **Process for Assessing the Appropriate Response**

Refer to the *Eastern Montana Fire Zone's Fire Danger Operating Plan*.

## Identification & Notification of Resources to Respond

MCC will dispatch federal resources (BLM, USFS, FWS) as recommended in the *WildCAD* program, while maintaining the “closest forces” concept. There are four response areas and resources from duty stations within the response area will generally be dispatched first to fires within that response area. If all resources are at station, resources will respond according to the “first up” order that is established by each station’s Fire Operations Supervisor (FOS).

Once the appropriate federal resources are identified, MCC will conduct radio tone-out procedures that will be simulcast across multiple repeaters for the zone. The tone-out will include a smoke identification number or incident name; general location area; legal land description, latitude/longitude or bearing/distance; and resource(s) to respond.

If federal resources must be dispatched during non-work hours, a landline to the FOS/Station Manager shall be the method of notification.

State or volunteer fire departments will be notified via landline.

## Cooperator Support and Planned Response

In eastern Montana fire suppression on State and private lands is a County responsibility. In South Dakota fire suppression on State and private lands is a State responsibility. The exception is private or “affidavit” land located within the Custer-Gallatin National Forest administrative boundary. By agreement the Bureau of Land Management has wildland fire suppression responsibility on affidavit lands within the Ashland and Sioux Ranger Districts. State and private lands that lie within federal boundaries, that are not affidavit lands or a part of a protection agreement, are protected by the counties.

- State of Montana and County Cooperative Agreements exist for each county in Montana.
- The State of South Dakota has established agreements with the Volunteer Fire Departments in Harding County.

Public land fire suppression is a Federal responsibility. This includes lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), US Forest Service (USFS), Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS), and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).

- The BLM will furnish fire protection to BLM, Affidavit, and Custer-Gallatin National Forest lands within the Miles City Division. This agreement is established in the *Montana Statewide Operating*.
- FWS and state lands within the Charles M. Russell Refuge and Medicine Lake Refuge executive boundary, in Garfield and McCone counties are protected by USFWS fire crews located in Sand Creek, Fort Peck and Jordan.
- The Northern Cheyenne will furnish fire protection on trust lands, which is established in the *Bureau of Indian Affairs Rocky Mountain Agreement*.

### Closest Forces

Utilizing closest available resources is a dispatch principle during initial and extended attack suppression, regardless of which entity has protection responsibility. The officer in charge

(County/Federal) who arrives on the fire first will act as Incident Commander. Prompt notification is required to the appropriate Protecting Agency.

### Protecting Agency Responsibilities

The County has fire suppression responsibility for State and private lands. Each county retains full protection responsibility for all incidents under their jurisdiction. Fires on State or private lands that have been staffed by Federal resources will be turned over to the County as soon as practical.

The Federal Government is responsible for fires occurring on public lands. Fires on BLM, USFS, FWS or BIA lands that have been staffed by County resources will be turned over to the Federal resources as soon as practical.

If requested, a unified command structure may be established for multi-jurisdictional fires.

Due to fire activity, Protecting Agencies may request assistance if unable to respond. This should be a short-term request, and the Protecting Agency should respond as soon as possible.

### Mutual Aid Assistance

Requests from the County (Fire Warden) for Federal resources and vice versa will be made through MCC with notification to the DNRC Fire Program Manager.

Resources provided by assisting entities will meet the minimum standards for personnel and equipment adopted by their own department/agency. Assisting resources may be recalled at any time, at the sole discretion of the entity furnishing the assistance. Recall of assisting resources will only be made after proper notification to the Incident Commander.

Refer to the *Miles City Division of the Northern Rockies Coordinating Group-Eastern Zone AOP* for the mutual aid period.

### Unified Command

Numerous wildfire situations require a unified command between cooperators who have shared responsibility for an incident. The following factors indicate that a unified command structure should be established:

- Extended fire operations on a fire area consisting of both federal and county protected lands.
- Multiple jurisdiction Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) fires.

Unified Command will take the form of all responsible agencies delegating authority to one incident commander. In these circumstances, officers in charge of both agencies will work together to set incident strategies and objectives. Since both entities have a legal obligation to suppress wildfires in the overlapping protection areas, neither agency can unilaterally assume full responsibility. Likewise, neither agency can compel the other agency to withdraw from the fire. Strategic decisions on the incident should be made jointly; however, each agency is compelled to follow its own mandate and guidelines.

## Independent Actions

If an agency determines that a fire occurring outside of its jurisdiction poses a threat to lands within its jurisdiction, the agency may take independent action to suppress the fire. Efforts will be made to work with the responsible agency, and no agency's actions should impede the actions of the other agency. Costs incurred on an independent action are non-reimbursable.

## **Communication Procedures**

### Radio Communications

MCC has four Telex radios with BLM, USFS, and DNRC repeater capabilities, as well as Flight Following and Air Guard. Agreements have been established by the BLM-Montana State Office Radio Shop to utilize non-BLM frequencies for wildland fire purposes.

During periods of multiple radio calls and/or fire overload situations, incoming radio calls are fielded in the following order:

- Life threatening, death, injury or major accident,
- Flight following check-ins,
- New starts or existing incidents escaping control/containment,
- Support of on-going fires,
- Other administration.

Refer to the Communications section of this document for detailed information.

### Telephone Communications

MCC's primary dispatch phone number is 406-233-2900. This line is forwarded to the on-call dispatch cell phone during non-business hours.

### Ordering Channels

Orders for wildland fire incidents and severity shall follow established ordering channels.

Incident Command/FMO  
Miles City Dispatch  
Neighborhood Dispatch Centers  
Northern Rockies Coordination Center  
National Interagency Coordination Center  
Geographic Area Coordination Center  
Dispatch Center  
Sending Agency

At any point when an order is filled, the process reverses back to the top in order to insure proper notification back to the incident or FMO.

MCC's neighboring dispatch centers within Northern Rockies (Region 1) geographic area include:

- MT-BDC Billings Interagency Dispatch Center
- MT-LEC Lewistown Interagency Dispatch Center
- MT-NCAC Northern Cheyenne Dispatch Center (fourth tier)
- ND-NDC North Dakota Interagency Dispatch Center

MCC may order resources directly from neighboring Rocky Mountain geographic area (Region 2) dispatch centers for initial attack per the *Northern Rockies Mobilization Guide* and *Rocky Mountain Mobilization Guide*. These centers include:

- SD-GPC Great Plains Interagency Dispatch Center
- WY-CPC Casper Interagency Dispatch Center

## **Procedures to Follow when Activity Exceeds the Initial Attack/Response Plan**

### Resource Ordering

MCC will utilize closest forces at all times setting priority with agency, cooperator and then contracted DPL resources. Resources must meet the needed date and time.

### Incident Prioritization

Prioritization of multiple incidents within the zone will be determined by the Miles City Division's Multi-agency Coordinating (MAC) group. The Center Manager shall be involved with these determinations.

### Expanded Dispatch

The MCC Center Manager shall open an expanded dispatch organization when incident support requirements exceed local unit capacity. MCC will support the Northern Cheyenne Agency through an expanded dispatch as required.

### Incident Management

The zone is capable of staffing Type 3 incidents locally. At minimum, a qualified IC Type 3 (ICT3) will be identified. Additional personnel may be identified or ordered for logistics or timekeeping. MCC is capable of handling a Type 3 incident without an expanded dispatch organization.

MCC hosts a Type 3 Incident Management Team (IMT) referred to as the County Assist Team (CAT). It is sponsored by the Montana DNRC but has an interagency membership. The team's roster and resource pre-order varies depending on each assignment and overhead availability. The CAT Coordinator will maintain the roster and ensure each person's availability and qualifications are set correctly in *IROC*. MCC will notify affected dispatch centers that fill overhead orders for the roster.

MCC shall order Type 3, 2 or 1 IMT's upon request from an FMO or designated acting. This request must include a needed date and time and in-briefing location, along with an established

Incident Command Post location with associated land-use agreement (if required). A host agency must be identified at the time of order along with a cost-share agreement (if required). It is the responsibility of the host Agency Administrator or FMO to conduct the IMT in-briefing, which should include a hardcopy IMT briefing package. MCC will provide local emergency contacts and procedures, repeater maps and frequencies, resource orders and status, and *Service & Supply Plan* that includes local incident business operating guidelines.

### Fire Business & Fire Numbers

MCC creates a unique Firecode for every wildland fire that requires Federal response. Each FireCode will have the FS-assisted box checked.

Incident numbers are issued based on the Protecting Agency. Refer to the *Protection Areas within the Miles City Dispatch Area* above in this plan.

Complex incidents or FEMA declarations will be assigned individual charge codes (e.g. FireCode, SABHRS, etc.) and maintained as individual incidents. This is for fire billing and cost recovery purposes.

MCC shall order a Buying Team upon request from an FMO or Center Manager determination. MCC may utilize another Buying Team that may be in place with a neighboring dispatch center. If a Buying Team is unavailable, MCC may utilize local Agency employees with micro-purchase authorities or contracting warrant authorities.

### Intelligence

MCC must submit fire activity in the SIT Report daily. Jurisdictional acres are reported under each Protecting Agency.

MCC must submit ICS-209 reports for any wildland fire incident that is 100 acres or larger in timber fuel types, 300 acres or larger in grass fuel types, or when a Type 1 or 2 IMT is assigned. Reports will be submitted daily until the incident is contained.

MCC publishes most incidents to *WildWeb* for public information. MCC updates the incident information as changes occur.

MCC shall notify a local Public Affairs Officer or Public Information Officer about incidents. It is the officer's responsibility to notify the media or answer any questions from the public. MCC dispatchers will not make notifications nor answer questions.

### **Aviation Procedures**

The zone has one primary Air Base located in Miles City. This base can accommodate helicopters and fixed wing aircraft, except large air tankers. In addition, the Fort Howes workstation has a helipad and hangar for rotor-wing aircraft.

MCC shall order aviation resources for agencies within the zone, except the BIA. MCC will forward BIA aircraft orders through the established dispatch channels.

MCC provides flight following for all aircraft within the zone, except for the BIA helicopter that is flight followed locally.

## **EMERGENCY OPERATIONS (FIRE/NON-FIRE)**

### **Notification of a Reported Fire**

MCC documents new smoke reports or fire/incident notifications in *WildCAD*.

### **Jurisdiction Verification**

MCC plots incident locations in *WildCAD* to determine jurisdiction. Additional jurisdiction verification resources include a large wall map in MCC, and BLM, FWS or USFS 1:100,000 maps. *Citrix-ArcMap* is another web-based program available.

### **Response Plan Activation**

MCC will dispatch federal resources (BLM, USFS, FWS) as recommended in the *WildCAD* program, while maintaining the “closest forces” concept, via radio tone-out during business hours or phone call to the appropriate Fire Operations Supervisor if after hours.

### **Agency and Area Notification**

Radio Tone-outs across BLM and USFS repeaters serve as notification to fire and field-going resources in the zone. Text messages serve as notification to Agency fire management and public information officers within the zone.

MCC will call the appropriate Duty Officer for all incidents.

### **Move-up and Cover Procedures**

The Agency Duty Officer determines what resources will be mobilized to cover for those resources that have been dispatched to an incident.

### **Call-back Procedures**

The Duty Officer shall determine which fire resources will return to duty and relay this information to MCC. MCC will contact the fire resources.

### **Evacuation of an Incident Area**

Area evacuations are the responsibility of the affected County Sheriff’s Office or Department of Emergency Services (DES) County Liaison. MCC will notify the County Sheriff’s Office.

## **Closing Public/Private Roads**

Closing roads is the responsibility of the affected County Sheriff's Office, whom MCC will notify.

## **Ordering Additional Personnel, Equipment, and Aircraft**

MCC will process orders from an Incident Commander with the Duty Officer's approval via *WildCAD* for zone resources or *IROC* for non-local and contract resources.

## **Fire Weather Watch and Red Flag Warning Notification**

Billings and Glasgow Weather Services service MCC's zone and contact MCC when fire weather watches and red flag warnings are issued. MCC disseminates this information immediately upon receipt and contacts the affected area via radio and phone.

## **Temporary Flight Restrictions**

MCC orders Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFRs) upon request from aerial supervision, Unit Aviation Manager, Incident Management Team, or as determined by MCC and approved by the Center Manager. MCC submits the *TFR Request Form* and corresponding *IROC* orders (e.g. TFR and AM Frequency) to Northern Rockies Coordination Center.

MCC notifies entities affected by the TFR as soon as the TFR is approved. In most instances, MCC will not change the assigned AM frequency in the middle of an operational shift. MCC will strive to change frequencies prior to the next operation day if possible.

## **Agency Duty Officers**

A designated duty officer shall be available to MCC as scheduled via cell phone. It is the responsibility of the duty officer to contact the affected jurisdictional duty officer/Agency Administrator as outlined in the *Interagency Standards for Fire & Fire Aviation Operations*, Chapter 2.

## **Aviation Mishap Response Guide**

MCC's *Aviation Mishap Response Guide* is tailored to the zone with local contacts for all agencies. This guide is updated annually in the spring. It is posted in MCC and available to all agencies.

## **Emergency Procedures**

MCC's Emergency Procedures are tailored to the zone with local contacts for all agencies. These procedures are updated annually in the spring and posted in MCC. These procedures are available to all agencies and include the following topics.

- Bomb Threat
- Evacuation
- Non-Evacuation Events
- Accident (Non-Injury)
- Injury

- Search & Rescue
- Entrapment/Burnover
- Fatality
- County Emergency or Sheriffs' Offices Contacts for Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming
- Medical Facility Locations and Burn Centers
- Air Ambulance Contacts and Response Areas
- Local Emergency Medical Technicians for the Agencies
- Smokejumper Injury Protocols
- Utility Company Notification Contacts (power and gas)

## **Law Enforcement Dispatching Procedures/Requirements**

MCC does not dispatch Law Enforcement. MCC will notify the local Federal Law Enforcement Officer of human-caused fires on Federal land.

## **Hazmat/Spill Response Notification Procedures**

The Counties are responsible for hazmat/spill response. MCC will notify the affected County Sheriff's Office of any hazmat/spills. MCC will notify the affected jurisdictional Duty Officer if applicable.

## **Local Government Requesting All-Risk Assistance**

Federal Agency Administrators must approve Federal response to any all-risk incident.

State Agency Administrators have plans in place to assist local government for all-risk incidents.

## **Search and Rescue**

The Counties are responsible for search and rescue. Federal Agency Administrators must approve Federal assistance for search and rescue as requested by the Counties.

## **LOCAL AGREEMENTS**

Copies of all agreements, memorandums of understanding, and operating plans are located in MCC. The following documents dictate MCC operations.

### Memorandums of Understanding

- **Memorandum of Understanding between the USDI-Bureau of Land Management, Miles City Field Office and the Miles City Municipal Airport concerning the use of the Airport infield in support of Wildland Firefighting Efforts (BLM-MOU-MT020-0304)**
- **Memorandum of Understanding between State of Montana, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation-Eastern Land Office and Bureau of Land Management-Miles City Field Office (BLM-MOU-MT020-0801)**

- **Memorandum of Understanding between Bureau of Land Management-Miles City Field Office and State of South Dakota, Department of Agriculture-Division of Wildland Fire (BLM-MOU-MT020-0802)**
  - This MOU provides procedures and guidance to dispatch Harding County Volunteer Fire Department Resources and agency line officer responsibility for incidents under their jurisdiction.

### Operating Plans

- **Statewide Operating Plan between the State of Montana-Department of Natural Resources and Conservation and United State Department of Agriculture, Forest Service-Northern Region and United State Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management-Montana Dakotas, National Park Service-Intermountain Region, Bureau of Indian Affairs-Northwest and Rocky Mountain Regions, and Fish and Wildlife Service-Mountain-Prairie Region.**
- **Annual Operating Plan between the South Dakota Division of Wildland Fire and Bureau of Land Management, Eastern Montana/Dakotas District-South Dakota Field Office**
- **Northern Rockies Annual Fire Weather Operating Plan**
- **Wildland Fire Management Annual Operating Plan for the Wyoming State Forestry Division, District #5 (Sheridan, Campbell, and Johnson Counties)**
- **Wildland Fire Management Annual Operating Plan for Crook County, Wyoming**
- **Miles City Dispatch Fire Danger Operating Plan**

### Agreements

- **Bureau of Land Management Fire Suppression Agreement between the Billings, Lewistown, and Miles City Field Offices**
  - This agreement outlines initial attack responsibilities and corresponding dispatch centers for the following counties as noted on page 3 of this document: Big Horn, Treasure, Daniels, Sheridan, and Valley counties.
- **Montana Cooperative Fire Management and Stafford Act Response Agreement between the State of Montana-Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, and the USDI, Bureau of Land Management-Montana and Dakotas, National Park Service-Intermountain Region, Bureau of Indian Affairs-Northwest and Rocky Mountain Regions, US Fish and Wildlife Service-Mountain Prairie Region, and the USDA Forest Service-Northern Region**
- **Interagency Cooperative Fire Management Agreement between the USDI, Bureau of Land Management-Montana Dakotas State Office, Bureau of Indian Affairs-Great Plains Region and Rocky Mountain Region, National Park Service-Midwest Region, Fish and Wildlife Service-Mountain Prairie Region, and the USDA Forest Service, and the State of South Dakota-Department of Agriculture, Division of Wildland Fire**
- **Interagency Cooperative Fire Management and Stafford Act Response Agreement-Wyoming among USDI, Bureau of Land Management-Wyoming, National Park Service-Intermountain Region, Bureau of Indian Affairs-Rocky Mountain Region, Fish and Wildlife Service-Mountain Prairie Region, and the USDA, Forest Service-Rocky Mountain Region, and the State of Wyoming, State Board of Land Commissioners-Wyoming State Forestry Division**
- **Northwest Wildland Fire Protection Agreement (Northwest Compact)**

# COMMUNICATIONS

## Procedures for Assigning/Managing Local Radio Frequencies

MCC is authorized to use the following agencies' frequencies for radio communication.

- BLM
- USFS
- DNRC
- FWS

These frequencies are monitored and digitally recorded, in addition to National Flight Following and Air Guard. National Flight Following is approved for point-to-point flight following, while Air Guard is approved as an emergency frequency to contact aircraft.

Repeater frequencies will be utilized to obtain tactical and fire size-up information from aircraft. MCC will manage radio communications by assigning aircraft to other agency repeaters when the primary BLM repeaters become congested.

MCC is assigned Air-to-Air (AM/Victor) and Air-to-Ground (FM) frequencies annually from the National Radio Communications Center. MCC will designate the primary and secondary FM frequencies and mitigate radio frequency congestion when incidents are close in proximity.

## Procedures for Obtaining Additional Frequencies

All requests for additional, non-local frequencies must be placed through established dispatch channels: MCC to NRCC to NICC. Additional frequencies will be released immediately when the need has ceased.

## Maps of Repeater Sites

The Montana/Dakotas Radio Shop produces repeater site maps. Refer to MCC's Radio Frequency Guide or the BLM-Montana/Dakotas Radio Frequency Plan.

## Instructions for Using Telecommunication Systems and Computers

Refer to the *MCC Detailer's Guide* for instructions to operate dispatch radio consoles, phones, computers, fax machines, and paging systems.

# WEATHER

## Procedures for Processing Weather Observations via Weather Information Management System (WIMS)

Daily weather observations as observed at each Remote Automated Weather Station (RAWS) must be confirmed in the web-based *Weather Information Management System (WIMS)*. MCC submits this information daily by 1500.

## Daily Posting and Briefing Procedures

MCC posts the *Miles City Interagency Daily Information Briefing* to the Miles City Dispatch webpage for public dissemination. This briefing includes fire danger ratings, burning indices, fire weather forecasts, relative humidities, rainfall accumulations, lightning map, and fuel moistures, etc.

The dispatch briefing is scheduled for 0830 daily and includes the information listed above as well as Fire Weather Watches or Red Flag Warnings. Significant changes in weather are relayed to dispatchers and the field throughout the day.

## Broadcasts of Fire Weather Forecasts to Local Fire Suppression Personnel

MCC does not broadcast the fire weather in the morning because this information is covered in morning briefings at all the stations in the zone.

MCC broadcasts the fire weather daily at 1500 in addition to the forecasted Burning Indices (BI). The fire weather includes the following zones:

- 131 – Ashland Ranger District and Northern Cheyenne Reservation
- 132 – Custer County
- 133 – Carter County and Sioux Ranger District
- 136 – Lower Missouri River Breaks including the Charles M. Russell Refuge

Each broadcast is relayed simultaneously across BLM and USFS repeaters. MCC documents these broadcasts in the *WildCAD* Daily Log, along with confirmed field-going personnel that copied the fire weather forecast transmission.

## Procedures for Processing Spot Weather Forecast Requests and Disseminating Spot Forecasts to the Field

An Incident Commander should request a spot weather forecast at the beginning of each incident, preferably within the first hour on scene. ICs may request spot weather forecasts at any time during an incident by relaying local weather observations or requesting MCC to obtain observations from a nearby RAWS.

MCC immediately submits local weather observations in either the Glasgow or Billings Weather Services' Spot Weather Request webpages depending on the incident location. MCC contacts the appropriate weather service to confirm the request submission. Once the weather service calls to relay the spot weather forecast is complete, MCC immediately relays the information to the IC.

At times, it is appropriate to use one spot weather forecast for multiple incidents that are close in proximity. All spot weather confirmations must be documented in the individual *WildCAD* Incident logs.

## **Procedures for Immediate Notification to Fire Suppression Personnel of Fire Weather Watches and Red Flag Warnings**

MCC disseminates fire weather watches or red flag warnings immediately upon receipt and contacts the affected area via radio and phone. MCC utilizes a checklist to ensure all agencies and/or incidents are contacted. MCC documents personnel (including Field Office employees) confirmations in either the *WildCAD* Daily Log or Incident log.

It is the responsibility of the Center Manager, Assistant Center Manager, or Floor Supervisor to ensure all dispatchers are aware of watches or warnings.

## **FIRE DANGER**

### **Locally Significant Fire Danger Indices and Recording Daily Values**

The zone utilizes the burning indices (BI) to calculate the Fire Danger Ratings across the area. The BIs and Fire Danger Ratings for the Miles City, Jordan, Fort Howes, and Ekalaka/Camp Crook response areas are posted daily on the *Miles City Interagency Daily Information Briefing*.

The forecasted BI is relayed via radio broadcasts daily at 1500 and documented in *WildCAD*.

### **Procedures for Updating and Posting of Monthly/Seasonal Trends of Those Values versus Seasonal Averages**

MCC does not provide this service; however, the BLM develops Fire Danger Pocket Cards annually and distributes the cards to all personnel in the zone. These cards provide guidance for monthly and seasonal averages in regards to the observed and forecasted BIs broadcasted by MCC.

## **BRIEFINGS**

### **Time Frames and Frequencies/Locations for Daily Briefings**

During the months of May-September, MCC has daily dispatch briefings at 0830. These morning briefings include information from the *Miles City Interagency Daily Information Briefing*, status of resources and incidents, daily workload and priorities, and *6 Minutes for Safety* or a related topic.

During high fire activity, MCC will brief in the afternoon at approximately 1530. This briefing will include the status of resources and incidents and fire weather updates.

Change of Shift Briefings will be documented and explained between the incoming and outgoing dispatchers. These briefings will include the status of resources and incidents, fire weather updates, pending orders or tasks to be completed.

## Method for Documenting Briefings

Daily briefings shall not be documented because all dispatchers will be present. Change of Shift Briefings will be documented in hardcopy or electronic format as there is a higher probability that information will be missed during shift changes (day/night).

## PREPAREDNESS LEVELS

### Procedures for Identifying Preparedness Level

MCC utilizes a Preparedness Level Worksheet as dictated by the *Fire Danger Operating Plan*. The Preparedness Level Worksheet is based on the Burning Index, Red Flag Warning, Ignition Risk, and Fire Activity. The breakpoints for the preparedness levels are set using historical analyses (FireFamily Plus) and its relationship to RAWs observations.

The Preparedness Levels for each response area are published daily on the *Miles City Interagency Daily Information Briefing*.

## AVIATION

### Ordering/Scheduling Requirements and Procedures

Aircraft orders will be placed on a resource order or *Flight Request/Schedule Form 9400-1a* for any flight ordered or filled by MCC; however, aircraft assigned to MCC under an agreement/contract will be documented in *WildCAD* for incidents within the zone.

MCC shall order Federal aircraft (including heavy airtankers) utilizing the closest-forces concept at all times as directed by the *Northern Rockies Mobilization Guide*. If Federal aircraft cannot meet the needed date/time, MCC may order call-when-needed aircraft, and will place an order for the next available Federal aircraft. Call-when-needed aircraft and pilots must be appropriately carded by the Office of Aviation Services.

MCC shall order DNRC helicopters for fires under DNRC protection or for Federal incidents, where lives and property are immediately threatened. MCC dispatchers may communicate with DNRC helicopters, but these aircraft remain under the operational control of the State of Montana. MCC must complete and file the *Public/Civil Aircraft Utilization Dispatch Worksheet/Documentation Record (F-810)* for any fires that do not qualify.

### Special Use Airspace

MCC's zone is impacted by the following special use airspace:

- Montana Air National Guard 120<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing
  - Hays Military Operating Area (MOA), along with various Military Training Routes (MTRs)
- United State Air Force 28<sup>th</sup> Operations Group Ellsworth Air Force Base
  - Powder River Training Complex MOA, along with various MTRs.

MCC will post daily military activity by viewing published schedules. This activity is not confirmed until the aircraft dispatcher speaks to the Scheduling Activity desk.

MCC will contact the Scheduling Activity desk for either the 120<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing or Ellsworth Air Force Base when any federally-contracted aircraft impact the MOAs or are located within 10 nautical miles either side of the centerline of an MTR. MCC may have to negotiate available altitudes (MSL) for federal aircraft utilization. This serves as deconfliction of the special use airspace.

For incidents that will impact special use airspace with aircraft for more than one operational period, MCC shall order a TFR and notify the appropriate Scheduling Activity desk.

### **Special Use Mission Requirements**

Special Use Mission flights must be documented in a *Project Aviation Safety Plan* and on a *Flight Request/Schedule Form 9400-1a*. These flights must have an assigned project manager and Flight Manager (regular or special use) for MCC to contact.

### **Incident/Accident Reporting and Documentation Procedures**

MCC's *Aviation Mishap Response Guide* shall be used for documentation purposes in addition to *WildCAD* (no *WildWeb*). Documentation may also be located in MCC's *Emergency Procedures* if an aviation incident/accident results in an injury or fatality.

Radio communications will also be available via digital media if needed for further documentation.

Aircraft accidents result in MCC notifying the corresponding County, in addition to agency contacts as outlined in the *Aviation Mishap Response Guide* and the *Emergency Procedures*.

MCC will coordinate with aviation management if required to submit a *Safecom* report.

## **Flight Management/Tracking Procedures**

Flight following is conducted via the web-based *Automated Flight Following (AFF)* in addition to radio communication. MCC will communicate via radio with aircraft after take-off, prior to landing, during hand-offs between Air Attack or another dispatch center, or when transitioning to a ground contact (e.g. incident commander or designee and helicopter manager).

After each take-off, MCC will confirm souls-on-board, fuel-on-board, passengers, and estimated time enroute (ETE). Every 15 minutes, MCC documents the latitude and longitude (degrees and minutes) and heading of each aircraft flying in the zone.

MCC will call neighboring dispatch centers or the NRCC when aircraft are flying across dispatch or geographic boundaries. All aircraft flying across geographic boundaries or outside of dispatch office hours, must file an FAA flight plan per the *Northern Rockies Mobilization Guide*, Chapter 20, Flight Following/Resource Tracking section.

## **EXPANDED DISPATCH PLAN**

Refer to the *Miles City Expanded Dispatch Operating Guide*.

### **Indicators for Considering Establishment of Expanded Dispatch**

The Center Manager shall evaluate the establishment for an expanded dispatch organization when the following event(s) occur.

- An Incident Management Team has been ordered.
- Two or more extended attack incidents with expected duration >72 hours.
- Heavy initial attack activity exceeding I.A. capabilities with an expected duration of <72 hours.

### **Recommended Organization and Points of Contact**

MCC has added dispatch profiles from neighboring dispatch centers (Billings, Lewistown, and North Dakota) to assist with IROC for the first 24-72 hour timeframe that may occur prior to expanded dispatch personnel arriving. Billings or Lewistown dispatchers can input resource orders (e.g. Incident Management Team pre-orders) for MCC, allowing MCC to still provide initial attack support services.

## **SERVICE & SUPPLY PLAN**

Refer to the *Eastern Montana Fire Zone's Service and Supply Plan*.

### **Procedures for Local and Geographic Area Cache Ordering**

MCC places orders direct to the Billings Fire Cache (BFK) via *IROC* and a phone call to confirm receipt. If the BFK cannot provide items, MCC places orders to the Northern Rockies Fire Cache (NRK).

## Commercial Travel Procedures

MCC has a BLM corporate travel card that is used for wildland fire emergency, airline travel only. During most instances, MCC will instruct travelers with government credit cards to utilize their own travel card for airline reservations. Refer to the *MCC Travel Reservations* binder.

## ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

### Funding

Funding for the dispatch center is reviewed annually and has been established by the BLM Montana/Dakotas State Office with cooperating agencies via a financial agreement.

Refer to the *Wildland Fire Operating Plan Agreement for the Miles City Interagency Dispatch Center*.

### Timesheets and Travel Reimbursement

Time and travel costs are incurred and approved by the dispatcher's hiring agency (e.g. BLM or DNRC).

### Personnel Hiring & Evaluation Processes

The MCC Center Manager has supervisory roles, while the MCC Assistant Center Manager has oversight roles. The Center Manager will maintain personnel folders for dispatch employees hired by the BLM. The Center Manager is responsible for all disciplinary actions for BLM dispatchers.

The MCC Center Manager will participate in the evaluation process of the DNRC dispatcher as determined by the DNRC Fire Program Manager. Disciplinary actions will be the responsibility of the DNRC Fire Program Manager.

### Fire Reports

MCC reports all fires within the zone that require BLM action or burn land under BLM protection (e.g. BLM, USFS, and Affidavit lands). Fire reports are initiated by incident commanders and completed by MCC dispatchers in the *Interagency Fire Occurrence Reporting (InForm)* application. All fire reports require the FMO's signature for approval. Hard copy fire reports with attached fire perimeter maps are housed in MCC.

USFS employees submit fire reports in *InForm*. MCC submits USFS jurisdictional fire data to Bozeman Dispatch Center (BZC) to establish S.O. numbers.

FWS employees submit fire reports in *InForm*.

BIA submits fire reports in *InForm*.

## **Procedures for Archiving Fire Records**

MCC archives all fire records as directed by the *Wildland Fire Incident Records Retention Guidelines*.

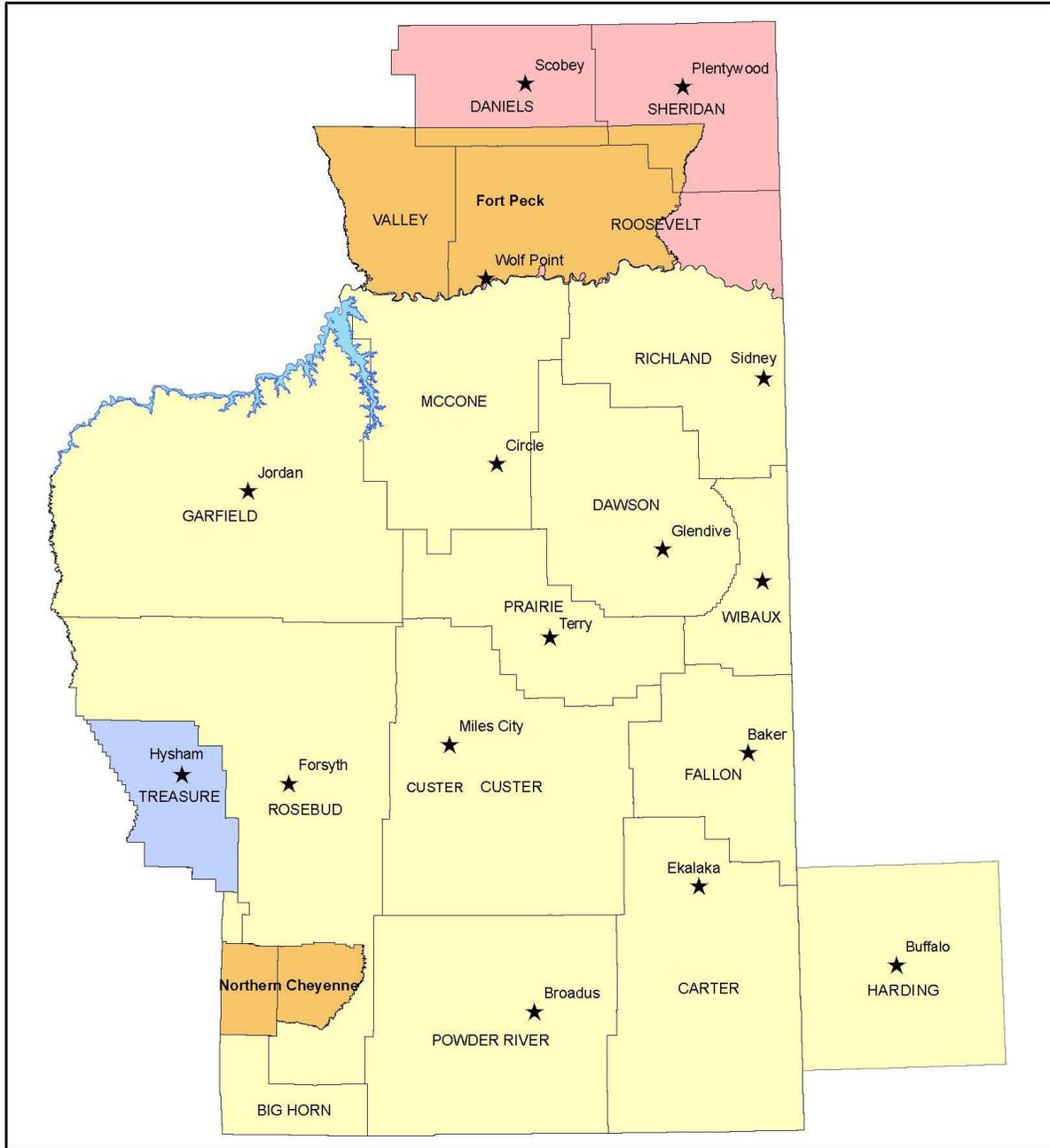
## **MEDICAL PLAN**

Refer to *MCC's Emergency Procedures* and *Aviation Mishap Response Guide*.

# APPENDIX A



## Dispatch Boundaries within the Eastern Montana Fire Zone



### Dispatch Zones

- Billings Dispatch Center (BDC)
- Miles City Dispatch Center (MCC)
- Lewistown Dispatch Center (LEC)
- Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

