



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

Federal, State, and Local Government Agencies Working Together In Emergency Response Management

Date: October 20, 2017

To: Northern Rockies Incident Commanders

From: Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

Subject: Use and Supervision of Privately Owned Equipment on Incidents

Due to the complexity and inherent danger of wildland firefighting, the primary operational concern of the Northern Rockies Coordinating Group is to provide the safest possible work environment for firefighting resources. We are confirming the requirements that define our commitment to provide adequate supervision and accountability for hired equipment. We recognize while not required, it is impractical for hired equipment vendors to provide comprehensive wildland firefighting training to their employees that would bring them to NWCG levels of fireline qualified positions. Commensurate with the minimum safety training currently required of all hired equipment vendors and operators, the following operating procedures apply while vendors are employed in firefighting operations.

All incident commanders must provide direct government supervision for all hired resources; at no time shall a contractor supervise another contractor.

When forming a functional group, strike team, or task force containing hired equipment, the functional Group Supervisor or Strike Team/Task Force Leader shall perform the following duties:

- Determine equipment readiness and compliance with minimum standards.
- Act as group supervisor or task force leader under direction of the Operations Section
- Initiate shift ticket process
- Prepare vendor evaluations

Furthermore, direct government supervision shall be provided in the following instances:

HEAVY EQUIPMENT (HE): Privately owned HE under agreement shall have a fully trained and qualified fire line supervisor available in the immediate area who is assigned to direct the private HE operator at all times during any suppression activities. These private operators **will not** work on the fire line without such supervision.

SUPPORT WATER TENDERS: Privately owned support water tenders under agreement shall not be engaged in direct fire suppression efforts on any active fire line (line where the fire could continue to spread, flare-up, or spot over the line). Support water tenders assigned to support firefighting activities shall be positioned in areas that provide a safe exit route. Safe placement of these vehicles shall be the responsibility of the fireline supervisor under whose supervision the support water tender was placed. Fireline supervisors must insure that the support water tender operator's radio is operating properly in order to maintain communications at all times.



A statement clarifying government supervisory requirement will be included in all pre-season awards for tactical equipment. The Northern Rockies Chapter 20 supplement to the IIBMH will also include government supervisory requirement to be incorporated in all Emergency Equipment Rental Agreements. We recommend that in-briefing documentation provided to Incident Management Teams include a reminder of government supervisory requirement for all privately owned hired equipment.



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Chair, Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

