



# Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

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

Date: April 17, 2023 NRCG Memo# 2023-001  
To: Northern Rockies Interagency Wildland Fire Community  
From: Chair, Northern Rockies Coordinating Group and Wildfire Agency Administrators  
Subject: 2023 Incident Management Team Expectations

Thank you for your commitment to the Northern Rockies Incident Management Teams (IMT). Whether you are new or have been on our teams in the past, the Northern Rockies Wildfire Agency Administrators (WFAA) and Northern Rockies Coordinating Group (NRCG) appreciate your commitment to managing wildland fire incidents during the 2023 season. This season may again be challenging, with COVID-19 hanging on and concerns around the transition to Critical Incident Management Teams. We will continue to incorporate lessons learned from 2020-22, and be patient, vigilant, and adaptive in order to protect from COVID-19, our own health, that of the communities we serve, our colleagues, and our families to the best of our abilities while protecting citizens, communities, and our natural resources from wildland fire. We thank the Northern Rockies Agency Administrators and Incident Management Team Members for being incredibly adaptable and emphasizing health and safety amid a global pandemic.

Our continued attention to COVID-19 does not diminish our commitment to the principles and practices that always anchor the high standards we expect of all Northern Rockies wildland fire resources. Northern Rockies IMT members represent the NRCG collectively; and we expect professionalism and leadership from our IMTs, and each and every member of our teams. Please discuss and continually reinforce the guiding principles below with your teams and the resources working with your teams.

## **Safety:**

- Make Firefighter and public safety not just a consideration in how to do work but the foundation of how decisions are made.
- Risk management should be a fundamental and an ongoing component of all fire management planning decisions. Make sound decisions based on firefighter/aviation/public safety, values at risk both public and private, and probability of success with the end-state clearly expressed and understood.
- Ensure risks are discussed and communicated; carelessness or unsafe actions are not acceptable.
- Promote safe driving practices at all times.



- Ensure incident emergency medical procedures are in place and communicated to those on the ground for every wildland fire. Exercise and practice scenarios to be better prepared for when accidents occur.
- All personnel are expected to adhere to the 2:1 work/rest ratio. Incident Commanders, along with their command and general staff, should set the example. Breaking the 2:1 work/rest ratio should be the exception that must be documented and mitigated.

## Personnel:

- Respond to emergency incidents within and outside of the Northern Rockies with highly skilled and qualified personnel.
- Handle stressful situations with frequent and positive support in team/crew interaction and promotion of group camaraderie.
- Promote a professional attitude with all our resources through continuous positive interaction and support.
- Harassment of any form will not be tolerated. It is the responsibility of all team members to say something when they see or hear someone being harassed. Agencies need to be notified when any form of harassment occurs. Every single person, whether agency, local, or contractor working on a fire assignment deserves the right to be treated fairly.

## Communication:

- Ensure your interaction with hosting units, local fire management, and local incident commanders is professional and reflects positively on the Northern Rockies.
- Immediately notify agency administrators of any serious “close call,” serious accident, injury, or fatality.
- Conduct quality After Actions Reviews (AARs) with hosting agencies, peers, supervisors, and subordinates. Make an effort to debrief and learn from your experiences and share lessons learned with others in the fire community.
- Ensure that any public interaction is a positive reflection on the Northern Rockies.
- Understand and utilize the chain of command to keep home unit and hosting supervisors informed.
- Always feel free to communicate with your NRCG representatives in accordance with home unit policy—please share experiences, personal thoughts, suggestions, and alternatives so that we can strive to continually improve how resources are managed and led.



## Agency Leadership:

- Assist host agencies to prioritize their values at risk and incident objectives.
- Demonstrate professionalism at all times – on incidents, between incidents, at training, and at public functions where you are a resource representing the Northern Rockies Geographic Area.
- Be personally committed to and responsible for your IMT members and your team's performance.
- Ensure that actions are fair, and all individuals and agencies are treated equally; we have zero tolerance for discrimination and harassment of any kind. Report discrimination issues to the local agency administrators.
- Handle conflicts with fire personnel in a professional and tactful manner.
- Resolve problems at the lowest level possible to ensure corrections are initiated at the first opportunity.
- An evaluation must be received and discussed before departing any assignment. This evaluation needs to be sent to the Northern Rockies Coordination Center Assistant Manager and will be reviewed by the NRCG Board of Directors.
- Ensure that every first responder and cooperater is treated as a valued member of the Northern Rockies team.

## Business Practices:

- All business practices should be in accordance with the Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook. Utilize incident business advisors' expertise to clarify agency policy and procedures.
- Manage incident cost and expenditures consistent with the direction contained in the Delegation of Authority, Agency Administrator's Briefing Package, and Wildland Fire Decision Support System or other decision support documents. Ensure expenditures based on tactical actions are commensurate with the values to be protected.
- Resources to support incidents shall be obtained in the most cost-efficient manner possible.
- Finance packages should be completed and closed out with the host agency prior to the demobilization of the incident management team.



## Preparing for the Future:

- Ensure that recruitment and training of new IMT members is a priority for succession planning. Seek, develop, and train new team members to help secure the future of our teams.
- Our most experienced and successful incident team members are to be commended for moving into the complex incident management team organization. Continue to encourage team members to look for opportunities to participate and advance to the next level of incident management teams. We understand the challenges with transitioning to CIMT's, but we appreciate that you are embracing these challenges. The Northern Rockies will host five (5) CIMTs and three Type 3 IMTs in 2023.

## Speed to Competency:

- It is our expectation that trainees be given the opportunity to perform in target positions, receive an honest clearly documented evaluation and if competent, be recommended for certification. The Position Task Book process was implemented by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) to document competency in the various tasks of a position, not to serve as a record of how many times a person performs in a position to prove they are competent. It is imperative that evaluator and agency certifiers take this into consideration when an individual is being considered for certification.

Thank you again for your continued commitment and long-standing dedication to the Northern Rockies Geographic Area. We look forward to working together to meet our shared goals and expectations.

Craig Foss  
Chair, Wildfire Agency Administrators Group

Rich Cowger  
Chair, Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

