



Northwest

Interagency Incident

Management Team Operations

Guide

2016

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Introduction

Northwest Interagency Incident Management Teams

This document guides the operation of the 10 - Northwest Interagency Incident Management Area Teams (IMTs), herein referred to as the Team(s). There are 8 Type II Teams and 2 Type I Teams that comprise the IMT's in the Northwest, herein referred as NW. The Teams may include individuals from the following agencies and affiliates:

- USDA Forest Service
- USDI Bureau of Land Management
- USDI Fish and Wildlife Services
- USDI Bureau of Indian Affairs
- USDI National Park Service
- Washington Department of Natural Resources
- Washington State Fire Marshal's Office
- Washington Fire Chiefs Association
- Oregon Department of Forestry
- Oregon Fire Chiefs Association
- Oregon State Fire Marshal's Office

Operations Guide

The NW Incident Management Team Operations Guide, herein referred to as the Guide, is developed by the Northwest Geographic Area Board, herein referred to as the Board, and reviewed by the Incident Commanders. It is intended to serve as an aid in providing assistance to teams, team members, alternate members, and trainees in preparing for and fulfilling their assignments.

This Guide should be used in conjunction with Existing Team Handbooks the Wildland Fire Incident Management Field Guide (PMS-210) NW Interagency Mob Guide, herein referred as NW Mob guide Interagency Standards for Fire, Fire Aviation Operations (aka "Redbook"), and the Bureau of Indian Affairs Wildland Fire and Aviation Program Management and Operations Guide (aka "Bluebook") with the understanding that each Team may need to adapt procedures to fit the circumstances of a specific assignment. The effective and efficient management of major emergency or critical incidents requires that a Team remain flexible, have freedom to apply sound judgment, and exercise creativity in action, planning and operations to achieve desired ends.

As a Guide, this document is intended to be used as one of many tools available to teams to effectively deal with circumstances and conditions of an incident.

This Guide does not replace any members home agency rules or policies. With each Team having members from several different agencies it is not possible to address every situation and how that rule or policy would apply. Each team member is responsible to notify their Team Supervisor if an order or assignment would be in conflict with an agency rule or policy, so that a workable solution can be found.

Objectives

- To balance the workload among the NW Area Teams, providing opportunities for all teams to be exercised on a regular basis.
- Build foundations for teams. The Guidelines are intended to become a framework for the teams to work within and may be augmented with each team's Standard Operating Procedures, etc.
- Improve successional planning across the NW geographic area, including a focus on the prioritization and management of trainees.
- Balance skill sets across the geographic area.
- Increase partnership involvement, participation and the addition of new team members from non-traditional sources.
- To create/increase broader geographic team influence through the diversification of teams. Over time each team will gain members, knowledge and expertise across sub-geographic areas increasing and strengthening local knowledge and relationships.
- Build and improve relationships between Agency Administrators and IMTs.
- Provide tools to IMTs (trainee pool, alternate list, etc.)
- The Teams will manage an incident in a manner that ensures the safety of all incident personnel and the general public, promotes fiscal responsibility, considers resource values and incorporate specific Agency Administrator direction.
- The Teams will support transitions with existing incident organization or a new incoming organization which promotes the success of meeting incident objectives. This is done in a professional manner which exhibits "command and control" to the agency and the public.

Expectations

Personal and Public Safety Comes First

All Team Members are responsible for safety on the incident, including:

- Personal safety
- Safety of others
- Correct and/or Report unsafe conditions or acts immediately

Being a Team that can minimize the incident impact on the host agency and local community

- Cooperate with host agency
- Identify and involve affected stakeholders
- Involve the community
- Support the economy of the local communities
- Provide timely and coordinated evacuation information to public
- Keep the community informed on incident progress

Practice and provide a safe and healthy environment by following the Firefighter Code of Conduct and Strategic Risk Assessment process to comply with:

- Standard Fire Orders
- Watch Out Situations

Be professional; respect the rights and opinions of others and practice mutual respect.

Achieving Team gratification through a quality and professional performance

What the Agency Administrator/Geographic Board can expect from the Teams

- Discussion on the feasibility of accomplishing objectives and the selected Course of Action with consideration of values at risk vs. firefighter exposure (i.e. Strategic Risk Assessment).
- Assistance in providing documentation of the information as stated in the Delegation of Authority or Task Order and in the case of federal wildland fire, a Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS) and Strategic Risk Assessment (if applicable).
- Operations are conducted in conformance with the Delegation of Authority or Task Order, Agency Administrator Letter of Intent, the WFDSS and any additional written direction issued by the Agency Administrator/Line Officer (AA/LO) within the established standards and guidelines of the hosting agency.
- Professional conduct from individuals assigned to the incident, especially from Team members.
- Daily Meetings with the IC, if needed. Frequent information transfers from the Team to those individuals the AA/LO has designated.
- A facilitated daily cooperator meeting, as needed.
- An understanding of the local socio-economic and political concerns of the AA/LO
- A complete and comprehensive financial and property accountability package. Provide a document box that follows the national template.
- Documentation of the decisions made by the Team, including a final fire package.

- Efficient use of resources assigned to the incident with emphasis on safety and cost containment.
- Attention to Human Resource issues, with an intolerance of discriminatory or demeaning actions.
- The team will lead and facilitate an incident closeout.
Attention to Safety as a primary concern.
- ADs selected for Command and General Staff positions in the absence of an agency employee, must be paired with an agency trainee. .

What the Teams can expect from the Agency Administrator/Line Officer

- The IC should have adequate access to the AA/LO for clarification of objectives and other associated items.
- The Team should be given a comprehensive briefing on the situation and clear objectives, prior to assumption of command, by the AA/LO. A delegation of authority, WFDSS/Strategic Risk Assessment (if applicable), maps and any special instructions should be available at that briefing.
- A representative should be available to the Team to make decisions if the AA/LO is not readily available.
- Local subordinates should understand AA/LO objectives and be supportive of such.
- Protocols for ordering CISM and associated roles and responsibilities.
- The AA/LO should express, either to the team or IC, any reservations or concerns about prior experiences so the Team has the ability to deal with them openly.
- The Team should receive ongoing direct feedback on performance, or questions about performance, from the AA/LO to the IC, or from subordinates to Team members. Recommend following the Red Book/Blue Book standard.
- The Team should be allowed to function within the parameters established in the Delegation of Authority. Changes in directions should occur with changes in the delegations or task order to insure timely implementation.
- The Team should clearly understand local concerns and key contacts, protocol regarding the release of information and primary contacts for emergencies. The Team Information Unit needs prompt admin access to Inciweb from the public affairs contact and a supply of local unit maps.
- AA/LO should provide the team with a local resource advisor.
- An expectation that safety first is reflected in AA/LO direction.
- Provide a copy of the unit's Emergency Operations Plan.

Team Training

Each spring, the NW Interagency Incident Management Teams will meet for a training session, as budget and agency priorities allow called - Team Training. Two of the teams on a rotational basis are responsible for organizing and coordinating the training. The Team Training will be developed in coordination with the NW Geographic Board.

The Incident Commanders will receive a Delegation of Authority from the Board providing specific directions and objective for the following year prior to fire season. One Incident Commander will be assigned to the Board to represent the Teams as part of their duties.

The assigned IC will report on a regular basis to the Board. An Agenda will be provided at the January Board meeting for review.

Team Policies

IC and Teams will develop policies consistent with the Northwest Interagency Incident Management Team Operations Guide. Individual Team Policies will be reviewed by the IC to ensure consistency.

Regulatory Compliance

Teams need to ensure that injuries and accidents are properly documented as per responsible agencies policy requirements, so that follow up investigation can be done by the appropriate jurisdiction(s).

Team Configurations

Reference the Current National Mobilization Guide Standards, Chapter 20 Overhead and Teams and the NW Mob guide.

In addition, team trainees are assigned to meet position needs as prioritized by the Board in consultation with the Incident Commander. A team may have more than six trainees, but numbers above six needs to be negotiated and agreed to by line officers or agency administrators.

Team Selection

There are four categories of Team members:

- Primary
- Alternate
- Trainees
- Mentees (420/520 mentees are managed by the PNW Training Program)

Selection Guidelines

These guidelines are used to select primary members, alternates and trainees:

- Active agency/cooperator personnel are selected before retired (AD) or Fire Department supplemental personnel.
- Candidates with potential and desire for advancement through the Type II Team organization to National Team positions; should be identified and given strong consideration for advancement in the selection process.
- Incident Commanders, including primary, deputies, alternates and trainees, are selected by the Board. Incident Commanders will be consulted concerning the selections of Deputies, and Trainees.
- The Board will review and approve team members. For vacant/unfilled positions on C & G the IC will notify the Board.
- NW Mob guide describes team configurations and temporary replacements for Primary C&G members.
- Approved alternate pool members and primary Team members from other NW teams may be used as primary C & G to fill vacancies without prior approval from the Board. Fill-ins to the C& G from outside the GA will require approval of the Board. See NW Mob Guide for additional requirements.
- The Board representative for each applicant's agency is responsible for ensuring that applicants from their agency are fully qualified to be considered for the position for which they applied. Interagency skill mixes need to be evident when each Interagency IMT roster is evaluated, this is especially important for the Operations Section.

Primary Team Members

Are fully qualified for the position assigned and are listed on the team roster. Primary team members are expected to be available for dispatch whenever their team is in the “up” position in the rotation schedule.

Primary Team Member Availability and Substitution

When a primary team member is unavailable for dispatch with his or her team, he/she is responsible to immediately contact his/her Section Chief or Incident Commander.

When a standing team member is unavailable for dispatch with his or her team , he/she is responsible to immediately contact his/her Section Chief or Incident Commander, the home dispatch office.,

The Section Chief I IC may select a replacement from the Alternate Pool. Alternate members should be provided opportunity to accept an assignment before other qualified people are contacted. The IC is responsible for notifying their host dispatch center of the changes.

Alternate Members

The alternate members are fully qualified for the positions listed, and are available to substitute for, or supplement, primary team members on active rosters. A list of Alternates will be provided prior to the start of the season. The Alternate list will be the primary source of replacements Pre-Mobilization.

Trainee Pool Members

Two lists of Trainees will be maintained, Priority Trainees and those identified by each Team.

The Board may choose to prioritize positions/people in the Trainee Pool for assignment. The first opportunity for training assignments is given to the person assigned top priority for a given position. The Board will work with the Redmond Training Center and Washington DNR Olympia dispatch to manage the Priority Trainee Pool. Trainees prioritized to meet IFPM requirements are responsible for notifying the Redmond Training Center and/or Olympia Dispatch and Incident Commander of changes in their qualifications and availability. Trainees assigned to a teams should complete their task book as soon as practical and be recommended for certification when appropriate. Once certified, the trainee is to be moved to the Alternate list and the next trainee for that position should be given the opportunity to work on their taskbook. The intent is to qualify as many personnel as possible each season by affording opportunities to more trainees.

Apprentices / Non-Qualified Individuals

The Board encourages the use of apprentices. This type of assignment is intended to help sustain adequate numbers of qualified individuals over time; as such, they are intended to compliment formal trainee assignments. Apprentices differ from trainees in that they have an interest in IMTs but lack the experience or prerequisite training necessary to be issued a Position Task Book for a specific ICS position.

The objective of an apprentice assignment is accelerated career development of the individual and eventual qualification for assignment to IMTs. They can contribute to the task at hand by providing some additional help to the incident, but are not to be relied upon to meet incident objectives.

Implementation of Apprentice use:

- Teams will report to the Board annually on the progress of assigned Apprentices
- Will be included as one of the 50 approved IMT positions unless otherwise negotiated

Performance or Conduct Issues

The Incident Commander for each team has the right to replace team members at any time for poor performance, unavailability, or unacceptable behavior. Such decisions shall be documented in writing and sent to the Geographic Board member representing the employing agency of the replaced team member.

Team Performance Reviews

Prior to each fire season the Board and each Incident Commander will sign a document that establishes mutual performance expectations. A representative of the Board will endeavor to attend each team in-brief and or close-out to hear first-hand about issues and concerns. The Board will provide feedback to each Incident Commander at the end of the season about his or her performance as an Incident Commander. Performance reviews are signed by both parties and a copy is sent to the Chair of the Board.

Team Mobilization

Reference the NW Mob Guide: Chapter 20 Overhead and Teams

Team Rotation

Reference the NW Mob Guide: Chapter 20 Overhead and Teams