

# CALIFORNIA WILDLAND FIRE COORDINATING GROUP



To: Incident Commanders  
California Federal Interagency Incident Management Teams

From: Dave Teter, Chair  
California Wildland Fire Coordinating Group

Date: April 18, 2017

Subject: Incident Commander Expectations for the 2017 Fire Season

Thank you for your continued commitment to California Interagency Incident Management Teams. In an effort to maintain the highest standards of professionalism and leadership, the California Wildland Fire Coordinating Group (CWCG) has outlined principles by which all Incident Commanders (ICs) are expected to adhere. These are described in the 2017 CA Mobilization Guide, Appendix A, "*California Federal Incident Management Team Operating Guidelines*" at: [http://gacc.nifc.gov/oncc/mob\\_guide/index.html](http://gacc.nifc.gov/oncc/mob_guide/index.html)

The mission of the Type 1 and Type 2 California Interagency Incident Management Teams (IMTs) is to provide Agency Administrators (AAs) and land management agencies with highly qualified personnel to respond to emergency incidents within California and across the nation. It is the expectation of CWCG that ICs will demonstrate professionalism at all times and be personally committed to assuring the highest level of performance from their Team and its individual members.

The sustainability of CA IMTs continues to be a concern, as we experience shortages of available full time Federal and Local Government personnel to fill critical command and general staff positions. The lack of Type 1 trainees is also a challenge and threatens our ability to roster the full complement of IMT configurations. CWCG and AAs expectations include utilization of the Federal Priority Trainee List to provide opportunities, particularly on Type 1 incidents, for completion of positions task books.

When a decision is made to engage in any fire management activity, employees are exposed to significant hazards. We ask that IMTs utilize a risk management process to continually weigh/evaluate the values at risk against the safety and exposure of fire personnel and the public, the cost of implementation, and the availability of resources.

To be successful as ICs, it is important to make time to establish positive working relationships with the AAs you support. We expect this relationship to include establishing clear expectations that describe incident objectives, desired outcomes and a process for evaluation. ICs should also develop an understanding with AAs regarding how coordination and communications with affected stakeholders will be completed.

ICs need to be mindful of the internal costs of IMT members and incident related support costs, including personnel time. AAs may require documentation of cost savings measures. It is the expectation of CWCG that IMTs will document expenditures appropriately in support of any resulting cost share or cost apportionment measures.

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Before departing the incident, ICs will obtain an evaluation from the local unit. This evaluation needs to be forwarded to the FS North or South Ops Assistant Director for Operations within two weeks of demobilization. That Assistant Director for Operations will then forward the evaluation to the CWCG Operations Committee Chair. CWCG has provided a standard template for team evaluations for 2017 (attached). IC's may need to remind AAs of the updated evaluation template upon receiving their delegation of authority.

Continue to reference the California Cooperative Fire Management and Stafford Act Response Agreement (CFMA) 2013-2018 which includes important items relative to the payment for structure defense as well as templates for cost share. Reference: <http://gacc.nifc.gov/oscc/cwcg/index.html>

CWCG will be directly involved with the IMTs during the 2017 fire season, so you should anticipate members of CWCG to make visits to your incidents. While individual agency visits are normal, Agency Fire Leadership may also be representing CWCG.

There are a number of national initiatives you and your team should be aware of: <http://www.nifc.gov/nicc/administrative/nmac/index.html>, including the USDA FS Chief's Letter – 2017 Fire Season (attached). Please be familiar with these helpful references as we proceed into this fire season.

Lastly, CWCG wants to emphasize that the safety of all first responders and the public has always been, and always will be, our main priority on every wildfire.

Again, we would like to thank you for your continued commitment and long standing dedication to incident management. We look forward to working with you to meet our shared goals and expectations.

Sincerely,

**Dave Teter**, CWCG Chair

Deputy Director  
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