

CALIFORNIA WILDLAND FIRE COORDINATING GROUP



May 1, 2015

To: CWCG Federal and State Agency Administrators

Subject: 2015 California Incident Management

As we embark on the 2015 wildland fire season, the California Wildland Fire Coordinating Group (CWCG) would like to update you on a several items.

Attached are the Coordinating Group's expectations of California Incident Commanders (ICs) for 2015. Please be aware the Coordinating Group has emphasized the importance of the Incident Commanders to make contact with you or your representative upon an Incident Management Team (IMT) order to clarify team size, number of trainees, any special needs, and your expectations. It is CWCG's expectation that to be successful as Agency Administrators you need to make time to establish a working relationship with the Incident Commander on your incident. We expect this relationship to include establishing joint incident expectations and as well as how the IMT and host agency will handle communications and coordination with affected stakeholders.

The 2015 California Mobilization Guide is available to further clarify the current California IMT configuration and operating procedures. http://gacc.nifc.gov/oncc/mob_guide/index.html

The California Incident Management Team Operating Guide contains the old CA IMT Evaluation Form. The new form is attached and will be available electronically from the CWCG web page: http://gacc.nifc.gov/oscc/cwcg/standing_committees/ops/index.html. The IMT evaluation has been modified to increase your ability to document in more detail your final evaluation and includes additional evaluation factors such as cost management. We request that you use this version to evaluate all teams your unit may host, including Buying Teams, Administrative Payment Teams and Incident Management Teams.

2015 IMT composition – In California there are 11 IMTs (4 Type I, 7 Type 2). CAL FIRE retains 6 Type I IMTs they manage exclusively for command and control. CWCG continues to see issues with succession resulting in shortages of Federal Agency Incident Commanders and Command and General Staff positions with very few in the pipeline. We continue to see challenges maintaining 11 IMTs in the geographic area for the future.

The 2014 IMT composition was 55% local government, 44% Federal and 5% AD/supplemental. The 2015 composition is 49% Federal, 35% local government, 11% supplemental and 5% AD. While this continues to be a national issue we encourage you to promote federal employees involvement, whether qualified or trainees, on incident management teams to ensure adequate qualified teams into the future. NWCG continues to move forward with Evolving Incident Management (EIM) under the direction of its member agencies. You can follow implementation from the following web site. <http://www.nwcg.gov/imosp/index.htm>

There are a number of national initiatives you should be aware of and some are found at this link: <http://www.nifc.gov/nicc/administrative/nmac/index.html>. You should become familiar with

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these topics, National Fire Season Themes, Area Command Team configuration, Proficiency with Short-Haul Exclusive Use crews, Unmanned Aircraft Systems, USDA FS Chief's Letter – 2015 Fire Season and new direction in DOI sage grouse habitat areas.

The California Incident Commanders, supported by the CWCG Operations Committee, sponsored the 2015 CA Incident Management Team Workshop held at the Wildland Fire Training and Conference Center on April 22-23. We thank you for supporting attendance of team members that are part of your organization. The State and Federal Incident Commanders met May 1 to discuss Unified Command and review past successes and identified areas for improvement. We encourage continued dialogue amongst state and federal cooperators at local and regional level as we expect an increase in Unified Command incidents this season.

Attached is the CWCG IMT performance rating form. CWCG requires the IMT performance rating be completed prior to the team demobilization, with a copy forwarded to the appropriate GACC, for South Ops to Randy Skelton and for North Ops to Paige Boyer. They will review and forward the form to the CWCG Ops Chair (currently Paige Boyer).

CWCG member fire agencies utilize three main agreements: California Master Cooperative Fire Management and Stafford Act Agreement (CFMA), California Fire Assistance Agreement (CFAA), and local cooperative fire agreements.

CWCG annually reviews the California Master Cooperative Fire Management and Stafford Act Response Agreement - 2013-2018 and the exhibits. The purpose of the CFMA is to document the commitment of agencies to improve efficiency by facilitating the coordination and exchange of personnel, equipment, supplies, services and funds among the agencies to the agreement. The agreement is posted at the following web site: <http://gacc.nifc.gov/oscc/cwgc/cfma/>.

Signatory agencies have completed the 2015-2020 version of the California Fire Assistance Agreement which includes many updates for billing rates and process. The CFAA is used when federal fire agencies and CAL FIRE need additional resources for large incidents. The agreement is used to request assistance from and reimburse California Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid System Agencies, it is not a reciprocal agreement, nor is it an authority for cost sharing activities. This agreement provides rates, formulas and methodologies for standardized reimbursement for overhead personnel and emergency apparatus and allows local government to local government request and reimbursement: <http://www.caloes.ca.gov/cal-oes-divisions/fire-rescue/reimbursement>. The following bullets are just a snapshot of the topic areas where significant changes have been made in the new agreement.

- 12 Hour Free Period Exception for designated agencies.
- The requirement for a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)/Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)/Governing Body Resolution (GBR) or equivalent for portal to portal reimbursement for personnel and emergency apparatus.
- The new agreement has established a number of reimbursement formulas for local agencies invoicing.

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- The new agreement clarifies reimbursement processes for different types of responders referred to as suppression and non-suppression personnel.

There is a need for clarification on the role of the IMT Human Resource Specialist (HRSP). The HRSP is responsible for: a) monitoring for inappropriate behaviors, b) providing awareness/education on expectations for mutual respect and a harassment free work environment, c) initiating corrective action to resolve and/or prevent problems, and d) preparing reports on activities related to human resources. The Human Resource Specialist will address inappropriate practices or conditions through the Incident Commander and/or other regular lines of authority. Matters that cannot be resolved during the incident will be relayed to the host incident unit for further action.

Human Resource Specialist assigned to the IMT is not utilized as the point of contact or for coordination of Critical Incident Stress Management activities. The Incident Commander is responsible for making the request through the Agency Administrator when CISM support is required. The request for CISM should be made through the GACC Duty Chief or Assistant Director. The information will be routed to a CISM coordinator. The CISM coordinator revolves through different people throughout the year. Once contact is confirmed, the CISM coordinator will contact the designated person on the Forest/Unit.

Finally, the safety of our Firefighters is our number one priority each year. It is imperative that supervisors, leaders and Incident Management Teams are providing oversight, supervision and leadership to individuals working on your units. Please ensure that duties and assignments given are understood, roles and responsibilities are defined, and employees are acting within the scope of their duty in a responsible manner.

If you have questions or concerns please contact your Agency Representative on the California Wildland Fire Coordinating Group.

Sincerely,

Paul Bannister, Chair
California Wildland Fire Coordinating Group

cc: CA Incident Commanders

Attachment 1 – CA Incident Commander Expectations for 2015

Attachment 2 – CWCG Committee Updates

Attachment 3 – CWCG IMT Performance Standards

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To: California Interagency Incident Commanders

April 20, 2015

From: California Wildland Fire Coordinating Group

Subject: Incident Commander Expectations for 2015

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 (IC) sanctioned by the CWCG are expected to adhere. These are described in the 2014 CA Mobilization Guide Appendix A, California Federal Incident Management Team Operating Guidelines at:

http://gacc.nifc.gov/oncc/mob_guide/index.html

The mission of the Type 1 and Type 2 California Interagency Incident Management Teams is to provide Agency Administrators (AAs) a pool of organized, highly skilled and qualified personnel to respond to emergency incidents within California and across the nation. ICs must demonstrate professionalism at all times, on incidents, in-between incidents, and at meetings where they are representing the California Agencies. Individual ICs must be personally committed to and responsible for their team's performance.

The current composition of CA IMTs continues to be a concern as we continue to see shortages of Federal Agency Incident Commanders and Command and General Staff positions with few Type I trainees in the pipeline. CWCG and Agency Administrators expectations include utilization of the Geographic Area priority trainee list to provide opportunities, particularly on Type I incidents for completion of type I positions task books. While implementation of Evolving Incident Management (EIM) is expected to take several years, we may call your IMTs to volunteer to pilot and host any necessary projects or training to support continuity of CA IMTs into the future.

When a decision is made to engage in any fire management activity, employees are exposed to hazards. IMTs will 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 diminished number of available resources. Appropriate hazard assessment and risk mitigation is a critical step before undertaking any wildland fire action.

To be successful as Incident Commanders, it is important to make time to establish positive working relationships with the Agency Administrators you support. We expect this relationship to include establishing clear expectations that describe how the IMT and AA will be successful in coordination and communications with affected stakeholders.

Incident Commanders need to be mindful of the internal costs of IMT members and incident related support costs including personnel time. Specifically, shift lengths need to reflect the operational and environmental complexities that affect incident objectives. Agency administrators may require documentation of cost savings measures.

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 Directors for Operations will then forward the evaluation to the CWCG

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Operations Committee Chair. CWCG has updated a standard template for team evaluations (attached). IC's may need to remind AAs of the updated standard 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 is making an effort to become more involved with the IMTs so you can expect members of CWCG to make visits to your incidents throughout the summer. 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 – 2015 Fire Season. Please get familiar with these helpful references as we proceed into this fire season.

Lastly, regardless of what changes we face in fire, we want to emphasize that safety of firefighters 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,

/s/ Paul Bannister

Paul Bannister
CWCG Vice Chair

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Attachment 2 CWCG Committee Update

California Wildland Fire Coordinating Group – CWCG Chair Paul Bannister, BLM

- Completed the new 2015 -2020 California Fire Assistance by Hire Agreement (CFAA).
- Sponsored CA Incident Management Team Meetings April 2015.
- Updating annual Direct Protection Areas (DPA) in California.
- Representation on Evolving Incident Management (EIM) work groups and Geographic Area Coordination and Advisory Council.
- Coordinates with National Multi Agency Coordination Group (NMAC)
- Agency members serves as Agency Representative to California Multi-Agency Coordination Group (CALMAC) when/if activated at Preparedness Level 5.

CWCG Operations Group - Liaison Paul Bannister, BLM

- Implements Incident Management Team (IMT) and Incident Commander (IC) application and selection process.
- Works with Training Working Team and IMTs on succession planning for Command and General Staff positions. Prioritizes CA S520 nominees with the TWT.
- Ongoing oversight of CA IMT through implementation of IMT Operating Guide. Revised the California IMT performance evaluations.
- Facilitated post-season after action review with Incident Commanders, identifies issues for improvement, whether local, regional, or national.
- Review and update of 2015 CA Mobilization Guide.
- Team roster statistics indicate 49% federal and 51% non-federal team composition. The current year rosters show the greatest shortages in Type I Federal Agency Incident Commanders, Safety Officers, Logistics, Finance and Air Operations.
- Facilitated the annual IMT electronic nominations and selection meeting.
- Facilitated the annual IMT workshop and training.

CWCG Wildland Fire Safety Officers Committee – Liaison Matt Johnson, NPS

- Coordinates annual CWCG Interagency Safety & Risk Management Workshop.
- Working with CA IMTs to implement use of new medical ICS 206wf
- Evaluates new templates to update CA Standardized Emergency Response Plans for IMTs
- Issuing pre-season and in season safety alerts as needed.

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CWCG CA Interagency Incident Business Advisors (CIIFA) – Liaison Jessica Wade FWS

- Implements annual updates and training on Cost Share, Cost Apportionment.
- Develops and updates CA Fire Bill Operating Plan.
- Meets regularly to settle cost share agreements.
- Reviews/updates the cost apportionment values.

CWCG Training Working Team (TWT) – Liaison TBD USFS

- Implementation of the CA priority trainee list for IFPM with GATRS & GACCs
- Continued planning & implementation for “Academy” course delivery – example, Plans Academy 2015, Logistics Academy 2016, Fuels Academy 2015.
- Prioritizing annual training calendar of courses based on needs of agencies vs wants of students due to declining budgets.
- Host annual training officers and training allocation meeting.
- Prioritize S 520 Advanced Incident Management Candidates with Operations Committee

CWCG Interagency Fire Prevention, Communication Education Committee – Liaison Dave Teter, CAL FIRE

- Developed on line version of the revised Interagency Camp Fire Permit.
- Developing Interagency Training in April, 2015.
- Develops unified messages - One Less Spark and Ready Set Go.
- Assessing CFMA items related to Exhibit I Law Enforcement & Fire Prevention Activities.
- Coordination with CA Fire Safe Council.

Attachment B – CWCG INTERAGENCY TEAM EVALUATION

Team IC		Incident Type	
Incident Name		Incident Number	
Assignment Dates		Total Acres	
Host Agency		Evaluation Date	
Administrative Unit		Sub-Unit	

1.	Objectives and Environmental Resources: How well did the IMT accomplish strategic direction, the objectives and meet resource concerns? Did the Team meet the Delegation of Authority and address items from Agency Administrator Briefings? Did the IMT engage with the WFDSS components as requested/required? Other?
Best Practices: Lessons Learned:	
2.	Finance: How well did the IMT manage the cost of the incident? Did the IMT follow incident business guidelines? Were follow-up issues identified and documented for the Agency Administrator, i.e. invoices, OWCP and vendor issues? Was a complete documentation package left for the unit? Other?
Best Practices: Lessons Learned:	
3.	Political and Social: How well did the IMT deal with sensitive political and social concerns? Was public information timely and accurate? Did the IMT develop partnerships with local cooperators? Other?
Best Practices: Lessons Learned:	
4.	IMT Dynamics: Did the IC provide the leadership required? Was the IMT professional? Did they transition in and/or out effectively and efficiently per Agency Administrator direction? Was the IMT sensitive to local needs? Other?
Best Practices: Lessons Learned:	

5.	Risk Management: Were safety measures appropriate and adequate? Were notifications made properly? Were follow up actions completed? Other?		
Best Practices:			
Lessons Learned:			
6.	Mobilization and Demob: Did the IMT manage resources timely and cost effectively? Did the IMT use local resources, trainees and closest available forces? Did they work well with unit and GACC counterparts? Other?		
Best Practices:			
Lessons Learned:			
Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency Administrators may provide additional feedback relating to the financial package to Incident Commanders and GACCs following the IMT close-out and upon receipt of the Use/Loss Report. Additional information can be provided as an attachment for feedback specific to your incident. All IMT's must leave the incident with a signed evaluation by both the Agency Administrator and the IC. 			
Agency Administrator or Agency Representative:			Date:
Incident Commander:			Date: