

# CALIFORNIA WILDLAND FIRE COORDINATING GROUP



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](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