

Cody Interagency Dispatch Center

2018 Year End Report



Devils Slide, Wind River/Bighorn Basin District BLM, SE of Worland, WY, 42 Acres

Photo by Zach Hartshorn, Rawlins Helitack

Cooperating Agencies In The Cody Dispatch Zone



Wind River/Bighorn Basin District - WBD

Shoshone National Forest - SHF

Bighorn National Forest - BHF

Wind River Agency - WRA

Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area - BIP

Wyoming State Forestry Division - CDS

Big Horn - BHX, Fremont - FRX, Hot Springs - HOX, Johnson - JOX, Park - PAX,
Sheridan - SHX, and Washakie – WAX Counties

https://gacc.nifc.gov/rmcc/dispatch_centers/r2cdc/

The Cody Interagency Dispatch Center experienced an above normal fire season for initial attack fires and acres burned within the zone. The year began with cold winter conditions bringing above average snow pack into the higher elevations of the Shoshone and Bighorn National Forests. Heading into the spring, and summer, this led to wetter than normal fuel conditions for both forests. However, the lower elevations of the dispatch zone received slightly below normal winter snow pack and minimal spring rains. Beginning early summer, the lack of moisture led to drier fuel conditions for the Wind River/Bighorn Basin District, Wind River Agency, Wyoming State Forestry Division, and county lands within the Cody Dispatch zone.

With an overabundance in fuel loading, and drier than normal conditions, the Wind River/Bighorn Basin District issued a Fuels Advisory for the Bighorn Basin effective mid-July through early September. By late October, the zone returned to typical seasonal weather patterns, and all Remote Automated Weather Stations were placed into freeze status by early November. The year rounded out with multiple agencies implementing broadcast and pile burning into late December.

The first wildfire of the year began March 12th, on the Wind River/Bighorn Basin District, for .6 acres. The final fire of 2018 started December 17th, on the Wind River Agency, for 1.5 acres. The total number of wildfires in the Cody Dispatch zone was 253, which was significantly higher than our five year average of 196 fires. The dispatch center reported 205 fires as human caused and 48 resulted from lightning starts. A total of 66,793.1 acres burned across the dispatch zone, with the Wind River/Bighorn Basin District owning a majority of those acres.

Cody Dispatch supported several type 3 extended attack fires within the zone. The Terek fire on Wind River/Bighorn Basin District lands grew 40,000 acres in one operational period. Due to excellent interagency partnerships, and utilizing a closest forces concept, the local units were able to keep the incident to a type 3 complexity. The prepositioning of Rocky Mountain Area aircraft assisted local units in catching the majority of fires during initial attack periods.

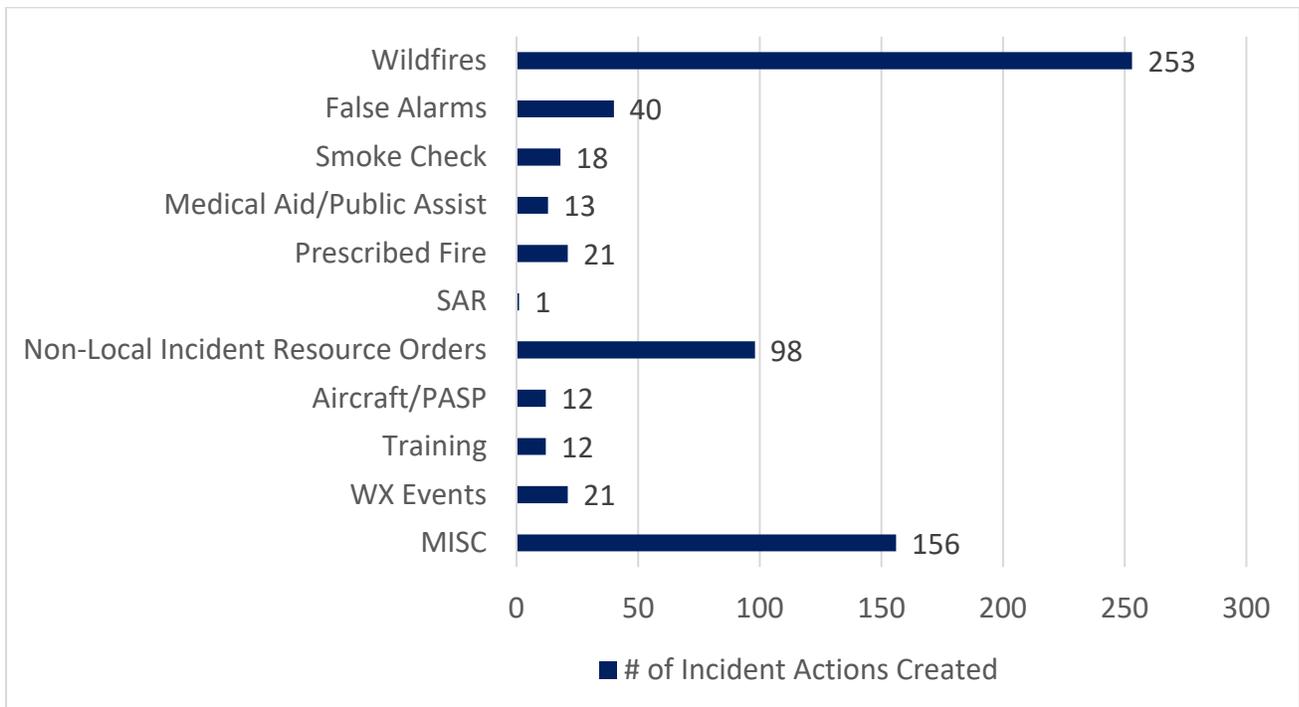
The Cody Interagency Dispatch Center began mobilizing resources in early March in support of fires in the southern half of the Rocky Mountain Area. The dispatch center mobilized equipment, crews, aircraft, overhead, and supplies totaling 1,690 resource orders filled in support of local and out of area fires. Agencies within the Cody Dispatch zone supported incidents in the

Rocky Mountain, Great Basin, Northern Rockies, Pacific Northwest, Southwest, Southern Area, North and South Operations California, and Alaska geographic areas.

In our fourth year of partnership with Team Rubicon, Cody Dispatch mobilized 155 overhead and 5 - T2 crews. In late summer, leadership at the BLM National Office changed and decisions were made to move the Team Rubicon mobilization efforts closer to Boise. By December 1st, Cody Dispatch no longer mobilized Team Rubicon personnel and all 864 overhead were transferred to the National Office in ROSS.

Incident Actions

Cody Dispatch created 645 Incident Actions to support wildfire management responses, prescribed fire support, medical aid, public assist, search and rescue, resource flight following, weather events, law enforcement, non-local incident resource orders, and miscellaneous training scenarios.



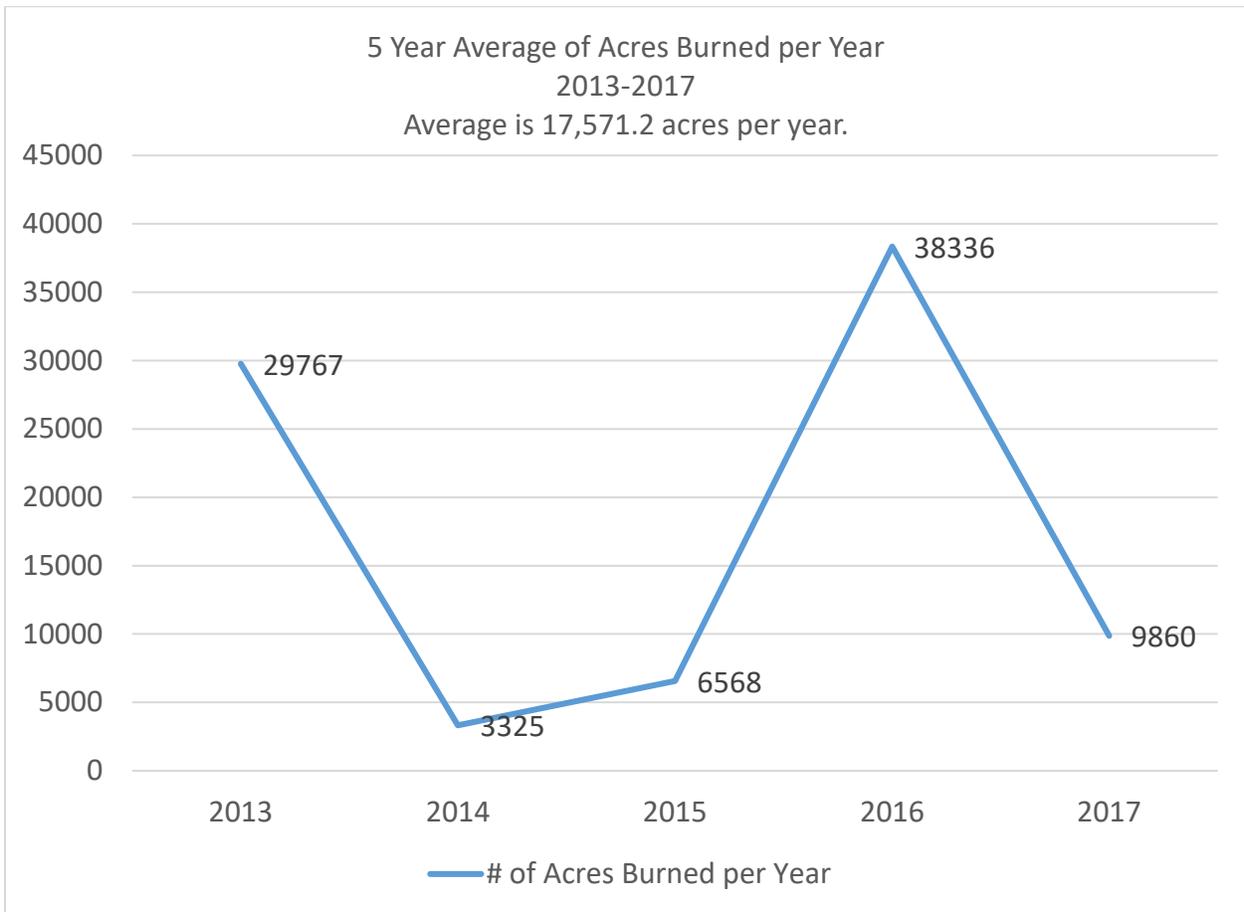
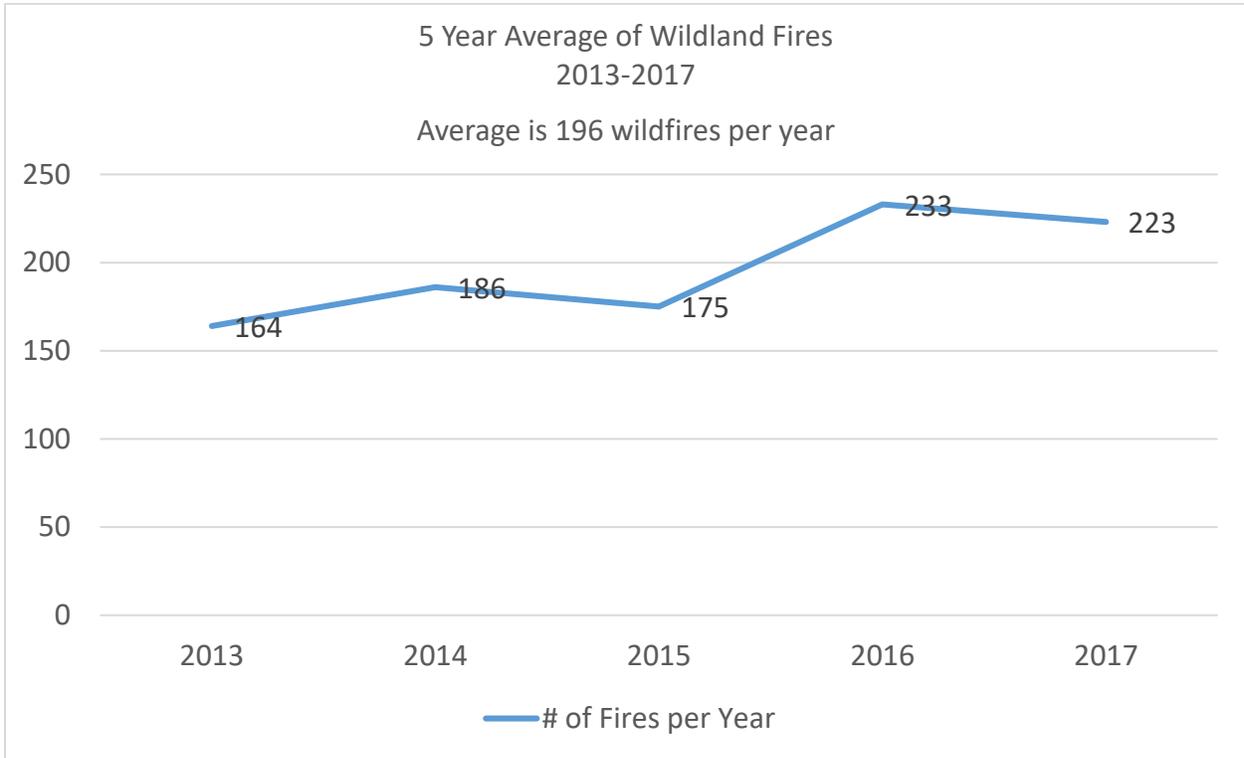
Fire Statistics

- 253 – Wildfires
- 66,793.1 – Acres Burned
- 645 – Incident Actions
- 1,690 – Resource Orders Filled
- 14 – Days Expanded Dispatch was Staffed
- 15 – Detailed Dispatchers
- 21 – Nights Staffed (24 hour service)
- 14 – Days Cody Dispatch was at PL3 (8/14-8/28/2018)

Agency Break Down

UNIT	HUMAN		LIGHTNING		TOTAL	
	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres
BHF Bighorn NF	7	.7	3	.5	10	1.2
BIP Bighorn Canyon National Rec. Area	0	0	2	.2	2	2
SHF Shoshone National Forest	10	1	3	.3	13	1.3
WBD Wind River/Bighorn Basin District	49	6,223.4	31	55,257.2	80	61,480.6
WRA Wind River Agency	94	697.6	5	391	99	1,088.6
WAAL WY Bureau of Reclamation	3	5.1	0	0	3	5.1
CDS Wyoming State Forestry Division	7	819.3	2	1,232.4	9	2,051.7
BHX Big Horn County	7	165	0	484	7	649
FRX Fremont County	8	237.8	0	0	8	237.8
HOX Hot Springs County	4	517.5	0	0	4	517.5
NAX Natrona County	1	4.8	0	0	1	4.8
PAX Park County	5	2.7	2	10.2	7	12.9
WAX Washakie County	10	13.4	0	729	10	742.4
TOTAL	205	8,688.3	48	58,104.8	253	66,793.1

5 Year Averages

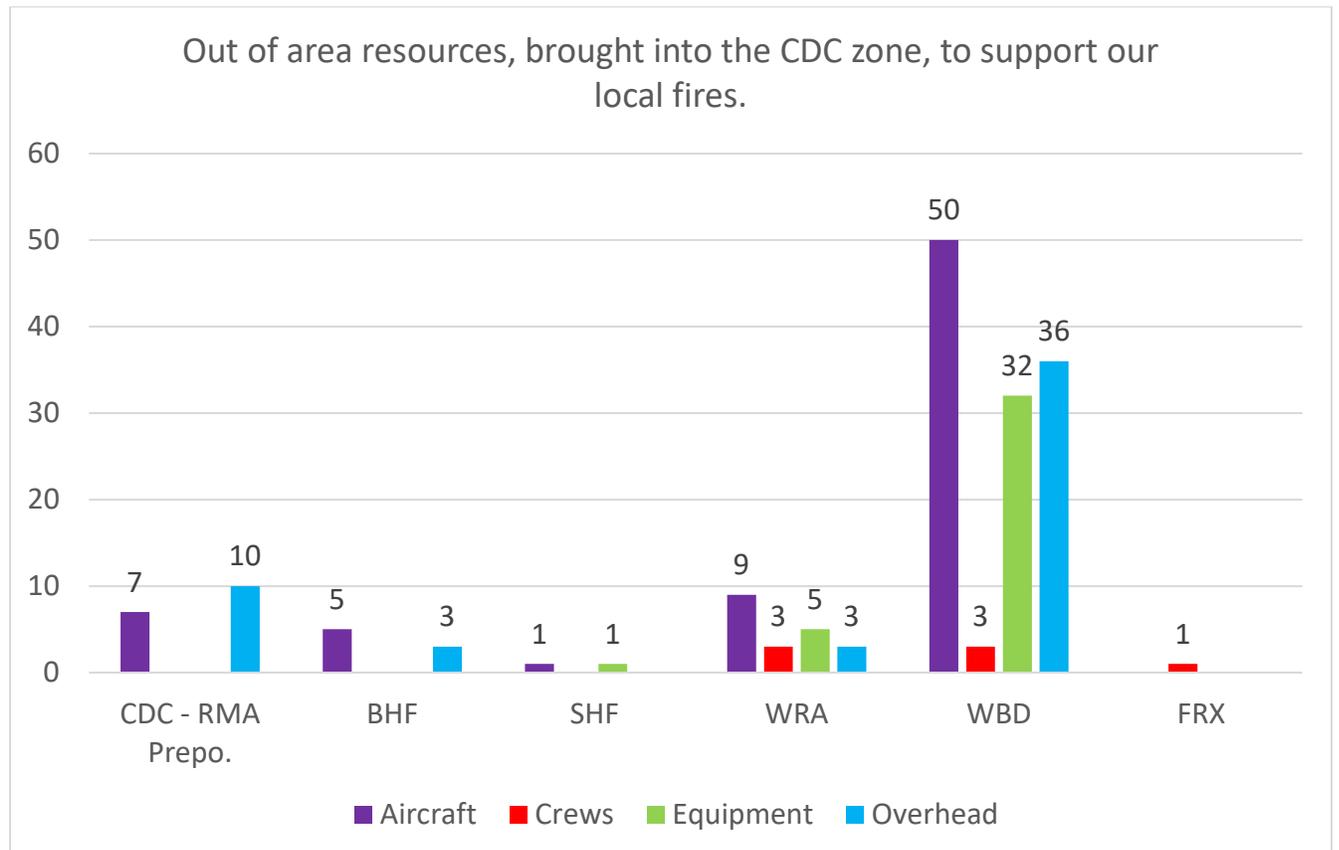


Large Fire Summary

Incident Name	Start Date	Cause	Final Acres	Unit	IC/IMT
Crowheart	April 16	H	641	FRX	Haslam ICT3
Weintz	June 14	L	1,995	WBD	Giles ICT4
Alkali Flats	July 2	H	437	CDS	Neighbors ICT4
Terek	July 8	L	42,267	WBD	Kidd ICT3
Ruby Ranch	July 10	L	390	WRA	Johnson ICT4
Potter Butte	July 26	L	2,449	WBD	Kocher ICT4
Zimmerman	July 28	L	3,857	WBD	Morefield ICT4
Rattlesnake	August 3	H	355	WBD	Kocher ICT4
Tater Ridge	August 3	H	348	WBD	Williamson ICT4
Powerline	August 12	L	1,794	WBD	Tucker ICT3
Cowboy	August 13	H	212	WBD	Godfrey ICT4
Denver Jake	August 13	L	7,140	WBD	Tucker ICT3
Black Mountain	September 13	H	2,105	WBD	Mountford ICT4

Resource Orders

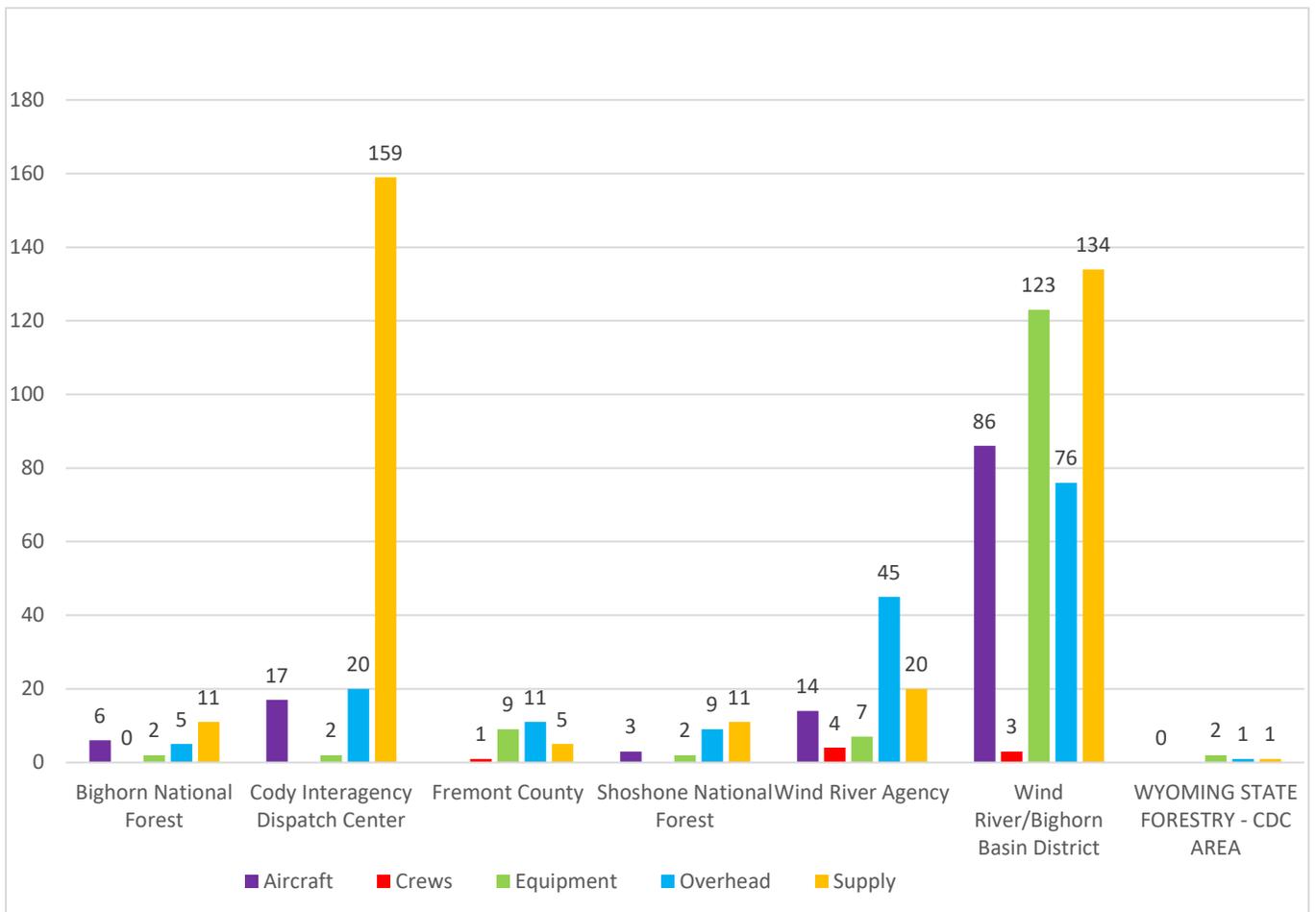
Incoming Resources by Provider



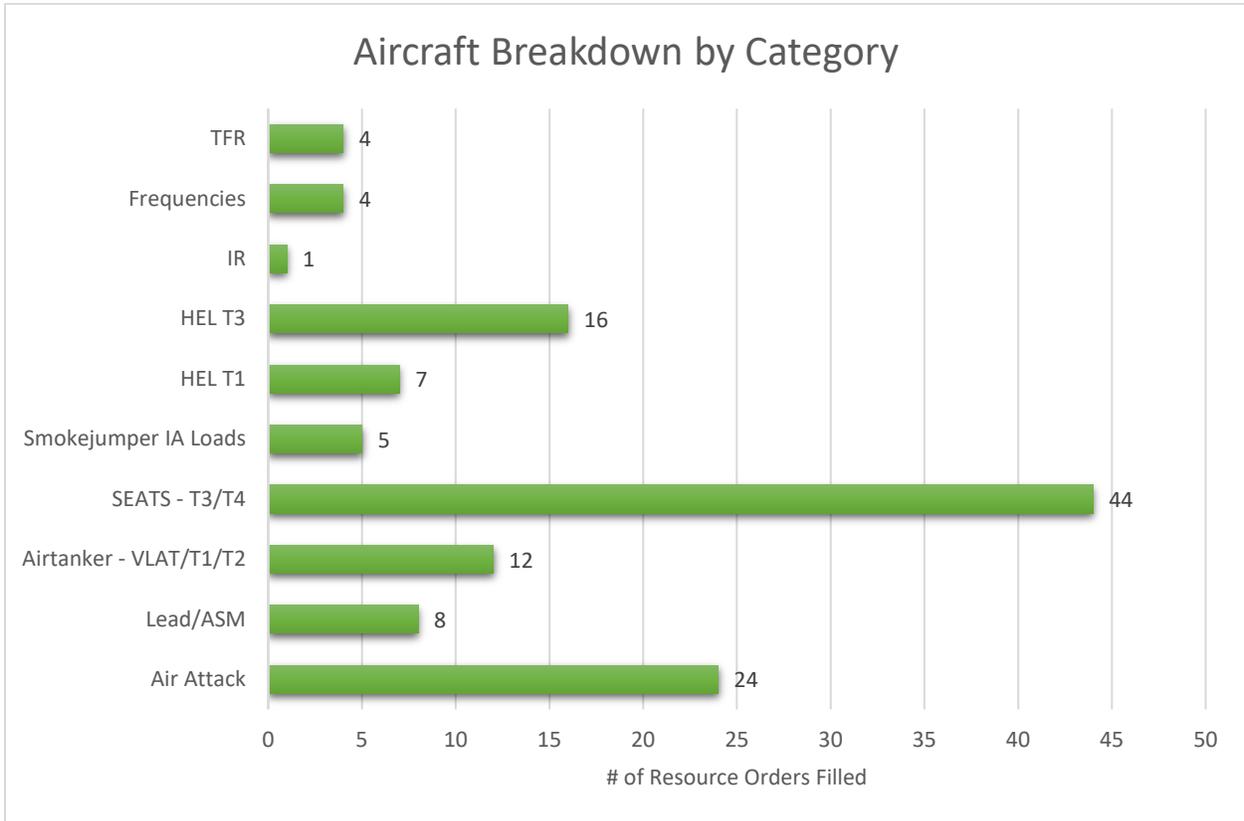
Total Internal Requests by Provider

Provider	Total Requests	Filled Internal	Cancelled	UTF
CDC (Team Rubicon & RMA Prepo)	218	206	1	10
BHF	47	40	7	0
FRX	37	37	0	0
SHF	34	32	2	0
WRA	176	164	7	1
WBD	735	666	58	12
CDS	14	10	2	2
TOTAL	1,261	1,155	77	25

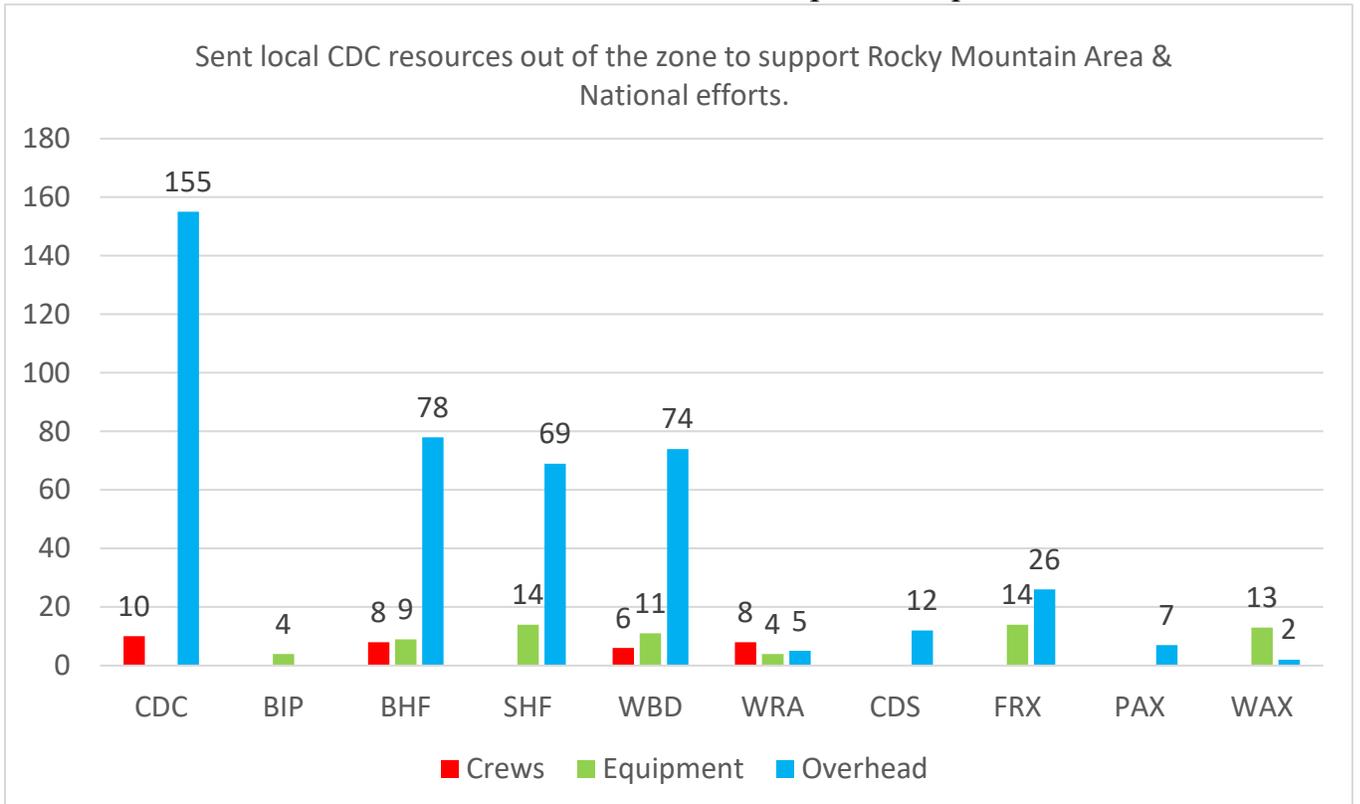
Breakdown of Filled Internal Requests by Provider



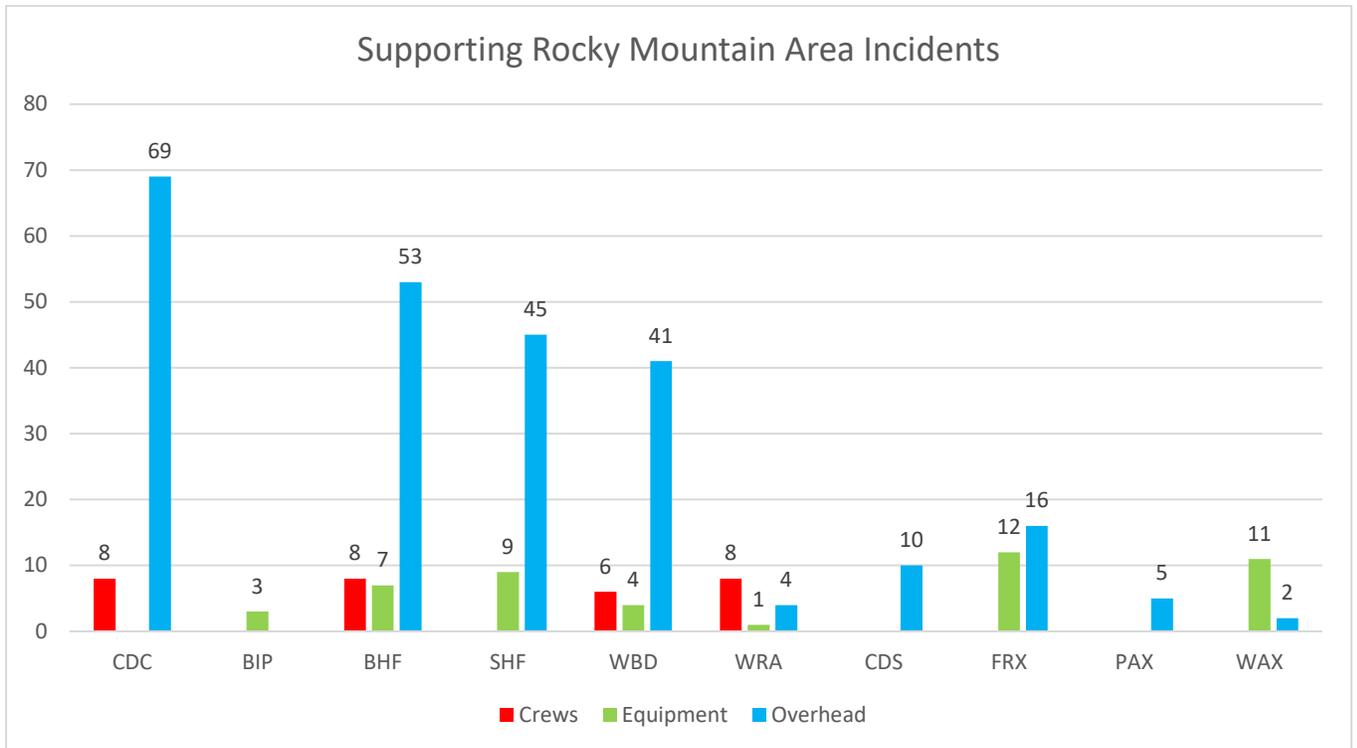
Aviation Incoming and Internal Filled Requests



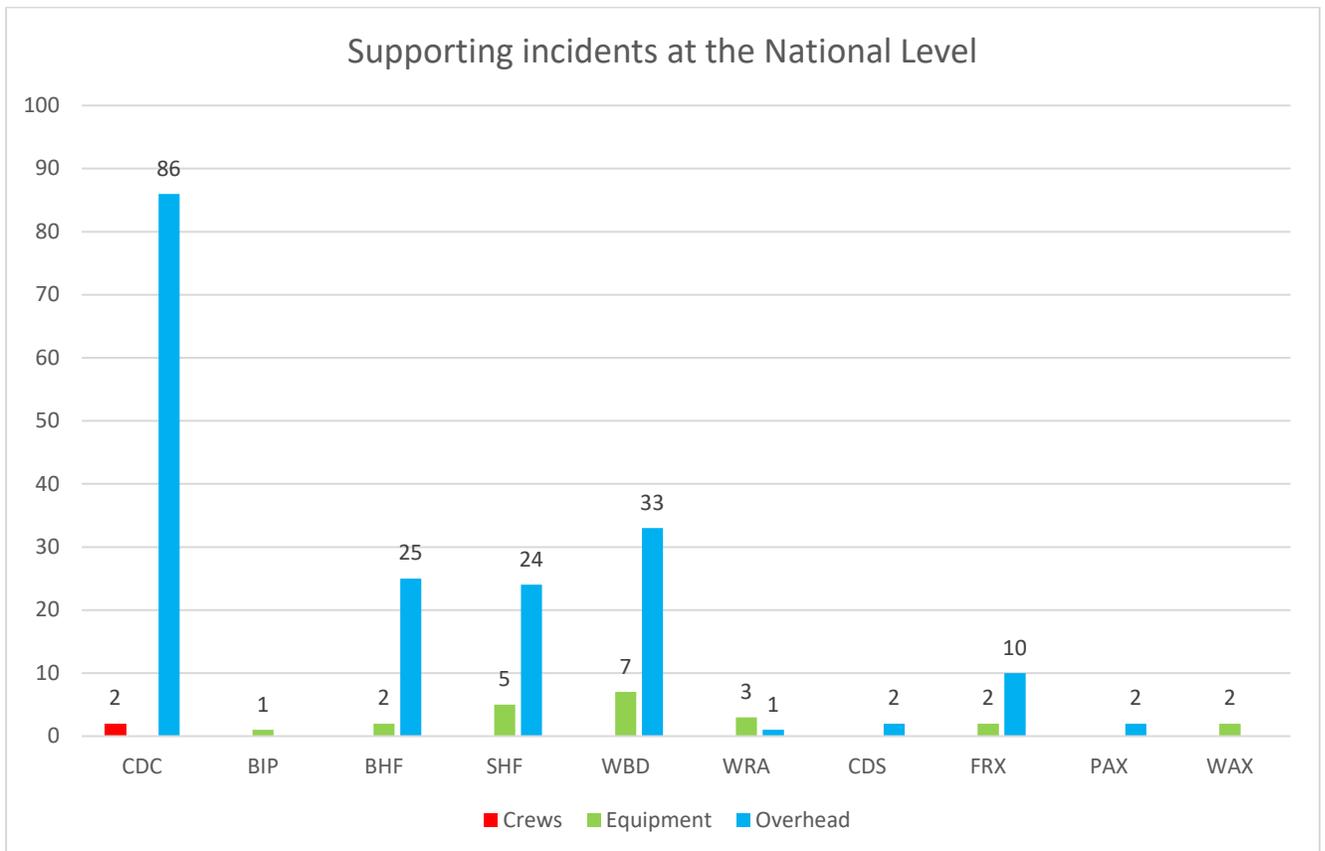
Total Non-Local/Out of Area Filled Dispatch Requests



Non-Local Filled Requests - RMA

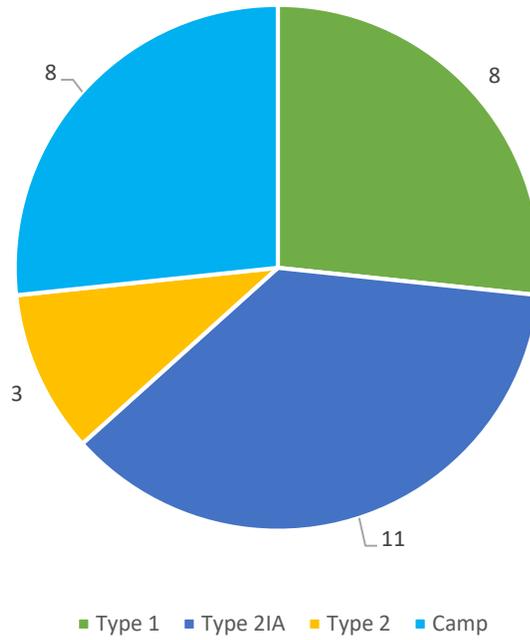


Non-Local Filled Requests – National



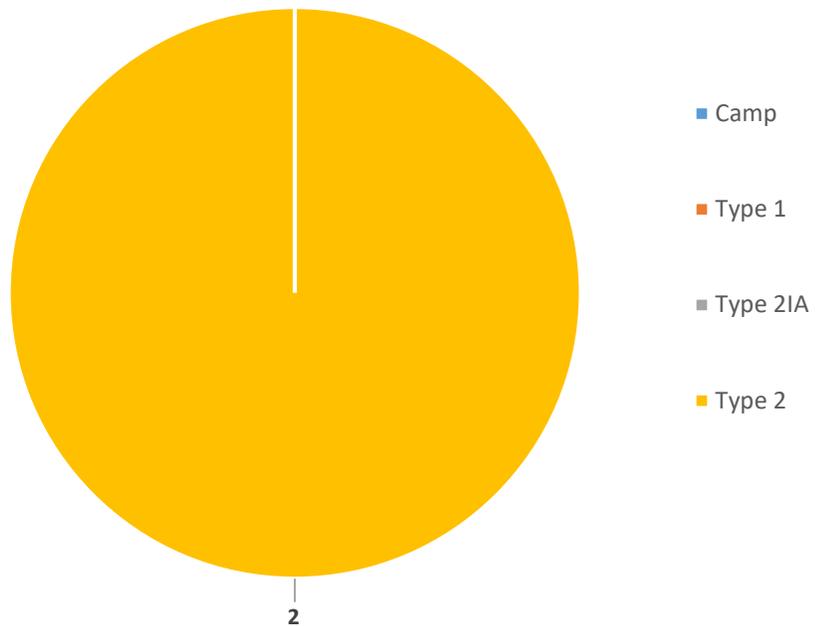
Rocky Mountain Area Crew Utilization

Crew support to Rocky Mountain Area Agencies

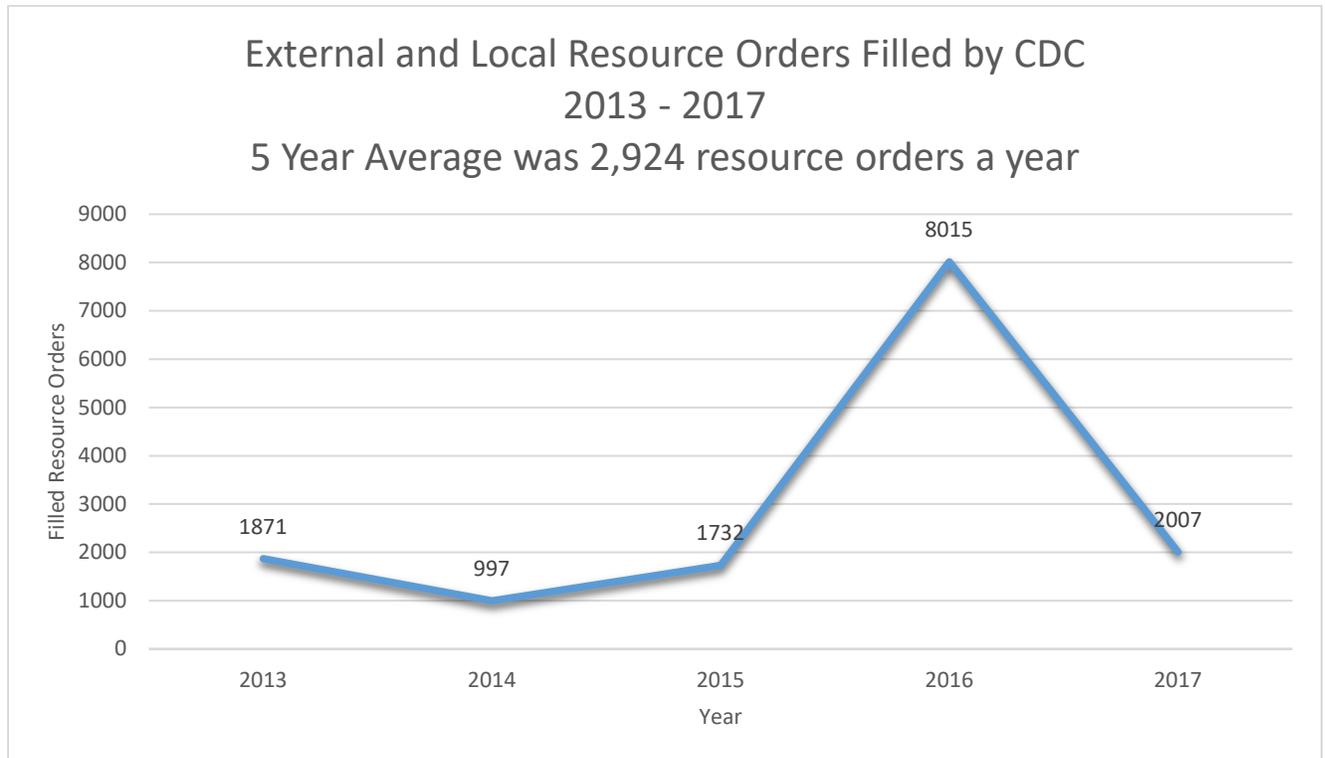


Crew - National Mobilization

Crews Mobilized to Support Out of the RMA



5 Year Average for Total Resource Orders filled by Cody Dispatch



In 2018, we filled 1,690 resource orders to support Local, Geographic Area, and National needs.

Challenges/Lessons Learned

- Dispatch Staffing Shortages
 - Although Cody Dispatch was fully staffed with 7 (based on organizational chart) this fire season, there continues to be a critical need for additional dispatch help. The Cody Dispatch workload continues to increase each year and the fire seasons run much longer. The current organizational chart staffing does not keep up with the growing frequency and complexities of the fires we're supporting on a regular basis. It is difficult to provide local 7 day coverage, have a work-life balance, and offer training opportunities for staff development when you may only have 2-3 people working in the center a day. If a dispatcher is able to take a fire assignment elsewhere, the remaining local staff have to cover their shifts. This causes more conflict in work-life balance, fatigue, and many times causes issues with work to rest guidelines.
 - During the fire season, Cody Dispatch may only have 2-3 dispatchers working a day to track 5 federal agencies resources/personnel, coordinate with seven county 911 dispatch centers/volunteer firefighters, make extreme weather event notifications, publish fire indices, monitor weather conditions, deal with medical emergencies, public assists, produce intel products such as 209's/Sit Report, provide logistical and tactical support to emerging and ongoing fires, process ROSS orders, make logistical travel for people responding to fires outside of the dispatch zone, deal with radio issues, process requests called in by phone, participate in many agency specific conference calls/meeting, coordinate with the

local steering committee, brief duty officers and FMO's on incident needs, assist the public on where to find fire information or who to talk to at the local level, etc. Often times, the dispatch staff is unable to take a 30 minute lunch break, or they eat at their console, due to the constant needs from the field and ongoing fires. With added positions into the dispatch center, this would alleviate some of the stress and burn out in the dispatch center.

- Continuing to find after hours help from local agencies and nearby militia is a struggle. Many militia have expressed they do not want to work overtime, nor staff all night at dispatch to answer the radio or phone in case there is an emergency. This forces us to place a regular dispatcher on night shift until we can order in help or the fire is contained. Again, we are then down a position during day shift when the majority of our fires start.
- Looking for help at the national level is difficult, as there are not a lot of qualified dispatchers in the system. Recruitment and retention continues to be an issue within the dispatch community. It's easy to say, "Order in more dispatch help," but more often than not, dispatch requests are unable to fill. You then have your local dispatchers work 14+ hours a day, for 13 days straight, with one day off the majority of the season. This leads again to burn out and retention issues.
- Inconsistency with the Rocky Mountain Area Preposition of resources led to confusion and questions about daily extensions, reassignments, and availability.
- C-Soft radios can be challenging to use. As agency network updates are pushed out, they can change established program settings, restart the computer, and require CIO assistance to make minor changes such as updating the clock.
- All resources brought into the Cody Dispatch zone need a bear briefing.
- Cody Dispatch operating costs continue to rise slightly each year. Some agencies are struggling to find the funds to pay for services the dispatch center provides.

Strengths

- Technology
 - Cody Dispatch implemented the use of Google Maps and texting out daily fire indices.
- 11 trainees worked on IADP, ACDP, and EDSD qualifications.
- Interagency coordination and cooperation has resulted in excellent partnerships across the dispatch zone.
- A 1039 seasonal position was filled by the BLM this fire season to assist with the increasing workload the dispatch center has been experiencing the last few years. The position was a great addition to the Organizational Chart and helped create a better work-life balance for the dispatch staff. However due to agency budget cuts in FY2019, this position will not be refilled for next fire season. The position will remain on the Organizational Chart, with the intent to fill someday in the future.

2019

- Leadership change will occur on January 1st, 2019, as the current Center Manager, Cathy Hutton, will be retiring. The position will be flown under the 0346 series and hosted by the BLM.
- Cody Dispatch continues to represent and support the dispatch community at the local, geographical, and national level with staff participating on the Rocky Mountain Coordinating Groups Dispatch and Training Committees. Additionally, staff is primary members on the National Coordination System Committee and Computer Automated Dispatch Committees under the National Wildfire Coordinating Group.