



Arizona State Forestry Division
Bureau of Indian Affairs: Southwest, Navajo, Western Regions
Bureau of Land Management: Arizona, New Mexico
National Park Service, Intermountain Region
New Mexico State Forestry Division
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 2
U. S. Forest Service



Date: March 14, 2016

To: Agency Line Officers and Fire Management Officers

From: Chair, Southwest Coordinating Group

Subject: Southwest Standard Air to Ground Frequency for Air MedEvacs on Wildland Fire Incidents

The lack of a standard Air to Ground frequency for Air Ambulances responding to medevac incidents on wildland fire incidents has resulted in a number of documented complications over the last several years in the wildland fire community. With several vendors providing air ambulance services in Arizona and New Mexico, and vendors having varying degrees of programming capabilities while in flight, the benefit of identifying a standard has become very evident.

During the winter of 2014/2015 frequency managers at the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) researched the feasibility of setting a national standard frequency for Air Ambulance/Air MedEvac for wildland fire. No single national solution was available. The direction from NIFC was for each state to pursue a solution at the local level. NIFC indicated the use of one of the National Interoperability Field Operations Guide (NIFOG) frequencies may be established for this purpose if coordinated with state cooperators (reference <http://www.dhs.gov/national-interoperability-field-operations-guide>).

Effective immediately, all wildland fire agencies in the Southwest Geographic Area have adopted VMED28 as the primary Air to Ground frequency when dealing with Air Ambulance/Air MedEvac operations under our operational control. VMED 29 will be utilized as a secondary frequency in rare occasions when VMED 28 is being utilized on an adjacent medical emergency. This will reduce the potential for conflict and increase the safety of ground resources as well as medical providers responding. We are requesting Air Ambulance providers who may respond to incidents in Arizona and New Mexico have these frequencies programmed into their radios if equipped with a VHF FM radio.

PRIMARY

“VMED28” = Rx 155.3400 MHz, Tx 155.3400 MHz with Tx CTCSS tone 156.7 Hz

SECONDARY

“VMED29” = Rx 155.3475 MHz, Tx 155.3475 MHz with Tx CTCSS tone 156.7 Hz

The selection of these frequencies was coordinated with the Arizona and New Mexico Offices of Homeland Security’s Statewide Interoperability Coordinator. The Office of Homeland Security has provided blanket authorization to the wildland fire agencies in Arizona and New Mexico for the use of these frequencies for this designated purpose. The designation of this standard does not prevent alternate or contingent frequencies from being established.

In the event there is a non-wildland fire medical emergency requiring air medevac and the incident is under operational control by one of the Southwest interagency dispatch centers VMED28 and VMED29 is authorized for use.



Loren W. DeRosear
Chair, Southwest Coordinating Group

3/14/16
Date