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1. INTRODUCTION and DECISION MAKING

The purpose for this guide, with a brief discussion on the process of decision making, avoidance of decision errors and guide to success.

1. Introduction and Decision Making

A. Purpose

The “Agency Administrator Guide for Wildland Fire Decision Making” has been developed for agency administrators for managing a large wildland fire incident in which a national or geographic area incident management team will be or is assigned. This guide is a compilation of tools and information that is intended to help the agency administrator through the wildland fire decision process. This guide is not intended to address the management of wildland fire use events.

There is no substitution for preparation to assure a successful outcome should one have the unfortunate opportunity to experience large wildland fire situation on the home unit. There are several sections within the guide to add local information such as fire management plans, key contact lists and forest plan direction. Another step is to pre-arrange with a neighboring agency administrator or Fire Management Officer to be the lead on preparing the Wildland Fire Situation Analysis. Both of these individuals on the home unit will already have their hands full.

Several decision gates have to be recognized and addressed in a timely and sequential manner in order to redeem the full range of responsibilities you hold when an unwanted wildland fire occurs on your unit. The following chart outlines the various decision gates through which the agency administrator will pass in recognizing an emerging large wildland fire incident and providing management and oversight of the objectives that have been set.

Agency Administrator Decision Gates in Wildland Fire Management

[1] Ensure safety in ongoing management at the local level: Be sure your initial attack forces are trained, equipped, and supervised for safe engagement on all fires.

[2] Recognition of emerging incident: Stay informed of initial attack activity on your unit, *monitor* severe fire weather and fire behavior conditions, *notice* Red Flag Warnings, *watch out* for extended attack, escaped fire, and serious incidents within the incident. Be sure that incidents in transition are being properly managed.

[3] Notify and assemble key people to assess, analyze, and make decisions: When it becomes obvious that you need to do something, do it, don't expect a deteriorating situation to fix itself. With an extended attack or escaped wildland fire, be sure the fire staff is kept informed. If you must begin the WFSA process, get the right people assembled fast.

[4] Inform and Involve, prepare for the media: Be sure the public affairs officer is aware of the emerging situation and provided with facts about the wildland fire and your plans to manage it. Take steps to make your employees aware of what is going on and how they may be involved. Inform media, key publics and government officials.

[5] Develop the Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA): Organize for development of the WFSA, assemble the information, documents, and intelligence you will need to complete the analysis, and identify a preferred alternative for managing the wildland fire.

[6] Complete an Incident Complexity Analysis: Identify the issues affecting this wildland fire and your strategy and objectives for it, and determine the kind of incident management organization you

need.

[7] Order the Incident Management Team (IMT): Based on your assessment of incident complexity and the objectives you have established for managing the wildland fire, order an appropriate IMT through your Zone Interagency Dispatch Center

[8] Prepare Agency Administrator's briefing: Work with your fire staff to prepare the Agency Administrator's briefing package for the incoming IMT. Set a time and location for this briefing and inform your Zone Interagency Dispatch Center.

[9] Prepare the Delegation of Authority: Set the specific objectives you expect the incident commander and the IMT to meet in managing the wildland fire.

[10] Assign and brief your Resource Advisor: Select a trusted individual to represent you as your resource advisor to the IMT. Ideally, involve this person in the decision-making processes and documentation identified above. Thoroughly brief your resource advisor of your expectations and their relationship to you and the team.

[11] Provide direction and support to the IMT: Once the IMT is assigned to the wildland fire, stay informed, available and involved in managing the incident.

[12] Plan for fire rehabilitation: Consider the need for burned area emergency rehabilitation (BAER) and fire suppression effects rehabilitation, and order/assign a BAER team as necessary.

[13] Transition back to local management: Monitor progress and evaluate conditions, and once the objectives set for the incident and the team have been met, return management of the incident to the home unit.

B. Decision Making

In high reliability organizations such as wildland fire suppression, the decision-making process can occur one of two ways; by rational decision making or by recognition primed decision making. You will probably use both during the course of a large wildland fire. It is important to recognize that in either, decision errors can occur which can lead to serious, undesirable consequences.

1. Rational Decision Making

Rational decision making is the process we typically use in complying with NEPA and other laws. It is the appropriate process for developing the Wildland Fire Situation Analysis. Its steps include:

- a. gather the facts;
- b. establish evaluation criteria;
- c. establish and analyze options;
- d. choose the best option;
- e. implement the chosen option; and
- f. monitor the results.

2. Recognition Primed Decision Making

Recognition primed decision making occurs when we do not have time to move through each of the steps associated with rational decision making. Instead, we use the available time to size up the situation, developing situational awareness until we automatically recognize the right thing to do, based on the nearest match between the event and our experience.

3. Decision Errors

In any decision making process, decision errors can occur when the person(s) responsible for the decision is/are;

- ignorant of their responsibility to make the particular decision;
- ignorant of critical information relevant to the issue to be decided;
- possessing a casual approach to the importance of inputs relevant to the issue to be decided, or to the seriousness or importance of the overall situation requiring a decision (frequently results when duties or information is overloaded);
- distracted by other events, tasks, sense of priority; and
- as a situation degrades, or critical decision gates increase, stress mounts; tunnel vision sets in and we focus on what we know, what is familiar, tending to miss important things, or at the worst, ignoring things that are important.

Any of the above can begin or aggravate the error chain that may ultimately lead to a process failure when decisions are not made, or are poorly made. Mitigating a potential or emerging error chain can be accomplished by:

- know it is there, be aware of it;
- practice your experience; if you don't have it, surround yourself by those who do;
- delegate, use team decision making; and
- if you see an error, yours or someone else's, acknowledge it, speak out, and consider the consequences of other actions.

Fire Management "Primer"

(Or, Tips for Success)

Review the current year Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations, NFES 2724, Program Organization and Responsibilities for your Agency.

1. Good communicators are successful in all endeavors. This is certainly true in fire management. Wander around, ask lots of questions, have the fire management officer brief you daily during appropriate times, call your State or Regional Fire and Aviation Management Director, or the Southwest Coordination Center Director anytime. It is easier to help before decisions are made than after.
2. Give your fire management officer a written delegation of authority that gives them the adequate level of operational authority that you want them to exercise. Clearly spell it out.
3. You and your fire management officer need to go over the Fire Management Plan annually.
4. Meet personally with as many of the fire crews as possible. Give them your fire safety message and your expectations. The military calls it "Command Presence," but the firefighters feel you care. It helps overcome their concern that management just provides "Lip Service" to safety.
5. Set up a team of 6 to 10 people who are really well qualified to prepare an escaped fire wildland fire situation analysis. They don't all have to participate each time, but you want to be sure that the well trained folks are the core of the group doing this analysis. Often an agency administrator only needs to do one of these every 6 to 8 years. It makes it difficult to be proficient. Having a trained cadre will make everyone successful.
6. Go to the fire!
7. Go to the closeouts. Participate in team evaluations. Be a significant part of team briefings.
8. As an incident is escalating from initial attack through extended attack, to a Type II incident, be sure the fire management group is giving you a new complexity analysis each day to review and approve. After you reach a Type I incident, this becomes unnecessary unless a new Wildland Fire Situation Analysis is needed. Make sure a review of the Wildland Fire Situation Analysis takes place every day of each incident, regardless of size after it escapes initial attack.
9. Set an expectation on your unit that all employees are part of the wildfire suppression organization. Are they getting the training they need?
10. Have the Zone Coordination Center give you and your public affairs officer a copy of the Energy Release Component (ERC) graph daily from April 1 to July 15.
11. Establish the following expectations as yours and follow-up to ensure they are met:
 - Safety for the public and firefighters is top priority.
 - Work rest guidelines will be followed during all operations.
 - Only trained and fully qualified people will be assigned to fire duty.
 - All incoming personnel will be appropriately briefed.
 - Incidents will be managed economically and with fiscal integrity.
12. Consider using a Incident Business Adviser when you are experiencing a large incident(s).
13. Make sure you are kept informed of the availability and unavailability of red-carded individuals being reported to the Zone Coordination Center by your unit.

14. Come into the Southwest Coordination Center for a 1 to 3 day period and shadow the Coordination Center Director.
15. Watch your Fire Management Officer. Sometimes they can get up to their necks in alligators during major incidents. It is a really good idea to bring in a shadow for them to help pick up the overload chores. This is not a sign of weakness or poor performance. In fact, it is a sign of being on top of the situation.
16. Remember, if you don't have a fire management plan completed and approved, you are obligated to put out a fire at the least cost. You can use confine and contain tactics to do this and consider resource benefits, but your goal is Safety and least cost.
17. Ask your Fire Management Officer if the Expanded Dispatch Plan is in place. Are there names assigned to positions? Are they trained?
18. Are readiness inspections completed each preseason?
19. Have you set an expectation that all your staff must be in partnership to accomplish the planning and execution needed in the future fire management program?

Ask any of the fire and aviation management folks to name their six emphasis areas. See if they know: Cost leadership, wildland-urban interface, large fire suppression management, smoke, wildland fire management planning, and tomorrow's workforce. They should also remember that diversity, safety, and customer satisfaction are integral building blocks of all six.
21. Make sure units are sticking with the basics. Is reinvention resulting in a skill level that does not provide the basic fire management skills on your unit?
22. Get to know the Zone Board and Geographic Coordinating Group members. These folks are in place to insure Agency Administrator success, but suffer from lack of line attention at times. A seamless organization is a boundaryless, interagency organization. Make sure your board knows and understands your expectations. One of those expectations should be that they have a workforce plan in place to insure that trained, experienced people will be in place in future years.
23. Visit project work sites where fire crews are working during the pre and postseason. Let them know that the workforce of the future in fire is a yearlong profession. You want them to step up and assume greater leadership roles, and that you really care for them.
24. Pass out lots of thank yous, praise, and compliments when deserved.
25. Make sure you have a trained, designated Aviation Officer. This person can help you insure that trouble doesn't occur with mission planning, flight following, briefings, and more. Aviation is high risk and cost, but sound mission execution has high payoff potential for your project needs. The Aviation Officer will make sure that the necessary procedures are followed in a way to keep you successful.
26. Ask what is included in NFMAS/FIREPRO/FIREBASE for your unit. Make sure someone is updating it yearly. Not updating is very harmful to your annual presuppression budget.
27. Keep asking everyone you see what LCES means; ask crews on the line where their safety zone or escape routes are, make sure they have a Pocket Guide.
28. Lastly, the most important Axiom is: Get Help!! There are lots available, and people want to help and can act as mentors if asked.

2. Wildland Fire Management Terminology

***Key terms used in wildland
fire management defined.***

2. Wildland Fire Management Terminology

The following terminology is pertinent to wildland fire management. A more comprehensive listing of wildland fire terminology may be found in: Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations; “Wildland and Prescribed Fire Management Policy Implementation Procedures Reference Guide” page 11 Definitions; and in “Integration of Wildland Fire Management into Land Management Planning, a Desk Guide,” page G1-1 Glossary.

These are the standard definitions found at the National Wildfire Coordination Group web site:

- **agency administrator** - The official responsible for administering policy on an area of public, private or tribal land and having full authority for making decisions and providing direction to the incident management organization.
- **agency representative** - The individual assigned by an assisting or cooperating agency or organization who has been delegated authority to make decisions affecting that agency's or organization's participation in managing the incident.
- **appropriate management response** - Specific actions taken in response to a wildland fire to implement protection *and* fire use objectives. (The concepts of confine, contain, and control should still be considered as viable TACTICS applied to suppressing unwanted wildland fires. Those terms, however, should not be confused for, or referenced to wildland fire management STRATEGY.)
- **area command** - An incident command system organization lead by an area commander assigned to manage multiple incidents, each in turn managed by a separate incident commander and incident management team. Also referred to as area command authority (ACA). Area command sets overall strategies and incident priorities and coordinates the activities of the IMTs assigned to it.
- **assisting agency** - An agency or organization providing personnel or other resources to the agency with protection responsibility to directly support incident management objectives.
- **command staff** - In an incident management team organization, the positions of information officer, safety officer, and liaison officer, who report directly to the incident commander. See also, general staff.
- **confine** - Use of tactical actions to manage a fire within a predetermined area or perimeter, usually defined by geographic features.
- **contain** - A tactical point at which a fire's spread is stopped by and within specific features, constructed or natural; also, the result of stopping a fire's spread so that no further spread is expected under foreseeable conditions. For reporting purposes, the time and date of containment.
- **control** - To construct fireline, or use natural features to surround a fire and any spot fires therefrom and reduce its burning potential to a point that it no longer threatens further spread or resource damage under foreseeable conditions. For reporting purposes, the time and date of control.
- **cooperating agency** - An agency providing assistance, other than direct tactical support, to support incident management objectives; e.g. American Red Cross, local law enforcement.
- **direct attack** - A method of wildland fire suppression where control lines are constructed next to or very close to the main fire edge.
- **extended attack** - That phase of wildland fire management when initial attack resources are no longer capable of achieving the objectives (usually control) set for the incident, and additional

resources and overhead are committed; generally extending incident activities into another operational period.

- **fire management plan** - A strategic plan that defines a program to manage wildland fire and prescribed fire and documents the fire management program in the approved land use plan.
- **fire use** -
- **general staff** - In an incident management team organization, the positions of planning section chief, operations section chief, finance section chief, and logistics section chief. See also, command staff.
- **incident** - An occurrence or event, either natural or person-caused, which requires an emergency response to prevent loss of life or damage to property or natural resources.
- **incident action plan** - Usually a written document which outlines objectives reflecting the overall strategy for managing the incident; includes identification of tactical resources and assignments plus numerous attachments which provide direction and important information for management of the incident during one or more operational periods.
- **incident commander** - The individual responsible for direct management of all incident operations; the leader of an incident command team.
- **incident command system (ICS)** - The combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organization structure with responsibility for the management of resources to effectively accomplish objectives determined for an incident.
- **indirect attack** - A method of wildland fire suppression where control lines are located at some distance from the main fire edge, sometimes using natural features, and the intervening fuel is burned out.
- **initial attack** - An aggressive suppression action consistent with firefighter and public safety and values to be protected.
- **jurisdictional agency** - The agency having legal responsibility to administer lands within a specified geographic area or location.
- **kind** - A classification of resources in the incident command system which refers to function; e.g. hand crew, helicopter, engine, dozer.
- **multi-agency coordination group (MAC)** - A group of agency administrators or their delegated representatives who have the responsibility and authority to make decisions to implement policy and coordinate the activities of the different agencies in support of their emergency operations.
- **objective** - A concise, time-specific statement of measurable, planned results that respond to preestablished goals. An objective forms the basis for further planning to define the steps to be taken and the resources to be used in achieving identified goals.
- **operational period** - A defined time period, e.g. 0600 to 1800 hours, in which a specific set of objectives are established for managing incident activities and for which specific resources and personnel are assigned to those activities; also referred to as a "shift."
- **overhead** - Personnel assigned to supervisory or management functions in the incident command organization; e.g. command and general staffs, directors, supervisors, and unit leaders.
- **preparedness** - Activities that lead to a safe, efficient, and cost effective fire management program in support of land and resource management objectives through appropriate planning and coordination.

- ***protection agency*** - The agency with responsibility and authority to provide fire prevention, detection, and suppression activities in a specified area.
- ***resources*** - Personnel and major items of equipment available or potentially available to be assigned to incidents. Resources are described in the incident command system by kind and type.
- ***strategy*** - A plan or direction selected through a decision-making process to guide wildland fire management actions to meet protection and fire use objectives.
- ***suppression*** - A management action intended to extinguish a fire or alter its direction of spread.
- ***tactics*** - Specific actions employed to implement and achieve objectives set forth by the chosen strategy.
- ***type*** - A classification of resources in the incident command system which refers to capability. Type 1 is generally considered to be more capable than Types 2, 3, or 4, respectively, due to size, power, capacity, or in the case of incident management teams, experience and qualifications.
- ***unified command*** - A structure of the incident command system which provides for each agency with jurisdictional responsibilities to participate in joint management of the incident through a common set of objectives.
- ***values to be protected, or values at risk*** - A relative estimate, or known measure of worth of resources and property exposed to a chance of loss or damage from wildland fire; those resources or property specified, e.g. watershed, air quality, timber production, wildlife habitat.
- ***wildland fire*** - Any nonstructure fire, other than prescribed fire, that occurs in the wildland. This term encompasses fires previously referred to as *wildfires* and *prescribed natural fires*.
- ***wildland fire situation analysis*** - A decision-making process which evaluates alternative management strategies against selected safety, environmental, social, economic, political, and resource management objectives as selection criteria.
- ***wildland fire suppression*** - An appropriate management response to wildland fire that results in curtailment of fire spread and eliminates all identified threats from a particular fire. All wildland fire suppression activities provide for firefighter and public safety as the highest consideration, but minimize loss of resource values, economic expenditures, and/or the use of critical firefighting resources.

3. Firefighter Safety

*The Standard Firefighting Orders,
Eighteen Situations That Shout Watch Out,
Lookouts, Communications, Escape Routes,
and Safety Zones.*

3. Firefighter Safety

RISK MANAGEMENT

FIREFIGHTER AND PUBLIC SAFETY IS THE FIRST PRIORITY OF THE WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM.

Remember To:

- Follow the Standard Firefighting Orders.
- Recognize the Watch Out Situations.
- Recognize the Common Denominators of Fire Behavior on Tragedy Fires.
- Follow the Risk Management Process.

The Risk Management Process

Step 1 - Situation Awareness

- Gather Information
 - Objective(s)
 - Previous Fire Behavior
 - Communication
 - Weather Forecast
 - Who's in Charge
 - Local Factors
- Scout the Fire

Step 2 - Hazard Assessment

- Eliminate Potential Fire Behavior Hazards.
 - Look Up, Down and Around Indicators
- Identify Tactical Hazards.
 - Watch-Outs
- What other safety hazards exist?
- Consider severity vs. probability.

Step 3 - Hazard Control

- Firefighting Orders → LCES Checklist – MANDATORY
 - Anchor Point
 - Downhill Checklist (if applicable)
- What other controls are necessary?

Step 4 - Decision Point

- Are controls in place for identified hazards?
 - NO – Reassess situation
 - YES – Next question
- Are selected tactics based on expected fire behavior?
 - NO – Reassess situation
 - YES – Next question
- Have instructions been given and understood?
 - NO – Reassess situation

YES – Initiate action

Step 5 - Evaluate

- Self: Low experience level with local factors?
 - Distracted from primary tasks?
 - Fatigue or stress reaction?
 - Hazardous attitude?
- The Situation: What is changing?
 - Are strategy and tactics working?

The key message for all agency administrators and others responsible for management of a wildland fire on their unit is, no fire, ***even those that threaten structures or improvements, is worth risking human life or injury.***

Responsible actions which should be taken to reinforce this message are:

1. Reiterate this safety message at every opportunity while exercising your agency administrator responsibilities in managing the incident.
 - WFSA and delegation of authority direction
 - incident management team briefings
 - strategy meetings
 - at the incident command post and incident base
 - at staging areas and R&R centers
 - team evaluations
2. Maintain personal participation in ongoing incidents.
 - show involvement and commitment
 - be consistent, follow up and follow through
3. Bring an expert with you.

On large fires, request a functional assistance visit by the regional ground operations safety officer or aviation safety team as you deem appropriate.

Be sure to do this with the full knowledge of the incident commander. Assign your own safety liaison officer if warranted, as a technical specialist reporting to you. Again, take this action with the full knowledge of the incident commander to support your mutual interest in safety, working with the team's safety officer.
4. Ensure firefighters are being briefed.
 - Do not assume those who need to know do know; be certain by asking questions.
 - Stress safety as everyone's responsibility.
5. Know and follow the wildland fire situation analysis policy.

- The WFSA must follow the direction provided by the Fire Management Plan and consider firefighter and public safety in all alternatives and direction.
 - Ensure the WFSA has quality involvement by those who have a stake, and that *you* know what that document says.
6. Know the weather forecast.
 - All incident personnel are to be made aware of fire weather forecasts and fire behavior predictions, including those who may be called on to review and approve strategic and tactical decisions.
 7. Participate in incident management team meetings and briefings.
 8. Stay in front of the power curve.
 - Don't assume something will fix itself; that which must be done eventually, more often than not, should be done immediately.

STANDARD FIREFIGHTING ORDERS

1. *Keep informed on fire weather conditions and forecasts.*
2. *Know what your fire is doing at all times*
3. *Base all actions on current and expected behavior of the fire.*
4. *Identify escape routes and safety zones, and make them known.*
5. *Post lookouts when there is possible danger.*
6. *Be alert. Keep calm. Think clearly. Act decisively.*
7. *Maintain prompt communications with your forces, your supervisor and adjoining forces.*
8. *Give clear instructions and insure they are understood.*
9. *Maintain control of your forces at all times.*
10. *Fight fire aggressively, having provided for safety first.*

Watch Out Situations

1. *Fire not scouted and sized up.*
2. *In country not seen in daylight.*
3. *Safety zones and escape routes not identified.*
4. *Unfamiliar with weather and local factors influencing fire behavior.*
5. *Uninformed on strategy, tactics, and hazards.*
6. *Instructions and assignments not clear.*
7. *No communication with crew members or supervisor.*
8. *Constructing fireline without safe anchor point.*
9. *Building fireline downhill with fire below.*
10. *Attempting frontal assault on fire.*
11. *Unburned fuel between you and the fire.*
12. *Cannot see main fire, not in contact with anyone who can.*
13. *On a hillside where rolling material can ignite fuel below.*
14. *Weather is getting hotter and drier.*
15. *Wind increases and/or changes direction.*
16. *Getting frequent spot fires across line.*
17. *Terrain and fuels make escape to safety zones difficult.*
18. *Taking a nap near the fireline.*

LCES

Lookouts, Communications, Escape Routes, and Safety Zones

The **LCES** system was designed as a simple way to remind firefighters of their responsibility on every fire to designate and use **lookouts** where warranted, maintain **communications**, and identify and make known to all personnel effective **escape routes** which lead to **safety zones** where they can survive sudden, adverse changes in the fire environment.

The **LCES** system accounts for and reinforces the **Standard Firefighting Orders** and **Watch Out Situations** while making tactical plans for implementing a strategy for fire suppression.

The Agency Administrator should make certain that fire managers at every level, from local initial attack to larger fires managed by incident management teams, use the **LCES** system on every fire at all times.

Firefighter Survivability

Fireline Questions to Emphasize Safety

Ten Questions Every Firefighter Must Ask and Answer Yes to Before Engaging in Fire Suppression

1. Do you understand the organization for this fire and your place in it?
2. Is there a plan, and do you understand it?
3. Do you know it is OK to ask questions and ensure that the instructions you are given provide for your safety and the safety of your fellow firefighters?
4. Do you know the weather forecast for today?
5. Have you followed the five step Risk Management, assessed fire behavior and made a prediction?
6. Are you interactive with the *Standard Firefighting Orders* and *Watch Out Situations*?
7. Do you have the **Lookouts, Communications, Escape Routes**, and *Safety Zones* in place?
8. Do you understand that it is both your responsibility and your right to say **No** to orders that cannot be accomplished without compromising one or more of the *Standard Firefighting Orders* or without mitigating each of the *Watch Out Situations*?
9. Can you describe the fire environment you are going to operate in?
10. Are you prepared to engage, monitor the fire environment, be proactive, and make adjustments?

4. Wildland Fire Situation Analysis

***A format, procedures, and aides
for completing a WFSA.***

4. Wildland Fire Situation Analysis

I. Wildland Fire Situation Analysis

Few decisions agency administrators make obligate more money, commit more people to hazardous duty, have longer term impacts on natural resources, or determine the scope of future management decisions than the selection of a large fire suppression strategy.

This guide is to assist you and your staff in preparation of the wildland fire situation analysis (WFSA), providing sufficient analysis to make safe and sound decisions.

A. Purpose

The wildland fire situation analysis (WFSA) is a decision-making process through which the agency administrator describes the fire situation, establishes objectives and constraints for managing the fire, compares various strategies for fire management alternatives, evaluates the expected effects of those alternatives against important local, regional, or national criteria, selects the preferred alternative, and documents the decision made.

The WFSA is essential when fire characteristics exceed local suppression and management capability. This applies to wildland fires declared wildland fires from the start, to wildland fires initially managed for resource objectives, and to prescribed fires which have burned beyond their prescription.

The WFSA will document the appropriate suppression action and cost decision making process for the incident which is expected to, or has exceeded, the actions prescribed in the forest fire management plan.

The responsible agency administrator will promptly implement this direction and the appropriate management response which is indicated by the WFSA.

B. Policy

A WFSA will be prepared by the responsible agency administrator for all wildland fires which exceed the conditions and objectives established by the appropriate management response. This direction applies to fires initially declared unwanted wildland fires, as well as to wildland fires initially managed for resource benefits or prescribed fires which have burned beyond the limits established in approved plans, and have been declared unwanted wildland fires, and that cannot be controlled by initial suppression actions.

On lands under the agency administrator's jurisdiction, but protected by another agency, the protection agency is required to prepare and is responsible for a WFSA for all escaped, unwanted wildland fires. In such cases, as the agency with jurisdiction, the agency administrator must be included in development of the WFSA to ensure all land and fire management objectives are recognized and will be met by the selected alternative.

The WFSA must be completed and approved by the agency administrator prior to significant expenditure of fire suppression funds, including mobilization of forces from outside the local area or ordering an Incident Management Team.

C. Requirements of the WFSA

The WFSA requires:

1. Identification of Evaluation Criteria

Criteria will reflect the priority for firefighter and public safety as well as land and resource management objectives and constraints, potential resource damage, and suppression costs. Local, regional, and national fire suppression activities and resource capabilities shall be considered.

2. Development of Suppression Alternatives

Develop alternatives that represent a reasonable range of strategies for the situation, commensurate to land management plan and fire management plan direction.

Each alternative must:

- a. be developed with a focus on firefighter and public safety.
- b. be economically viable.
- c. include a strategic plan of control for the incident.
- d. have an estimate of the suppression forces required to achieve the objective.
- e. assess the probability of success and consequences of failure to meet the objective.
- f. estimate the times of containment and control, acreage burned, suppression costs, and resource damage.
- g. be responsive to environmental issues and direction provided by the land management plan, including given constraints.
- h. be responsive to pertinent social and political issues.

In this process, be prepared to discuss why other alternatives were not considered in order to give strength to your rationale for those that were considered.

3. Analysis of Suppression Alternatives

Use evaluation criteria to analyze each alternative. Be certain that estimates of expected suppression actions are consistent with resource objectives and values to be protected. Identify the alternative that provides for firefighter and public safety, minimizes the sum of suppression costs plus resource damages, and has an acceptable probability of success.

4. Approval and Notification

The agency administrator will select the most appropriate WFSA alternative and approve all revisions to the original and subsequent WFSA. Inform the public and cooperators of the selected alternative as appropriate.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

The agency administrator must ensure validation of the selected WFSA alternative daily. Base validation on the current and predicted situation, including success at meeting objectives, weather and fire behavior observations and forecasts, and other local, regional, or national activity affecting availability of suppression forces.

6. Documentation

Document the analysis, including any revisions and maintain as part of the permanent fire record. A map showing the predicted fire area for each alternative will be prepared.

7. Decision Tree Analysis

Decision tree analysis provides a useful way for displaying and comparing alternatives against their respective probability of success or failure. A decision tree analysis will be prepared for each alternative in the WFSAs and attached to the WFSAs document.

D. Factors to Consider in the WFSAs Process

The WFSAs strategy and direction it provides may be the single most important decision an agency administrator makes regarding a wildland fire. Poorly considered, developed, and monitored WFSAs with inappropriate or unrealistic direction have resulted in enormous commitments of fire suppression forces, money, and time against insurmountable odds presented by the wildland fire. Unnecessary exposure of firefighters to the hazards of the wildland fire environment is another frequent outcome of WFSAs direction to implement strategies that simply will not be effective until other conditions change.

The WFSAs process is designed to bring out creative thinking focused on a unique situation. No two large fires are identical and no school solution will apply perfectly to any fire. The agency administrator should consider the momentum initiated by the WFSAs, the commitment of fire suppression forces, money, and the effect on land and resource values that result from their decision, and the inertia that commitment to a weak or ineffective WFSAs usually produces before a more appropriate strategy is adopted.

Factors which contribute to a **STRONG** WFSAs include:

- Firefighter and public safety is recognized throughout the process;
- Realistic assessment of fire suppression resources availability and capability is used;
- Realistic timeframes are used;
- Realistic costs and resource values are used;
- Environmental resource issues are appropriately identified and considered;
- Social and political issues are recognized and addressed; and
- Constraints are identified and their impacts are considered and clearly understood.

Factors which contribute to a **WEAK** WFSAs include:

- Planning for and calculating effectiveness of suppression forces that are not available, or underestimating the number or kind of forces required to achieve the objectives set forth by the planned strategy.

Hint - Know what else is going on and the priority of the incident you are responsible for. Can you get what your analysis says you will need to meet the objectives for the incident and reasonably ensure the probability of success? Does the success of your strategy depend on the availability of suppression forces that are questionable or unlikely?

- Unrealistic time estimates to put suppression forces on the fire.

Hint - Consider where the fire will be when the forces you intend to deploy are actually engaged and becoming effective?

- Poor estimates of fire spread and perimeter increase over time.

Hint - Are your fire behavior predictions reasonable, and do you have a reliable weather forecast; did you develop good maps for your alternatives to show what the fire is capable of doing?

- Overestimating the effectiveness of suppression forces that are available.

Hint - Are those forces going to have to run to stay even? Are you considering weather, fuels, and topography factors which influence fire behavior and may result in constraints to tactics and logistics?

- Underestimating the time it will take to achieve the objectives of the planned strategy.

Hint - Will your strategy really work, or are you going to watch the pages of the calendar turn until something beyond your control occurs?

The Fireline Handbook, Appendix A and B, provides good guidelines for estimating fire size and production rates for and recommended numbers of suppression forces. The Southwestern Coordination Center can provide good information on the availability of suppression forces, regional and national activity competing for resources, and their arrival at incident timelines.

E. Cost Estimation for Large Fire Suppression Planning

1. Large Fire Suppression Costs

The cost of suppressing large wildland fires has, over the last decade, been accelerating to levels which are unprecedented, even considering inflation. Too many variables have influenced this trend to detail those in this guide. However, the agency administrator should be aware of the significance placed on large fire cost management and the potential scrutiny which a large wildland fire will be reviewed for effective cost management, beginning with the WFSA.

Cost management should be considered as prudent selection of strategies and application of tactics to achieve bonafide objectives that are effective and efficient. Cost management does not include accepting shortcuts which compromise firefighter or public safety or accomplishment of valid objectives.

The following displays typical percentages, by category, of large fire costs.

Crews	15% - 30%
Overhead	15% - 20%
Aircraft	15% - 25%
Incident Support	15% - 20%
Equipment	10% - 20%
Supplies	5% - 10%

(Costs will vary within these ranges depending on strategy and tactics, and crew and other resource types available and used.)

2. Resource Value

An integral component of the decision-making process during the WFSA is realizing the impacts of various suppression alternatives on the resource values threatened.

Understanding the potential value of resources that may be lost or damaged by either the fire itself or the suppression tactics will contribute to making a stronger decision. Often, resource value information is not available in a timely fashion to consider during the WFSA process. A good source for this information is the data that was used for

NFMAS/FIREPRO/FIREBASE planning. Contact your fire management officer to get this information and have it on hand as part of this guide prior to a situation occurring on your unit.

3. Cost Planning Guidelines

The following two guides are provided to help develop planning values for large fire suppression costs.

The “**Cost Estimation Guide for Large Fire Suppression Planning**” provides average costs (hourly, daily, or by load) for each of the principal fire suppression resource types and is based on the Incident Standard Rate Estimates from the Fire Business Management Handbook. Cost information can also be obtained via the Internet at www.fs.fed.us/r3/fire/welcome.htm under Fire Management, Finance. Local resource cost information should be used if known.

The “**Cost Worksheet for WFSA Preparation**” should be used to calculate the cost for each alternative considered in the wildland fire situation analysis. This process will provide a relative comparison of suppression costs for each alternative.

F. Planning for the Automated WFSA

Each administrative unit should download the program files (see section G) to a local PC. WFSA Plus is divided into four parts. These parts are the WFSA Prep, Wildland Fire Implementation Plan (WFIP), Basic WFSA, and WFSA. The WFIP is to be used for management of a natural ignition when a fire management plan is in place and it is appropriate to manage the fire for resource benefits. A WFSA Prep file is typically developed for each administrative unit. A WFSA Prep file stores values for computing suppression costs and impacts on resource values. Setting up these files in advance will save precious time when a fire is burning and chaos is mounting.

G. Wildland Fire Situation Analysis Format

The following interagency format may be used to complete the wildland fire situation analysis.

The WFSA (WFSA Plus4.2) is also available and may be downloaded from the Internet to any local unit in a PC software version. To download go to www.fs.fed.us/r3/fire/welcome.htm and select: Fire Management - Software – Wildland Fire Situation Analysis.

Annual, or as appropriate, updates to the WFSA program and procedures will be provided with necessary direction.

WILDLAND FIRE SITUATION ANALYSIS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

*Bureau of Land Management
National Park Service
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Fish and Wildlife Service*

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Incident Name: _____

Jurisdiction(s): _____

Date and Time Completed: _____

5100.fire.mgmt/5130.suppression/5130-2.wfsa/wfsa.format

I. WFSA Information Page (directions and guidelines)

- I.A. Jurisdiction(s): Assign the agency or agencies that have or could have fire protection responsibility for the area involved by the fire (e.g. USFWS, USFS, etc.).
- I.B. Geographic Area: Assign the recognized Geographic Coordination Area the fire is located in (e.g. Northwest, Northern Rockies, etc.).
- I.C. Unit(s): Designate the local administrative unit(s) the fire is located on (e.g. Hart Mtn. National Wildlife Refuge, Flathead Indian Reservation, etc.).
- I.D. WFSA No.: Identify the number assigned to the most recent WFSA for this fire.
- I.E. Fire Name: Identify the unique name assigned to this fire.
- I.F. Incident No.: Identify the incident number assigned to this fire.
- I.G. Accounting Code: Identify the local unit's accounting management code assigned to this fire.
- I.H. Date/Time Prepared: Identify for this WFSA.
- I.I. Attachments: Check here to designate items used to complete the WFSA package. "Other" can include data or models used in the development of the WFSA; briefly describe any used.

WILDLAND FIRE SITUATION ANALYSIS

I. Incident Identification (to be completed by Agency Administrator(s))

A. Jurisdiction(s)	B. Geographic Area
C. Unit(s)	D. WFSA No.
E. Fire Name	F. Incident No.

G. Accounting Code
H. Date and Time Prepared

I. Attachments

- | | | |
|--|-----|--|
| 1. Complexity Matrix/Analysis * | [] | |
| 2. Risk Assessment/Analysis * | [] | |
| Probability of Success * | [] | |
| Consequences of Failure * | [] | |
| 3. Maps of alternatives * | [] | |
| 4. Decision Tree Analysis ** | [] | |
| 5. Fire Behavior Projections * | [] | |
| 6. Calculations of Resource Requirements * | [] | |
| • Other (specify) | | |

	[]	
--	-----	--

	[]	
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- * Required by all agencies
 ** Required by USFS

II. Objectives and Constraints (directions and guidelines)

- A. Objectives: Specify objectives which *must* be considered in the development of alternatives. Safety objectives for firefighter, aviation, and the public *must* receive the highest priority. Suppression objectives *must* relate to resource management objectives in the unit's approved resource management plan.

Economic objectives could include closure of all or portions of an area, thus impacting the public, or impacts to transportation, communication, and resource values.

Environmental objectives could include management objectives for airshed, water quality, wildlife, etc.

Social objectives could include any local attitudes toward fire or smoke that might affect decisions on the fire.

Other objectives might include legal or administrative constraints which would have to be considered in the analysis of the fire situation, such as the need to keep the fire off other lands, etc.

- B. Constraints: List constraints on wildland fire action. These could include constraints to designated wilderness, wilderness study areas, environmentally or culturally sensitive areas, irreparable damage to resources or smoke management and air quality concerns. Economic constraints such as public and agency cost could be considered here.

II. Objectives and Constraints (to be completed by Agency Administrator(s))
--

A. Objectives (Must be specific and measurable)

1. *Safety*
 - Public

- Firefighter

2. *Economic*

3. *Environmental*

4. *Social*

5. *Other*

B. Constraints

III. Alternatives (Directions and Guidelines)

- A. Wildland Fire Management Strategy: Briefly describe the general wildland fire strategies for each alternative. Alternatives must meet resource management plan objectives.
- B. Narrative: Briefly describe each alternative with geographic names, locations, etc. that would be used when implementing a wildland fire strategy. For example, contain within a specific named watershed within the first burning period.
- C. Resources Needed: Resources described must be reasonable to accomplish the tasks described in the narrative in Section III. B. It is critical to look at the reality of the availability of these needed resources.
- D. Final Fire Size: Estimated final fire size for each alternative at time of containment.
- E. Estimated Contain/Control Date: Estimates of each alternative shall be made based on predicted weather, fire behavior, resource availability, and the effects of suppression efforts.
- F. Cost: Estimate all incident costs for each alternative. Consider mop-up, rehabilitation, and other costs as necessary.
- G. Risk Assessment: Probability of Success/Consequences of Failure: Describe the probability as a percentage and list associated consequences for success and failure. Develop this information from models, practical experience, or other acceptable means. Consequences described will include fire size, days to contain, days to control, costs, and other information such as closures and effects on critical habitat. Include fire behavior and long-term fire weather forecasts to derive this information.
- H. Complexity: Assign the incident complexity rating calculated for each alternative; e.g. Type 1 or Type 2.
- I. A map for each alternative should be prepared. The map shall be based on the Probability of Success/Consequences of Failure and include other relevant information.

III. Alternatives (to be completed by FMO / IC)			
	A	B	C
A. Wildland Fire Strategy			
B. Narrative			
C. Resources Needed handcrews engines dozers airtankers helicopters other			
D. Final Fire Size			
E. Estimated Contain/Control Dates			
F. Costs			
G. Risk Assessment Probability of Success Consequence of Failure			
H. Complexity Level			

I. Attach Map for Each Alternative			
------------------------------------	--	--	--

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IV. Evaluation of Alternatives (Directions and Guidelines)

- A. **Evaluation Process:** Conduct an analysis for each element of each objective and each alternative. Objectives shall match those identified in Section II. A. Use the best estimates available and quantify whenever possible. Provide ratings for each alternative and corresponding objective element.

Fire effects may be negative, cause no change, or may be positive. Examples which may be used include:

- A system which employs a "-" for negative effects, an "0" for no change, and a "+" for positive effects; or
- A system which uses a numeric factor for the importance of the component being considered (soils, watershed, political, etc.) and assigns values (such as -1 to +1, or -100 to +100) to each consideration, then arrives at a weighted average; or
- If you have the information necessary to assign dollar amounts (estimates) for natural resource and cultural values, this level of data is preferred.

Use those methods which are most appropriate for the situation and agency. To be able to evaluate positive fire effects, the area must be included in the approved resource management plan, and there must be consistency with the objectives and prescriptions of the unit's fire management plan.

Sum of Economic Values: Calculate for each element in each alternative the net effect of the rating system used. This can include the balance of; pluses (+) and minuses (-), numerical ratings, or natural and cultural resource values expressed in dollars.

Again, resource benefits may be considered as part of the analysis process when the wildland fire is within a prescription consistent with approved fire management plans and in support of the unit's resource management plan.

IV. Evaluation of Alternatives (to be completed by Agency Administrator(s) and FMO/IC)			
A. Evaluation Process	A	B	C
Safety firefighter aviation public			
Sum of Safety Values			
Economic forage improvements recreation timber water wilderness wildlife other (specify)			
Sum of Economic Values			
Environmental air visuals hazardous fuels TE&S species other (specify)			
Sum of Environmental Values			
Social employment public concern cultural other (specify)			
Sum of Social Values			
Other (specify)			
Sum of Other Values			
Comparison of all Evaluated Categories			

V. Analysis Summary (Directions and Guidelines)

- A. Compliance with Objectives:** Prepare narratives that summarize each alternative's effectiveness in meeting each objective. Alternatives that do not comply with objectives are not acceptable. Narrative could be based on effectiveness and efficiency. For example, "most effective and least efficient," "least effective and most efficient." Answers could be based on a two-tiered rating system such as "complies with objective" and "fully complies with or exceeds objective." Use a system that best fits the manager's need.
- B. Pertinent Data:** Data for this section has already been presented and is duplicated here to help the Agency Administrator(s) confirm their selection of an alternative. Final fire size is displayed on page 7, section III. D. Complexity is calculated in the attachments and displayed on page 7, section III. H. Costs are displayed on page 7, section III. F. Economic values have been calculated and displayed on page 9. Probability of success/consequences of Failure is calculated in the attachments and displayed on page 7, section III. G.
- C. External and Internal Influences:** Assign information and data occurring at the time the WFSA is signed. Identify the Preparedness Index/Level (1 through 5) for the National and Geographic Area levels. If available, indicate the Incident Priority assigned to this incident by the MAC Group. Designate the Resource Availability status. This information is available from the Geographic Coordination Center and needed to select a viable alternative. Designate "yes" indicating a current weather forecast has been provided to, and used by, the Agency Administrator(s) to evaluate each alternative. Assign information to the "Other" category as needed by the Agency Administrator(s).

VI. Decision (Directions and Guidelines)

Identify the alternative selected. Must have clear and concise rationale for the decision, and Agency Administrator(s) signature(s), with date and time signed included.

V. Analysis Summary (to be completed by Agency Administrator(s) and FMO / IC)			
Alternatives	A	B	C
A. Compliance with Objectives Safety Economic Environmental Social Other			
B. Pertinent Data Final Fire Size Complexity Suppression Costs Resource Values Probability of Success Consequences of Failure			
C. External / Internal Influences National & Geographic Area Preparedness Levels _____ Incident Priority _____ Resource Availability _____ Wx Forecast (long range) _____ Fire Behavior Projections _____			
VI. Decision (to be completed by Agency Administrator(s))			
The Selected Alternative is: Rationale: <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 20px;"> <div>_____</div> <div>_____</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 10px;"> <div>Agency Administrator(s)</div> <div>Date and Time</div> </div>			

VII. Daily Review (Directions and Guidelines)

The date, time, and signature of reviewing officials are reported in each column for *each day* of the incident. The status of preparedness level, incident priority, resource availability, weather forecast, fire behavior projections, and WFSA validity is completed for each day reviewed. Ratings for the preparedness level, incident priority, resource availability, and weather forecast are addressed on page 10, section V. C. Assign a "yes" under "WFSA Valid" to continue use of this WFSA, without revision. A "no" indicates this WFSA is no longer valid and must be revised, or a new WFSA must be prepared.

VIII. Final Review (Directions and Guidelines)

This section is completed by the Agency Administrator(s). A signature(s), date, and time are provided once all conditions of the WFSA have been met.

VII. Daily Review (to be completed by Agency Administrator(s) or designate(s))

<p><i>Selected alternative to be reviewed daily to determine if still valid until objectives have been met</i></p>
--

[illegible]

*** * * If WFSA Is No Longer Valid, A New WFSA Will Be Completed ***

VIII. Final Review (to be completed by Agency Administrator(s))

The elements of the selected alternative were met on:

Date: _____ Time: _____

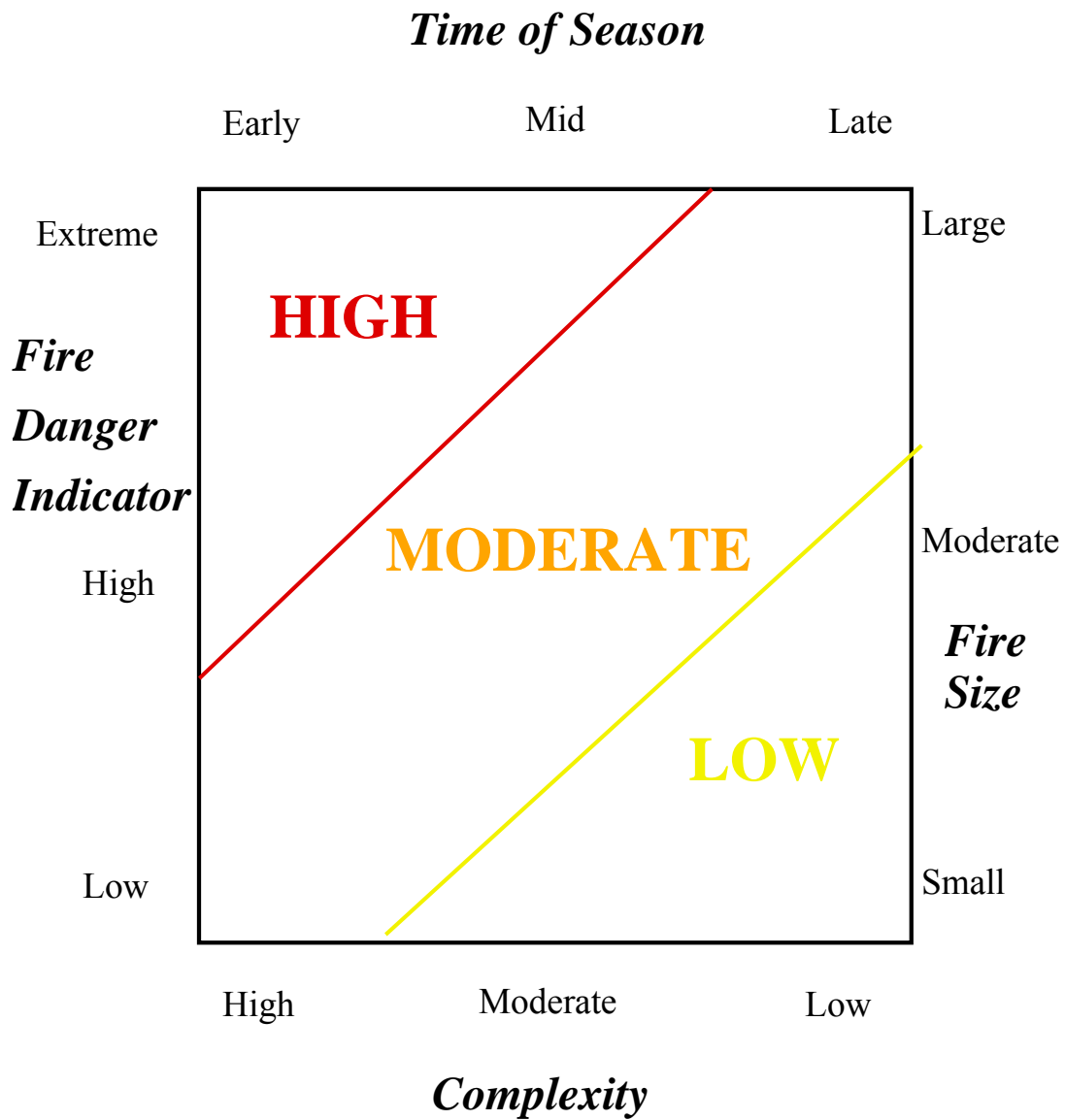
And final review made by:

Name(s):

Agency Administrator(s)

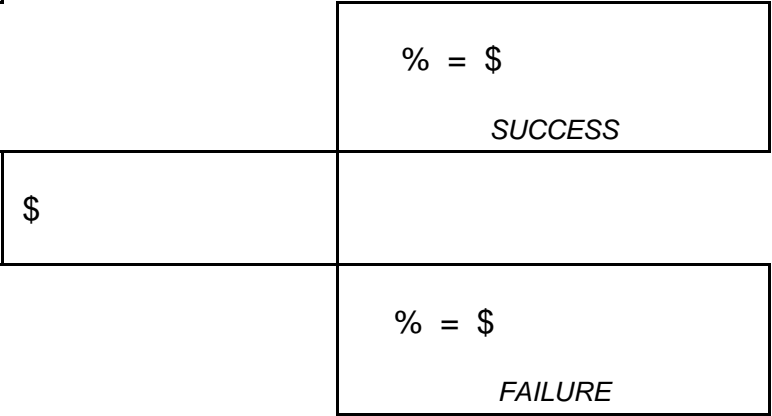
Remarks:

Wildland Fire Relative Risk Rating

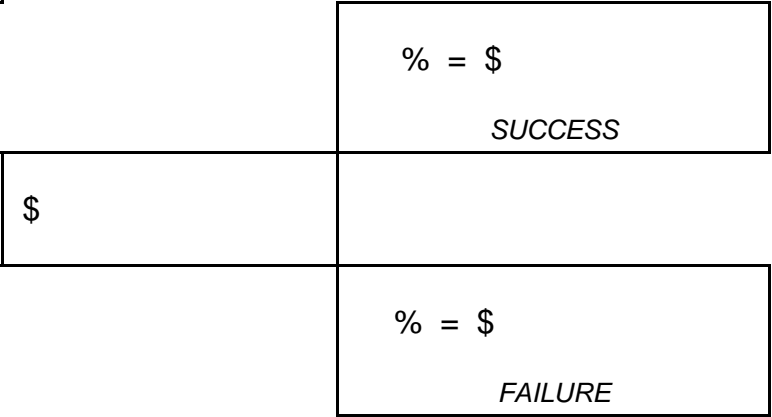


WFSA DECISION TREE ANALYSIS

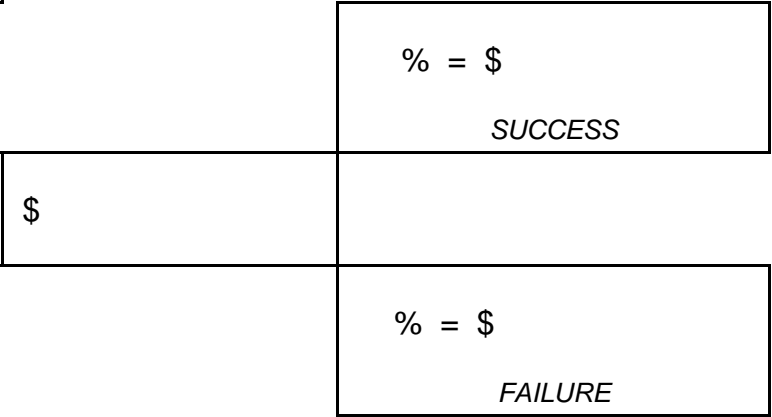
ALTERNATIVE **A**



ALTERNATIVE **B**



ALTERNATIVE **C**



H. Wildland Fire Situation Analysis Example

The following is an example of a completed Wildland Fire Situation Analysis and Decision Tree Analysis.

(insert example WFSA here)

5. Fire Complexity Analysis

Definitions of the five levels of wildland fire incidents, initial attack Type 5 to Type 1. A decision making format for analyzing an incident's complexity and determining the type of incident management organization required.

5. Fire Complexity Levels

Definitions of the five levels of wildland fire incidents, initial attack Type 5 to Type 1. A decision making format for analyzing an incident's complexity and determining the type of incident management organization

The agency administrator is responsible for determining the complexity of a wildland fire incident and assigning qualified personnel to its management. Many factors determine the complexity of an incident, including area involved, threat to life and property, political sensitivity, organizational complexity, jurisdictional boundaries, values at risk, fire behavior, strategy and tactics, and agency policy. The agency administrator must understand the basic elements of incident complexity in order to recognize the magnitude of an actual or potential situation and make appropriate decisions regarding its management.

The following guidelines will assist the agency administrator in determining incident complexity. The guidelines are presented in order of ascending complexity and describe the fire suppression response and fire organization that are appropriate to the situation and consistent with fire management direction. The Type 5 incident is the lowest level of complexity formally recognized in the Incident Command System (ICS); the Type 1 incident is the most complex. Type 5 through Type 1 incidents have uniform national standards for personnel qualifications established in the ICS and described in the Wildland Fire Qualifications Subsystem Guide Handbook 310-1. Incidents Type 5 are among the most common. These incidents are considered any which require no more than five personnel to manage. Agency standards are established for qualifications of incident commanders for incidents.

A. Incident Descriptions

1. Type 5 Incident

- a) Resources required are local and typically vary from two to six firefighters.
- b) The incident is generally contained within the first burning period and often within a few hours after resources arrive on scene.

2. Type 4 Incident

- a) Command staff and general staff functions are not activated.
- b) Resources are local and vary from a single module to several resources.
- c) The incident is usually limited to one operational period in the control phase.
- d) No written incident action plan (IAP) is required. However, a documented operational briefing will be completed for all incoming resources.

3. Type 3 Incident

- a) Resources are usually local and some or all of the command and general staff positions may be activated, usually at the division/group supervisor and/or unit leader level. Units may have a predetermined Type 3 organization designated.
- b) Type 3 organizations manage initial attack fires with a significant number of resources, an extended attack fire until containment/control is achieved, or an escaped fire until a Type 1 or 2 team assumes command.
- c) Initial briefing and closeout are more formal.
- d) Resources vary from several resources to several task forces/strike teams.
- e) The incident may be divided into divisions.
- f) The incident may involve multiple operational periods prior to control, which may require a written Incident Action Plan (IAP).
- g) A documented operational briefing will be completed for all incoming resources, and before each operational period. Refer to *Incident Response Pocket Guide* for outline.
- h) Staging areas and a base may be used.
- i) By completing an Incident Complexity Analysis, a fire manager can assess the hazards and complexities of an incident and determine the specific positions needed (e.g., if sensitive public/media relationships are evident, then an information officer should be ordered as part of the team).
- j) When using a Type 3 organization or incident command organization, a manager must avoid using them beyond the Type 3 complexity level.
- k) A Type 3 IC will not serve concurrently as a single

4. Type 2 Incident

- a) A Type 2 team can be ordered in a short or long configuration. The national standard configuration is the same for all teams. GACCs may adjust the makeup of teams for use in their areas.
- b) The incident extends into multiple operational periods.
- c) Operations personnel often exceed 200 per operational period and total personnel will usually exceed 500 (numbers are guidelines only).
- d) A written action plan is required for each operational period.

- e) Many of the functional units are needed and staffed.
- f) The agency administrator will have regular briefings, and ensure that WFSAs and delegation of authority are updated.
- g) Divisions established for span of control are usually established to geographically facilitate work assignments.

5. Type 1 Incident

A Type 1 incident meets all the characteristics of a Type 2 incident, plus the following:

- a) All command and general staff positions are activated.
- b) Operations personnel often exceed 500 per operational period and total personnel will usually exceed 1,000 (numbers are guidelines only).
- c) Divisions are established requiring division supervisor qualified personnel.
- d) May require the establishment of branches.
- e) Aviation operations often involve several types and numbers of aircraft.

B. Wildland Fire Incident Complexity Analysis

More than 95 percent of all unwanted wildland fires are controlled in the initial attack or extended attack stages with local resources. When the initial management response is unsuccessful, the agency administrator must complete a wildland fire situation analysis to evaluate alternatives and select a new strategy for managing the fire. It is at this stage, and based on the WFSAs selected alternative, that a comprehensive analysis of incident complexity should be made to determine the level, or type, of team to manage the implementation of the strategy indicated by that alternative. The decision to be made is usually between a Type 1 or Type 2 incident management team, weighing the complexity characteristics of the actual incident or its potential against recognized capabilities and limitations of the types of teams.

The following represents factors contributing to incident complexity. The responsible agency administrator and staff should analyze each factor specific to the actual or potential circumstances of a wildland fire incident. The summary of that analysis should serve as a guideline to identify the complexity level of the fire and assign the appropriate type of incident management organization to it. Since the time required to assemble and transition an incident management team to a fire may be as much as 24 hours, this analysis should consider both the current state of the fire and its probable state in 24 hours under the influences of burning conditions and current management organization.

Incident: _____ Date: _____ Evaluator: _____

Incident Complexity Analysis (Type 3, 4, 5)		
Fire Behavior	Yes	No
Fuels extremely dry and susceptible to long-range spotting or you are currently experiencing extreme fire behavior.		
Weather forecast indicating no significant relief or worsening conditions.		
Current or predicted fire behavior dictates indirect control strategy with large amounts of fuel within planned perimeter.		
Firefighter Safety		
Performance of firefighting resources affected by cumulative fatigue.		
Overhead overextended mentally and/or physically.		
Communication ineffective with tactical resources or dispatch.		
Organization		
Operations are at the limit of span of control.		
Incident action plans, briefings, etc. missing or poorly prepared.		

Variety of specialized operations, support personnel or equipment.		
Unable to properly staff air operations.		
Limited local resources available for initial attack.		
Heavy commitment of local resources to logistical support.		
Existing forces worked 24 hours without success.		
Resources unfamiliar with local conditions and tactics.		
Values to be protected		
Urban interface; structures, developments, recreational facilities, or potential for evacuation.		
Fire burning or threatening more than one jurisdiction and potential for unified command with different or conflicting management objectives.		
Unique natural resources, special-designation areas, critical municipal watershed, T&E species habitat, cultural value sites.		
Sensitive political concerns, media involvement, or controversial fire policy.		

If you have checked “Yes” on 3 to 5 of the analysis boxes, consider requesting the next level of incident management support.

Guide to Completing the Incident Complexity Analysis (Type 1, 2)

Incident: _____ Date: _____ Evaluator: _____

- 1) Analyze each element and check the response, Yes or No.
- 2) If positive responses exceed, or are equal to, negative responses within any primary factor (A through G), the primary factor should be considered as a positive response.
- 3) If any three of the primary factors (A through G) are positive responses, this indicates the fire situation is or is predicted to be of Type 1 complexity.
- 4) Factor H should be considered after numbers 1–3 are completed. If more than two of the items in factor H are answered yes, and three or more of the other primary factors are positive responses, a Type 1 team should be considered. If the composites of H are negative, and there are fewer than three positive responses in the primary factors (A-G), a Type 2 team should be considered. If the answers to all questions in H are negative, it may be advisable to allow the existing overhead to continue action on the fire.

Incident Complexity Analysis	YES	NO
A. Fire Behavior (Observed or Predicted)		
1. Burning index (from on-site measurement of weather conditions) predicted to be above the 90% level using the major fuel model in which the fire is burning.		
2. Potential exists for extreme fire behavior (fuel moisture, winds, etc.).		
3. Crowning, profuse or long-range spotting.		
4. Weather forecast indicating no significant relief or worsening conditions.		
Total		
B. Resources Committed		
1. 200 or more personnel assigned.		
2. Three or more divisions.		
3. Wide variety of special support personnel.		
4. Substantial air operation which is not properly staffed.		
5. Majority of initial attack resources committed.		
Total		
C. Resources Threatened		
1. Urban interface.		
2. Developments and facilities.		
3. Restricted, threatened, or endangered species habitat.		
4. Cultural sites.		
5. Unique natural resources, special-designation areas, wilderness.		
6. Other special resources.		
Total		
D. Safety		
1. Unusually hazardous fireline construction.		
2. Serious accidents or fatalities.		
3. Threat to safety of visitors from fire and related operations.		
4. Restrictions and/or closures in effect or being considered.		
5. No night operations in place for safety reasons.		

Total		
E. Ownership		
1. Fire burning or threatening more than one jurisdiction.		
2. Potential for claims (damages).		
3. Different or conflicting management objectives.		
4. Disputes over suppression responsibility.		
5. Potential for unified command.		
Total		
F. External Influences		
1. Controversial fire policy.		
2. Pre-existing controversies/relationships.		
3. Sensitive media relationships.		
4. Smoke management problems.		
5. Sensitive political interests.		
6. Other external influences.		
Total		
G. Change in Strategy		
1. Change in strategy to control from confine or contain		
2. Large amounts of unburned fuel within planned perimeter.		
3. WFSA invalid or requires updating.		
Total		
H. Existing Overhead		
1. Worked two operational periods without achieving initial objectives.		
2. Existing management organization ineffective.		
3. Overhead overextended mentally and/or physically.		
4. Incident action plans, briefings, etc. missing or poorly prepared.		
Total		

6. Use of Incident Management Teams

*Procedures for ordering, receiving, and
using a Type 1 or Type 2 incident management team.*

6. Use of Incident Management Teams

When the decision has been made to order a Type 1 or Type 2 incident management team to take over management of a wildland fire, the following process must be accomplished by the responsible agency administrator; that official with jurisdictional and/or protection authority for the area on which the incident occurs.

A. Obtaining The Services Of An Incident Management Team

1. To Request a National or Geographic Area Incident Management Team

The responsible agency administrator will:

- Place the request for an incident management team with the Zone Interagency Dispatch Center as soon as that need has been identified and verified by a complexity analysis for the incident. Identify the type of team needed, location for the team to report to for the agency administrator's briefing, and time to report at that location.
- Be sure your ordered time lines are reasonable, consider the time necessary to assemble and transport the team, avoidance of night mobilization when possible, and most likely time to effect transition from the current incident management organization to the national or geographic area team. Generally, plan on a 12 hour minimum lead time to get a team.

Do not plan a transfer of command of Incident Management Teams during an operational period.

2. Prior to Meeting the Team

The responsible agency administrator, with assistance from appropriate staff should:

- Prepare the WFSA and agency administrator's briefing package.
- Prepare the delegation of authority.
- Appoint a resource advisor to work with the incident management team and brief that person on their responsibilities and authority.
- Consider the need for an incident business advisor (IBA) to assist you in managing the fiscal aspects of the incident. The IBA works *for* the agency administrator and *with* the team to ensure the agency's direction on costs and accountability is understood and met. General advice for when an IBA should be used is: anytime your incident cost estimates exceed \$250,000; anytime the incident is suspected to be a person-caused trespass fire; whenever claims are involved or likely to be; or whenever a Type 1 incident management team is to be assigned.
- Notify and assemble key staff and other personnel, including cooperators, essential to preparing for and transitioning to the incoming incident management team.

The fire management officer or staff should:

- Determine the location of the incident base and command post.
- Consider ordering basic support equipment and supplies through the dispatch center for the incident, for delivery to the incident base, generally including but not limited to a NIFC communications system, telephone communications system, with FAX,

computer support, a national contract caterer, national contract shower unit, potable water supply, and gray water unit(s).

- Order and assemble adequate quantities of maps, aerial photos, GIS data sets, fire weather forecasts, and other intelligence material to support the incident.
- Determine transportation requirements for the team, including transporting team members from airport(s) to the location of the agency administrator's briefing, and from the agency administrator's briefing to the incident base, and appropriate vehicles to assign to the incident management team for internal use. Sources of supply include agency owned and available and local rental.

The fire staff should consider:

- Implementing a resource information management team for large fire data needs support.
- Implementing the large fire incident support organization, as necessary, to augment the capabilities of the local dispatch organization to support the increased workload brought on by the incident.
- Ordering a regional buying team, as necessary, to support the procurement requirements of the fire.
- Requesting an incident business advisor be appointed for the incident.

The dispatch center should:

- Order a temporary flight restriction (TFR) over the incident area, as appropriate.

3. Meeting the Team

- The responsible agency administrator and fire staff will meet the incident commander and command and general staff, welcoming them to the unit. The agency administrator and IC will agree when to begin the agency administrator's briefing.
- The responsible agency administrator will conduct the agency administrator's briefing following the format provided in this guide.

4. Transition from local management to team management of the incident

- Avoid transfer of command during the active burning period or an operational period to which resources are assigned and being managed by the local organization.
- If no resources are assigned to the incident, takeover of the incident by the team may occur as practical. However, current fire behavior and area involved by the incident should be compatible with objectives stated for the team in the WFSA.
- Ensure availability of the current incident commander and any key personnel to personally meet with and brief the incoming team.

5. Managing the Team

- The responsible agency administrator will provide oversight to the incident management team, primarily through monitoring the appropriateness of the WFSA selected alternative strategy and effectiveness of the team's tactical implementation of that decision document, direction in the delegation of authority, and overall relationship with the host unit, cooperators, and incident support organization.

- **Remember, the team is working for you.** You have the same obligation to them as you would to any other member of your regular organization to support their needs to get the job done. When the team arrives to manage the incident, find out if they are at full strength, with all key positions staffed or en route. If not, help the team get the qualified personnel they need by exercising your influence through proper channels. Find out what other specific needs the team may have or anticipate, and help make those resources available to them. Use this opportunity to address your units training needs as well.
- The responsible agency administrator, or a delegated representative (agency administrator's representative or fire staff) should be available to the incident commander for quick consultation and decision making on an arranged basis through established communications contact points and times and scheduled meetings.

Distinctions Between Type 2 and Type 1 Incident Management Teams

As with all resource kinds in the incident command system, incident management teams are "typed" to better identify and communicate the capabilities they bring to incident management. Generally, a Type 1 IMT is considered to have the most experienced and qualified personnel available for managing the largest and most complex incidents. Most Type 1 team members have experience on Type 2 teams and many have multifunctional experience.

A Type 1 IMT will come to an incident with approximately 35 to 40 core members and be able to manage the largest incidents, including those involving branching for effective span-of-control and large scale aviation operations. This and their experience with multiple jurisdictions and agencies, complex fiscal situations, high profile public and media events, and sheer size of organizations typically associated with the largest incidents are frequently the reason Type 1 teams are assigned.

There are currently 16 (2001) National Type 1 incident management teams formed; two of those are assigned in the Southwest Geographic Area. Teams are available on scheduled rotations managed both at the local geographic area level and nationally by the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise. A large or complex incident in the Southwest will normally have one of the two Type 1 teams for this area assigned to it. A national rotation provides for T1 teams to be available at most times for assignment to any location where activity warrants, including outside the normal geographic area of use for those teams.

A Type 2 IMT will come to an incident with approximately 25 to 30 members and is considered to be most effective at smaller and less complex incidents. Type 2 teams are formed within zones or subgeographic areas of the larger geographic area. There are four Type 2 teams within the Southwest Geographic Area. One located in New Mexico, one in Northern Arizona, in central Arizona, and one in Southern Arizona. Type 2 teams are fully qualified for those incidents where organizations, political and fiscal complexity, duration of the incident, and other factors included in the incident complexity analysis indicate.

Both Type 1 and Type 2 teams are interagency in nature and all members may be expected to represent the interests and carry out the direction of the host agency and unit fully during their assignment to the incident.

7. Incident Organizations

Incident Command System large fire organizations and large fire incident support organizations.

7. Incident Organizations

A. Incident Management and Support Organizations

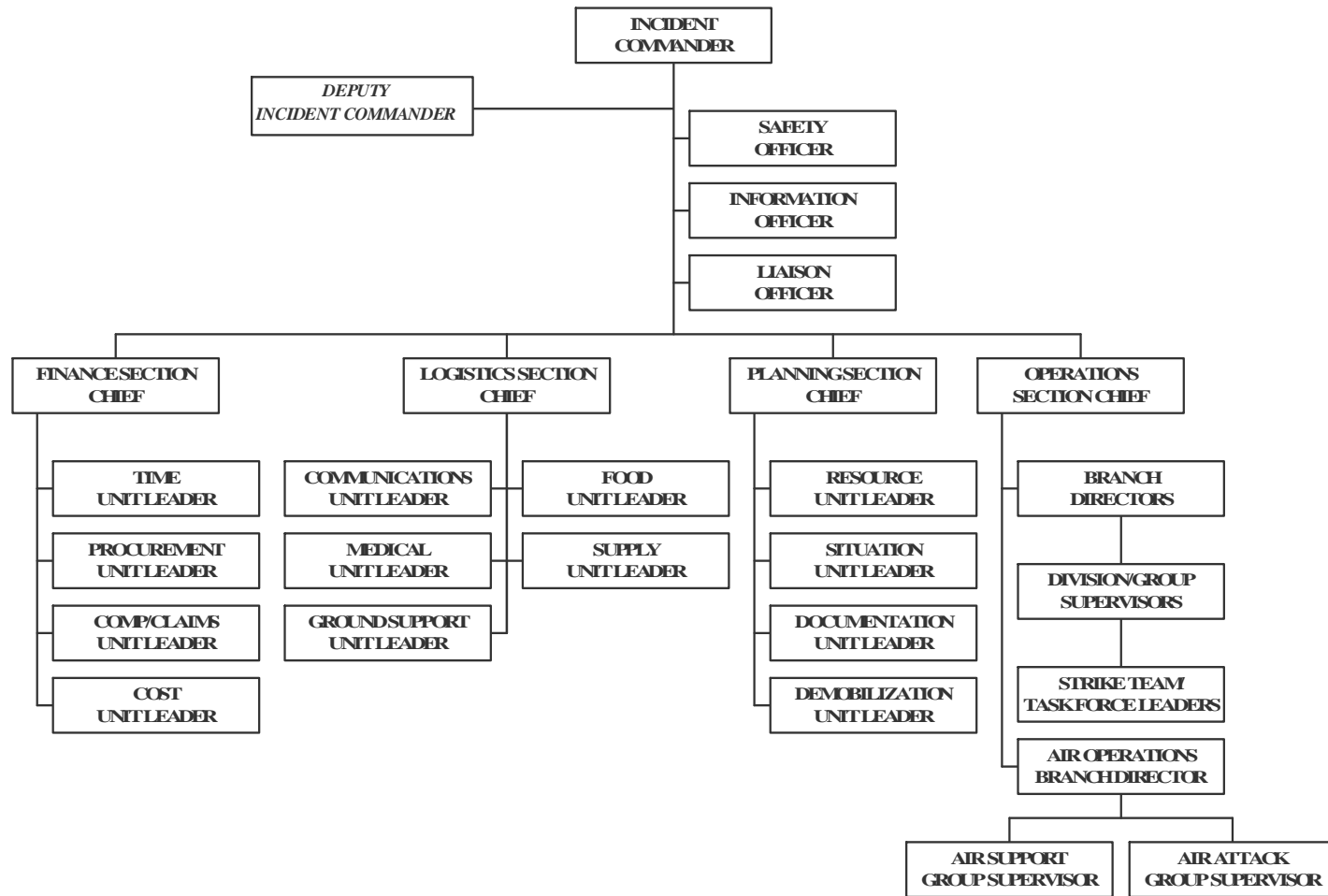
Several types of organizations exist or are formed to manage wildland fire activity and individual wildland fire suppression and support requirements. They include the following:

1. Incident Management

a. Incident Command System Organization Incident Management Team (IMT)

An IMT is established at the appropriate level (type) for the complexity of the fire. The incident commander and the command and general staffs oversee the functional sections assigned to the team. The ICS organization is designed to expand and contract effectively as the complexity of the incident warrants. An incident management team organization at the Type 1 level (branched) is shown in Chart 1. In most cases, both Type 1 and Type 2 organizations will have additional positions filled under the unit leader levels and both types will expand and contract their organizations appropriately based on the complexity of the incident. Additionally, Type 1 and Type 2 IMTs will carry six or more trainee positions to the incident, with other trainee positions filled in the organization as appropriately determined by the incident commander and agency administrator.

Chart 1.a. Incident Management Team (IMT)



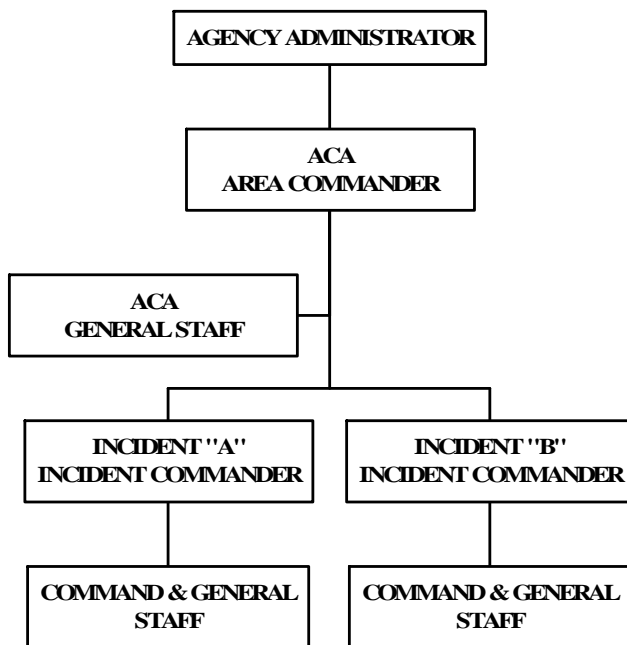
b. Area Command Authority (ACA)

An ACA is activated when multiple large incidents are occurring in a relatively small geographic area, usually within a single zone. ACA expands the command function of the ICS to provide coordination, direction and oversight to individual incident command teams. Area command works for the agency administrator(s) with responsibility for the lands involved through a single or unified delegation of authority. The ACA area commander provides delegation to individual incident commanders working within the ACA area of authority.

An ACA deals primarily with intelligence from and about the situation in their area of authority and is responsible for making key decisions regarding prioritization of incidents and assignment of critical resources to those incidents. The ACA does not manage tactics for individual incidents. When a MAC group is established, the ACA coordinates closely with that group for management of intelligence and critical fire suppression resources.

ACA members will be qualified incident management personnel in the general staff functions, usually to include an area commander, area command planning chief, and area command logistics chief. A typical ACA organization is shown in Chart 2.

Chart 2. Area Command Authority (ACA)



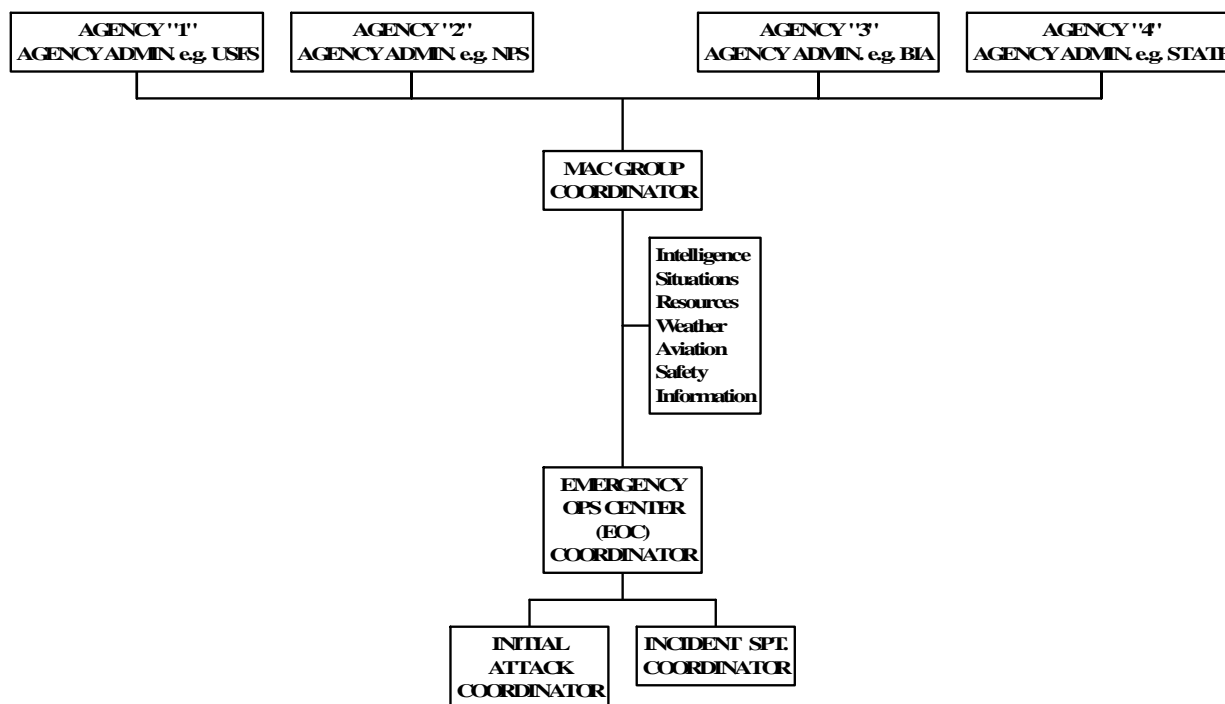
c. MultiAgency Coordination Group (MAC)

A MAC is a group of interagency representatives with decision making authority for their agencies which may be convened at the national level (one only at the National Interagency Fire Center at Boise), the geographic area level (e.g. southwest), and/or at the local or zone level.

A MAC group deals primarily with intelligence from and about the situation in their area of authority and is responsible for making key decisions regarding prioritization of incidents and assignment of critical resources within that area of influence.

Local MAC group members will be agency administrators, or delegates (e.g. forest supervisor, park superintendent, area manager, county commissioner(s)). A typical MAC organization is shown in Chart 3.

Chart 3. MultiAgency Coordination Group (MAC)



2. Incident Support

a. Initial Attack Dispatch Centers (IAC)

An IAC (e.g. Cibola Dispatch) is responsible for initial attack and extended attack dispatching and support at the administrative unit level. IACs are supported from dispatch coordination centers when local resources are insufficient to meet initial attack and extended attack requirements.

b. Dispatch Coordination Centers (DCC)

A DCC (e.g. Albuquerque Zone) is usually interagency or multiple intra-agency in composition. It has authority to assign resources to and support incidents at multiple agency and/or administrative unit levels, usually within a defined zone. A DCC may be colocated with an IAC. A DCC is supported from the geographic area coordination center established for that area when resources available in the DCC zone are insufficient to meet needs.

c. Geographic Area Coordination Centers (GAC)

A GAC (e.g. Southwest Coordination Center) coordinates intelligence and resource status, including the movement of fire suppression forces and equipment, between DCCs within a geographic area. A GAC has responsibility for providing incident(s) support to DCCs for large fire or multiple fire events. A GAC does not have initial attack responsibility. A GAC is supported from the National Interagency Coordination Center when geographic area resources are insufficient to meet needs.

d. National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC)

The NICC at Boise, Idaho, coordinates intelligence and resource status, including the movement of fire suppression forces and equipment, between geographic areas throughout the country. NICC is responsible for providing support to GACs from other GACs and other Federal agencies (e.g. military, FEMA), and for coordination between Federal agencies in the U.S. and other nations.

e. Expanded Dispatch (EDS)

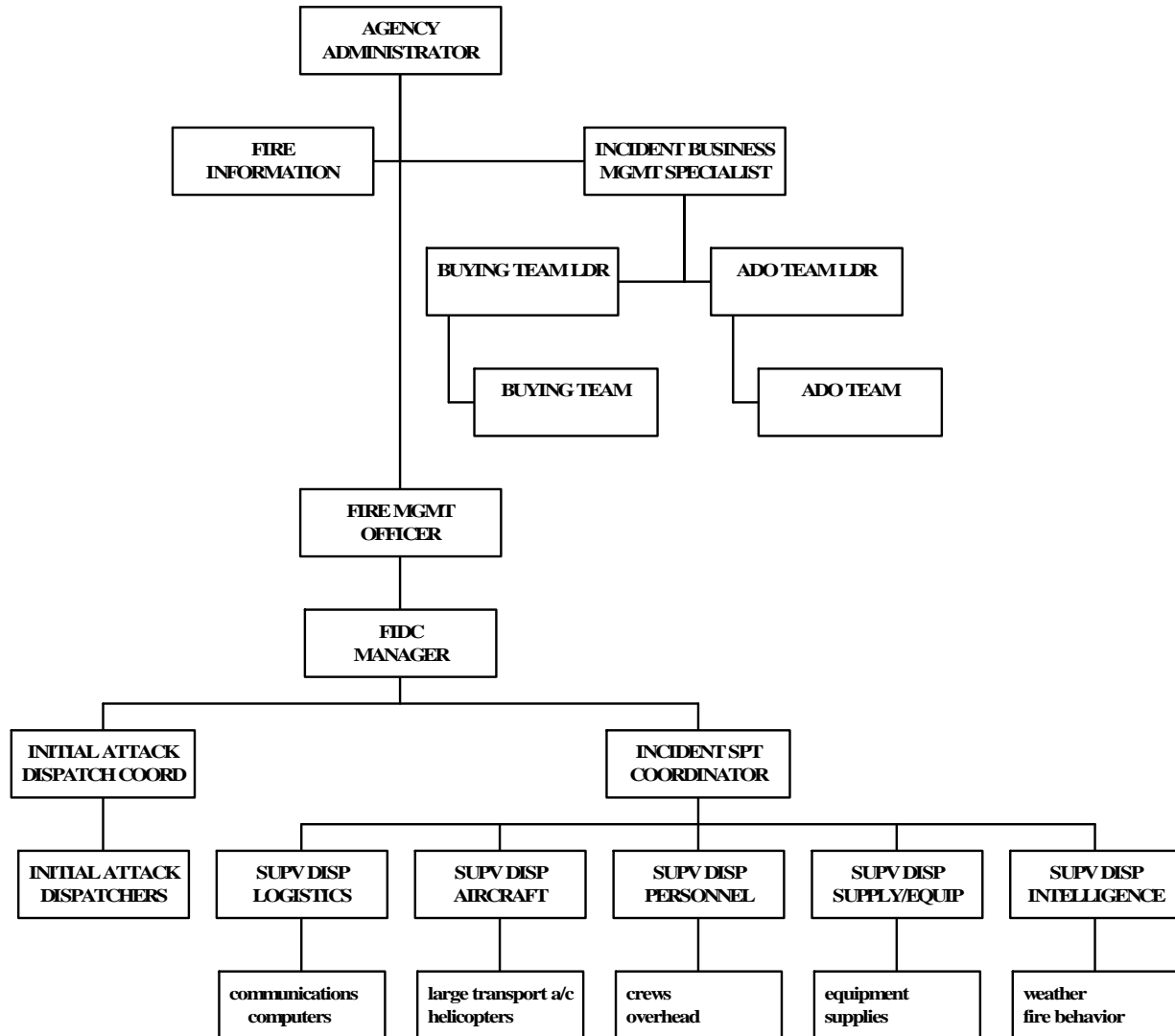
An EDS is established as a temporary functionalized organization to relieve a unit's initial attack dispatch organization from extra workloads associated with supporting a single large incident or multiple incidents. EDS is usually formed at the IAC and fully integrated with the unit's normal dispatch organization to increase staffing and provide extended service.

f. Incident Support Organization (ISO)

An ISO may be established to support a large wildland fire incident or multiple incidents (to which a Type 1 or Type 2 IMT has/have been assigned). The ISO is generally needed when the incident require(s) a level of support exceeding the capabilities of the normal dispatch organization. Timely activation of this organization is critical to effective incident support and to prevent overloading the local dispatch organization which must remain focused on initial attack and other normal activities on the forest.

As with the ICS large fire organization, the ISO is designed to expand and contract as incident complexity and volume of business warrants. An ISO is established to support incident requirements other than dispatching. The ISO performs technical and administrative support functions including communications support, ground transportation, equipment inspection, procurement, staging area management, etc. A typical large fire ISO is shown in Chart 4. The ISO should be organized to meet specific incident workload requirements.

Chart 4. Large Fire Incident Support Organization



8. Delegation of Authority

A format for the agency administrator's delegation of authority to the incident commander.

8. Delegation of Authority

A. Introduction

The transfer of authority for suppression actions on a wildland fire is accomplished through the execution of a written delegation of authority from the agency administrator with responsibility for the land area involved to the incident commander who will be assigned responsibility for implementing the agency's strategic direction for management of the incident. In conjunction with the wildland fire situation analysis, the delegation of authority is the most important procedural responsibility the agency administrator has in managing the wildland fire.

An incident management team will assume the authority to manage suppression actions on a fire only after receiving a signed delegation of authority from the agency administrator which is definitive enough for the situation and mutually acceptable. The delegation is part of the briefing package provided by the agency administrator and appropriate staff to the incident management team.

B. Purpose of the Delegation of Authority

A letter delegating authority and assigning responsibilities should be issued by the agency administrator whenever an incident commander and his or her team is assigned to manage an incident on the unit.

Prepare a delegation of authority specific enough to convey to the incident commander your expectations, yet broad enough to allow the team to be responsive to contingencies which develop during the incident. Any constraints that are necessary for the agency to meet land management objectives, avoid political problems and high levels of public concern, prevent unacceptable environmental impacts, or jeopardize firefighter or public safety should be included in sufficient detail for clear understanding between the agency administrator and incident commander. Where the team can be given the latitude to carry out the agency administrator's direction within the WFSA preferred alternative, further constraints only inhibit and reduce the team's management effectiveness and should be considered carefully.

Consider the delegation of authority as the performance objectives for the team on this incident. If that document is vague, the team cannot be held accountable for specific intentions the agency may have, but failed to clearly communicate in writing. If it is too restrictive, the team loses the necessary latitude to be responsive to changed conditions in the fire's environment that may require immediate action.

The direction provided in the delegation and the strategic objectives in the WFSA should serve as the basis for evaluating the performance of the incident management team at the conclusion of their assignment.

C. Who Is Responsible?

As in delegating any authority, the delegation for management of a wildland fire incident can only be made by the person responsible for management of the lands involved. For incidents involving more than one organizational level, or adjacent lands, either public or private, the the individual responsible for the entire jurisdiction will act as the responsible agency administrator. The appropriate official will also represent the agency administrator's role in incident management anytime an area command team is in place during multiple incident situations on the unit or involving the agency and cooperating agencies. In this case, the appropriate agency administrator will issue a single delegation of authority to the area commander, and the area commander will

further delegate authority to individual incident commanders specifically for the incidents they are managing.

D. Components To Include In The Delegation Of Authority

The delegation of authority should identify objectives and important issues identified by the agency administrator, placing performance expectations on the incident management team, and should identify and explain:

- Jurisdictional and protection responsibility for the lands involved in the wildland fire, including responsibility for structural protection where relevant.
- The agency administrator's representative who is authorized to speak for the delegating agency administrator.
- Suppression objectives and their priority.
- Specific suppression tactics or areas that require agency administrator approval.
- Initial attack responsibilities and areas that may be assumed by the team.
- Resource advisor who will represent the agency administrator's specific direction to the team.
- Basic documents that guide incident management on the agency/unit.
- Cost constraints and guidelines.
- Property accountability; fire loss/use rate expectations.
- Incident business advisor and required coordination with the team.
- Guidelines for media relations and incident information management.
- Procedures dealing with threats to other jurisdictions and private property.
- Any local logistical considerations, including procurement and supply procedures.
- Any other constraints or issues, such as current activities by forest or other agencies, legal requirements, training opportunities, etc.

In any specified direction, use clear, measureable descriptions to the extent possible.

E. Example of a Delegation of Authority Letter

The following is a sample format for the delegation of authority from the agency administrator to the incident commander.

SAMPLE DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

File Code: _____ Date: _____

Subject: Delegation of Authority for the _____ **Incident**

To: _____, **Incident Commander**

_____, you are hereby assigned as the Incident Commander for the _____ Incident on the _____ District of the _____ National Forest. This fire will be managed under a Unified Command structure with _____.

I expect you to take command of the incident no later than _____ at _____ hours.

You have full authority and responsibility for managing incident operations within the framework of legal statute, current policy, and the broad direction provided in both your verbal and written briefing materials. You are accountable to me. A formal evaluation of your performance will be conducted prior to your departure from the Forest. This formal evaluation may be followed up within sixty days after your departure once the Forest has had the opportunity to review accountability, claims, financial matters, and other items, which require time to evaluate.

Safety

Accountability for fire safety is your first and most important responsibility. All members of your team must observe a “Zero Tolerance” for any careless or unsafe action. As Incident Commander, please take the appropriate actions to insure that everyone involved in suppressing the fire knows and follows these **Safety Principles**:

- Safety Comes First on Every Fire, Every Time.
- The Ten Standard Fire Orders Are Firm. They will not be bent or broken. If anyone is observed breaking an Order, they are to be relieved of their fire assignment on the spot. No exceptions!
- All firefighters must have a safe assignment. If a chance is taken, it will be on the loss of property and natural resources, never on firefighter safety.
- Every firefighter and member of your team is responsible to ensure compliance with the established safe firefighting practices.

Incident personnel who violate these practices are to be reprimanded and released from the incident. Again—**ZERO TOLERANCE**—no exceptions.

Wildfire Fire Situation Analysis (WFSa)

A Wildfire Fire Situation Analysis (WFSa) has been prepared for this incident and will provide broad strategic direction for you. Should a new WFSa be deemed necessary upon regular operational period review, be prepared to assist in its development.

Cost Accountability

You are to provide the necessary suppression capability to control this wildfire at a reasonable cost to meet the objectives specified and to protect on- and off- Forest values.

- Emphasize good accountability for supplies ordered from the cache. Keep the incident loss tolerance within 25%.
- By 10:00 AM each morning, please provide me with a daily fire suppression cost, by category for this incident.
- Although broad incident suppression cost estimates is set in the WFSa, I expect the team to develop and implement reasonable and prudent incident suppression expenditure decisions.

The estimated suppression cost in the WFSa is \$ __,000,000. I am setting the estimated suppression limit at \$ __,000,000 based upon the assumption that you will make every effort to contain within the selected alternative, but with the realization that there will be increased _____ (aviation) costs associated with working in the _____ (urban interface) of _____. If the fire remains within the selected alternative boundary, you are authorized to spend up to _____ (ten (10)) percent more than this amount without further changes to the WFSa. Given the variability and complexity of this incident and the range of historic costs used to derive this figure, I am providing this flexibility in order to ensure the successful conclusion of this incident, with the expectation that you and your Incident Management Team will strive to achieve the lower amount. I wish to be clear on the expectation that I do not want firefighter or public safety to be compromised over cost-containment actions.

Wildfires involving multiple jurisdictions may require mutually approved cost apportionment agreements. These agreements should be implemented by you as the Incident Commander based upon direction from the Administrative Officer or the Incident Business Advisor.

Incident Business Advisor (IBA)

An Incident Business Advisor (IBA) has been assigned, _____. Work closely with the IBA to stay fully informed of fiscal issues, expenditures and the limitations. Be concerned about property accountability and potential damage claims. Be efficient in your operations.

Public Information

Work closely with Public Affairs Officer, _____, and representatives of other agencies and jurisdictions. Keep them informed and work closely with them, proactively dealing with controversial issues.

An information center has also been established in the _____ and a Joint Information Center (JIC) is being established. You will be responsible for information, but I expect you to coordinate releases through the Forest Information Center and the JIC.

Cooperate with the local media. Be responsive to their needs but do not compromise safety standards in meeting their needs.

Your team is to handle local and national media contacts in coordination with the agency or JIC if established. All political contacts are to be forwarded to District Ranger _____. Keep me informed regarding all political aspects.

Suppression Considerations

The WFSA sets the priorities for the suppression actions. In my absence, _____ (Fire Management Officer) or _____ (Deputy Fire Management Officer) will be my representative. District Ranger _____ are available to advise you on District resource considerations.

_____ will be the agency liaison to you. Work closely to resolve problems and seek local fire management expertise in coordination with other incidents.

Resource Issues

Sensitive resource and land management issues include the necessity to minimize long-term watershed damage, minimize the adverse impacts to threatened and endangered species habitat. Please coordinate closely with the assigned agency Lead Resource Advisor _____ to minimize impacts to these habitats. Archeological considerations need to be addressed with _____ during suppression operations. Other sensitive activities requiring resource management advice include the placement of tractor lines, road damage and other suppression actions that could cause disturbance to watershed values.

Major Threatened and Endangered (T&E) species issues: _____. Please work closely with the Resource Advisor to minimize impacts to these issues.

Practice minimal impact suppression tactics in riparian areas when ever possible. Be conscious of invasive species, I expect actions to be taken to reduce the opportunity of spread of weeds. A weed-washing station for off-agencyt equipment should be set up as soon as possible.

Work closely with the Resource Advisors at briefings and planning meetings to minimize impacts to all resources.

A rehabilitation team will be assigned to evaluate rehab needs. Please work closely with the team.

Central Ordering Point

The central ordering point will be at _____.

Human Resources

Human resource issues include the need to provide for training specialist and human resource specialist needs. I expect that all Human Resource issues will be reported to me personally. The incident is to me managed with ZERO TOLERANCE FOR SEXUAL HARASSMENT. Incident personnel who demonstrate any type of inappropriate behavior should be released immediately

with appropriate follow-up documentation. Inappropriate behavior would include alcohol, drugs, sexual harassment, or any violation of personnel rules.

Be sure we provide for and meet Regional Training needs and human resource objectives. There will be no closed camp as far as incident personnel are concerned. A representative from NFFE may be assigned to this incident.

Incident Base

The Incident Base will be at _____.

Incident Turn Back Standards

The Fire Management Officer _____ will set the turn back standards.

Final Payments

Because of fiscal accountability issues, your team will be expected to prepare daily accruals and pay all obligations incurred on this incident.

Should any problems or concerns arise, please contact me. I am prepared to discuss any needs to revise or revisit this delegation. Agency personnel can be contacted at the following numbers:

Name	Title	Office	Cell Phone	Pager	Home
	Agency Administrator				
	Dep.				
	FMO				

	Resource Advisor				
	Public Affairs Officer				

SWCC Dispatch can be reached at Emergency 505..., Business 505..., or Fax 505...

Sincerely,

Agency Administrator
Southwestern Agency

9. Agency Administrator's Briefing

A format for preparing and conducting the agency administrator's briefing to the incident management team.

9. Agency Administrator's Briefing

A. Introduction

The agency administrator's briefing is a crucial procedure that should be given thorough attention and preparation, in consideration of the general hurried state of business during the transition between extended attack, an escaped fire, and the anticipation of an incident management team.

The agency administrator's briefing will provide information, guidance, and direction, including constraints, necessary for the successful management of the incident.

The briefing must be provided any time an incident management team is assigned, including changing teams before all incident objectives have been met, and whenever major jurisdictional responsibilities are added or otherwise change during the incident.

Either at the time of the agency administrator's briefing for the incident management team, or at a separate place and time if necessary, ensure that the IMT has an opportunity to meet with, be briefed by, and thoroughly transition with the current incident commander and members of their organization prior to assuming command of the incident.

B. Purpose of the Agency Administrator's Briefing

The purpose of the agency administrator's briefing is to:

1. Provide a common understanding between the agency administrator and the incident management team of the environmental, social, political, economic, and other management issues relevant to the incident and its location.
2. Inform the IMT of the history, current status of the incident, and actions taken to date, including weather, fire behavior, and effectiveness of tactics.
3. Present other documents providing intelligence and aids to management of the incident, including maps, photos, GIS products, weather forecasts, fire management plans, phone lists, agreements, operational period plans, and current ICS-209.
4. Present the wildland fire situation analysis with the selected alternative and delegation of authority letter from the line officer to the incident commander.
5. Identify key agency personnel who will be involved with the IMT, including the agency administrator's representative, resource advisor, and incident business advisor.
6. Establish procedures and schedules for communication between the line officer and incident commander.
7. Establish how news media, public information, and important local and political contacts will be handled on the incident.
8. Establish resource ordering procedures.
9. Identify the IMT's responsibility for initial attack and support of other forest incidents.
10. Establish the disposition of forest suppression resources and local participation on the incident.
11. Establish understanding for the use of trainees on the incident.
12. Establish forest and incident policy on compensable meal breaks, work/rest, rest and recuperation, and open v. closed camps.

13. Establish standards for return of the incident to local management, including mopup and fire suppression rehabilitation expectations.
14. Identify special safety awareness concerns and expectations.

C. Conducting the Agency Administrator's Briefing

The briefing should be planned for a comfortable setting away from most distractions, where the incoming incident management team and all required representatives of the host agency can assemble. It should take place as soon as the incoming team is assembled. It is essential that the line officer ensure notification of the briefing time and location to the incident commander, usually through the dispatch network.

The briefing should be led by the responsible line officer and follow an organized format to ensure information exchange and minimize the time required of the team prior to them mobilizing to the incident location. All agency participants must be prepared for their part in this procedure, and all pertinent information and documentation must be printed in sufficient quantities for required distribution.

The agenda for the agency administrator's briefing should include:

1. Welcome and Introductions Agency Administrator/ IC
2. Incident History..... FMO
3. Background of other activity or issues on the unit
that may influence this incident FMO/Agency Administrator
4. Overview of WFSA selected alter native, strategy and direction FMO
5. Presentation of the agency administrator's briefing package
(discussion of each element) FMO
6. Presentation of delegation of authority to the IC. Agency Administrator
7. Emphasis on Safety Agency Administrator
8. Questions and AnswersIC/AgencyAdmin/ FMO
9. Concluding RemarksAgency Administrator

D. Who Should Participate

From the agency:

- Agency administrator from all affected levels of the organization or their representatives
- fire staff officer/FMO
- resource advisor
- incident business advisor
- current incident commander
- dispatch center manager
- incident support organization coordinator
- buying team leader
- necessary staff specialists

From the incident management team:

- At a minimum, the Command and General Staff should attend. Attendance of other members of the teams should be at the IMT's discretion

Others:

- Involved cooperator's representatives

Do not make the agency administrator's briefing a public meeting and do not include the press.

E. Agency Administrator's Briefing Format

The following format is for organizing the agency administrator's briefing package.

**Agency Administrator's Briefing
to
The Incident Management Team**

_____ **WILDLAND FIRE INCIDENT**

_____ **AGENCY**

_____ **ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT**

_____, _____

Contents

1. Delegation of authority to the incident commander
2. WFSA _____ Fire ____/____/____
3. Agency administrator's briefing form
4. ICS-209 for ____/____/____
5. Unit fire management direction
6. Fire wx. forecast for ____/____/____
7. Incident area map(s)
8. Incident area aerial photo(s); (planning section chief packet only)
9. Resource, overhead, and equipment order forms completed to ____/____/____
(logistics section chief packet only)
10. Agency, incident telephone directory
copies to (21)

Command and General Staff:

- ☐ IC
- ☐ Deputy IC
- ☐ Planning Section Chief
- ☐ Operations Section Chief
- ☐ Finance Section Chief
- ☐ Logistics Section Chief
- ☐ Incident Information Officer
- ☐ Safety Officer
- ☐ Liaison Officer
- ☐ Air Operations Director
 - ☐ Area Commander (if ACA established)
 - ☐ MAC Group Coordinator (if MAC established)
 - ☐ Other

Local Organization:

- ☐ Supervisor/Manager/Superintendent
- ☐ Incident Business Advisor
- ☐ District Ranger/RA Manager
- ☐ Resource Advisor
- ☐ Agency Fire Staff
- ☐ Unit FMO
- ☐ Agency Dispatch Center Manager
- ☐ Incident Support Coordinator (if ISO established)
- ☐ Public Affairs Officer

**Key Personnel and Contacts for the
(name of wildland fire) Incident**

For the _____ Unit (see attached Unit/Incident telephone directory):

For Other Agency Cooperators

For County

Local Landowners, Residents, Permittees, Parties with Interest

Agency Administrator's Briefing To The Incident Management Team

A. Incident Identification

1. Name of incident: _____
2. Incident start: _____
 - cause _____
 - date _____
 - time _____
3. Size of incident: _____
4. Current IC: _____
5. General weather conditions/forecast: _____

6. Fire behavior: _____

7. Fuel types:
 - at fire _____
 - ahead of fire _____

B. Command Considerations

1. Other fires on unit/cooperators: _____

2. Delegation of authority; agency administrator's representative: _____
3. Resource advisor(s) assigned to incident: _____

4. Technical specialists assigned to incident: _____

5. Unit Mgmt. Plan/Fire Mgmt. Plan direction:

6. Priority for this incident (local, regional, national):

7. Values to be protected:

8. Political considerations:

9. Social/economic considerations:

10. Social/economic considerations:

11. Health and welfare considerations:

12. Human resources management considerations:

13. Desired local participation in fire team organization:

14. Unified Command (in place or contemplated):

15. Area Command (in place or contemplated):

16. MAC organization (in place or contemplated):

17. Evaluation team assigned:

18. News media relations:

19. IIO organization report to:

20. Special relationships/"thank you" policy for assistance:

21. Other agencies on this incident:

22. Land status:

23. Cooperative agreements relevant to incident:

24. Condition of organization on rest of unit:

25. Capability of unit to support team:

26. Training opportunities/policy on use of trainees:

27. Team will assume command: date _____ time _____

28. Transition and closeout plan:

C. Safety Considerations

1. Accidents/near misses on incident to date:

2. Status of accident investigations/reports:

3. Areas with known or potential hazards:

4. Firefighter safety considerations:

5. Public safety considerations:

6. Critical incident stress management procedures:

7. Medical treatment facilities/procedures:

D. Operations Considerations

1. Priorities for management, WFSA selected strategy:

2. Are structures threatened:

3. Equipment on fire:
Is all equipment inspected (including pressure washing for weeds) and signed up:

4. Tactics used to date and success:

5. Fire weather forecasting services/fire weather station(s) data availability:

6. Mopup standards:

7. Initial attack responsibilities:

8. Airtankers assigned:

Airtanker effectiveness: _____
9. Air Base location: _____
Telephone: _____
10. Helicopters assigned:

11. Helibase location: _____

- Telephone: _____
12. Crash/rescue at helibase:

13. Temporary Flight Restriction assigned:

14. Flight hazard map available/known hazards in area:

15. Smoke conditions affecting air operations:

16. Air operations technical specialist assigned or ordered:

E. Planning Considerations

1. Unusual fire behavior and fire history in area of fire:

2. Legal considerations (investigations in process):

3. Preattack plans available: yes _____ no _____
4. Availability of aerial photos and maps:

5. Agency needs for release of presently assigned resources:

6. Incident Status Summary (ICS-209) reporting requirements:

7. Most recent ICS-209 available:

8. Training specialist assigned or ordered:

9. Personnel now on incident (organization):

10. Firefighter rest and rehabilitation policy:

11. Fire suppression rehabilitation policy:

12. Demobilization procedures:

F. Logistics Considerations

1. ICP location:

2. Base location:

3. Incident transportation plan:

4. Incident Support organization:

5. Ordering system to be used:

6. Procurement Unit/Buying Team in place or ordered:

7. Security considerations/local law enforcement assistance:

8. Communications system(s) in use/ordered:

9. Resources ordered:

10. Catering services/feeding procedures:

11. Medical/burn facilities:

12. Medivac procedures:

13. Potable water sources:

14. Gray water disposal location:

15. Vehicle and Equipment Washing Stations and Instructions:

Location: _____

Have all equipment and vehicles washed at check-in before assignment to the fire area.
Equipment Managers check all equipment for compliance.

15. Garbage disposal service/location:

16. Incident recycling requirements:

G. Finance Considerations

1. Fiscal considerations/limitations or constraints:

2. Cost to date:

3. Cost sharing agreements in effect:

4. Incident Business Management Advisor assigned:

5. Procedure established for T&A transmittals:

6. Claims to date:

7. Potential for claims:

10. Managing Incident Information

*Fire Information, Local Contact Person, Internal
Communication, Key Contacts*

10. Managing Incident Information

A. Incident Information

Keeping internal and external contacts informed is an important aspect of managing a fire or other incident. Getting the facts out to people in a timely manner is the primary objective of a fire information strategy.

In an initial attack situation, the dispatcher(s) essentially function as a fire information officer. Once the public or media are aware of an incident, they will be demanding information. If this situation begins to interfere with performance of dispatching duties, it is appropriate to request the assistance of a local public affairs officer (PAO) or a trained incident information officer (IIO). Until that person arrives, phone calls should be logged (name, affiliation, phone number), and personnel should simply tell the public and media someone will call them back as soon as possible.

Once a PAO/IIO is on the scene, he/she should be briefed and given a workspace. Designating a person at least one line for phone traffic and a second line for a PC for fire information will establish a central source and relieve the dispatcher and other incident personnel from the responsibility of responding to requests from the public or media. The IIO will then organize basic information (facts and a map), assess the situation, and determine if there is a need for additional help. He/she may recommend ordering one or more people.

Many news media monitor agency radios and often are en route to incidents as soon as they are aware of them. An IIO should be sent to the incident scene to deal with media and serve as a direct contact for the IIO handling phone inquiries.

Fire staff/agency administrators should work with PAOs and IIOs to evaluate the level of public and media interest in an incident and develop an appropriate information strategy. The steps to designing a strategy include:

- Identify goals and objectives.
- Identify key audiences.
- Determine which issues are important to communicate.
- Determine key audiences' expectations.
- Identify appropriate communication tools.
- Identify the timeframes involved.
- Identify people with roles/responsibilities.
- Determine any followup needed.

An IIO is an integral member of an incident management team. In addition to the tasks described above, the IIO can provide information to incident personnel, Zone or Southwest Area Intelligence Section, local agency personnel and cooperators; local, county, state, and Federal elected officials; track down and dispel rumors/misinformation; be alert to sensitive social/political/environmental issues and inform the management team; use the incident to communicate other messages; establish and maintain relationships with individuals/communities affected by an incident; and assist with special situations such as airplane crashes, vehicle accidents, evacuations and other events that may occur during an incident. Above all, an IIO can keep incident information in an active, rather than reactive mode.

B. Local Contact

Assigning a local contact person to the IIO will greatly facilitate the information process. A local person can quickly provide information about the local media, community concerns, key contacts, social and political issues, incident history, local geography and place names, road access and other valuable details about the area.

C. Internal Communication

Due to the pressure of dealing with the information needs of the public, news media, and elected officials, we sometimes forget the importance of our internal audiences. These include incident personnel, local agency personnel, and cooperating agencies who may be left out of the loop if the focus is on external contacts. An IIO and the local contact should ensure that a variety of communication methods (e-mail, fax, individual calls, bulletin boards, etc.) are utilized to keep people apprised of information as it becomes available. Among other things, this fosters morale and promotes support for incident management.

D. Critical Information Module

In the event of a fatality or other critical incident, the Southwest Coordination Center will dispatch a Critical Information Module if requested by an incident management team on an incident with a need for critical information handling. The Critical Information Module will work for the Incident Commander and be attached to the Team Information Officer. This 7-person module will include 6 information officers and a technical (computer) specialist.

E. Key Contacts

Maintaining a list of key contacts can be useful to both the local unit and the IMT when they arrive. These contacts may include key political figures in the area, cooperators, landowners of in-holdings that may affect, or be affected by, suppression activities or the fire itself, and news media sources.

Key Contacts

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>
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Southwest Area Coordination Group

Southwest Area Agency Administrator/Incident Management Team Internal Implementation Guidelines for Working with News Media

May 21, 2004

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Media plays an important role in the development of an informed public. It is the best interest of resource and incident managers to provide as much access to the Media as the situation allows (i.e. safety, or legal considerations). The media is guaranteed certain rights under the First Amendment to the Constitution. Members of the media are not entitled to unrestricted access to all aspects of incident operations, but denial of access will be the exception and not the rule. This guide will help the agency administrator/line officer (responsible official) determine what level of access can be allowed.

Denial of access is the exception, not the rule. Media access may be limited when:

- Safety is a significant concern. (i.e. Poor escape routes; travel to and from the site; narrow roads, etc; put others at risk; poor communications; extreme/erratic fire behavior).
- Interferes with or compromises incident operations. (i.e. vehicles or aircraft blocking access for firefighters; strategy/debriefing meetings).
- Compromises integrity of an investigation or investigation scene.
- Limits or violates security or personal privacy of emergency workers/firefighters.
- Not approved by non-public or tribal entity.

Your responsibility is to allow access to the maximum extent possible and convey these expectations to the Incident Commander. These guidelines will assist you in preparing for media operations in three areas: The Delegation of Authority, Information Operations, and Command Considerations.

PURPOSE

This document provides guidelines for consideration by Agency Administrators and Incident Managers to work effectively and SAFELY with the news media during incidents. Incidents create situations where resources are limited in a dynamic and hazardous environment with compressed timeframes. The intent of these guidelines is to enable the people served by the agencies represented here to receive information through the news media that is accurate, thorough and up to date.

These guidelines are presented in a format consistent with the chronology of a management team assuming responsibility for an incident. The responsible official needs to develop a local unit media policy prior to the arrival of an Incident Management Team.

A. Agency Administrator/Line Officer/Responsible Official Considerations

1. Prior to fire season develop a communication plan to identify key audiences, key messages, and protocol for release of information.

2. Delegation of Authority

- a. All jurisdictions and agencies agree on the roles and responsibilities that will be retained and those that will be delegated to the Incident Management Team. (e.g. Threatened & Endangered, and other sensitive issues questions and releases will be not delegated to the Incident Management Team)
- b. Define jurisdictional protocols (e.g. Local law enforcement has jurisdiction over evacuations, security of evacuated area, media access into closed communities and access to burned homes/structures on private land – delegate to Incident Management Team or identify key contact).
- c. Responsible official (s) determine if there will be a Joint Information Center (JIC) for all media information, or if each agency/jurisdiction provide their own information (refer media to individual agencies).
- d. Determine how you want the team to interact with either the JIC or individual agency.
- e. Identify key public affairs contacts from each jurisdictional agency.
- f. Define expectations for dissemination of information (e.g. public meetings, consistent coordinated messages – spokesperson(s))
- g. Provide “accurate and timely dissemination of incident information” as an Incident Objective, with definition and timeline for accomplishment.
- h. Determine whether or not to honor Memorandum of Understandings or other agreements (Agreement must be presented to the Agency Administrator) from other jurisdictional areas outside the host agency.

See Attachment 1, Examples of wording for Delegation.

B. Agency Administrator Briefing

Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations 2004, Chapter 11, Appendix 11-4, page 11-25, Agency Administrators Briefing to Incident Management Team (Attachment 2), add the following addendum to section Transition that apply in the Southwest Geographic Area:

- Key Public Affairs Contacts for each jurisdiction with incident responsibilities.
- Identify whether to honor a formal/informal agreement with media from outside your local authority (i.e. Forest Service Memorandum of Understanding with Hot Shot crew and newspaper reporter.)
- Identify key messages you expect the Incident Management Team to convey to the public.
- Identify whether to use a Joint Information Center or send referrals to individual agency Public Affairs Officer's.
- Provide documentation of any closures or restrictions in effect.

C. Incident Management Team Information Considerations

This section defines tactical considerations for the Information function of the Incident Management Team:

1. On incidents with an intense media interest, develop a media protocol to address “ground rules” while covering the incident. This document provides all media representatives with clear and consistent direction. This protocol should include the following:
 - a. Whether areas are closed to the media and a short explanation of why
 - b. Safety message
 - c. Where and who to contact
 - d. Place and time of media briefing/press conference

- e. What areas are immediately available for photographs, video, and live shots
 - f. What is required for escorted tours into closed or hazardous areas
- 2. Media representatives must be aware of what to expect during the incident, including specific safety concerns, and access options. Provide consistent direction.
- 3. When qualified escorts in the information group are limited, or access into the area is restricted, consider the use of “joint shared coverage” (preference is not to use the term “pool”). Ask the media to design the make-up of the joint shared coverage group, limiting to a set size.
- 4. Document reasons for access restrictions, i.e. current fire behavior or other safety hazards, closures imposed by other jurisdictions, etc.
- 5. Treat all media consistently and fairly, with consideration of formal agreements and/or prior training or certifications.
- 6. Emphasize Agency key messages as they relate to this incident (safety, fire behavior, National Fire Plan implementation, forest health issues, Local Government Cooperation, and Local Agency Administration messages).
- 7. Include cooperating agencies and partners in all public and media contacts.
- 8. Facilitate briefings with subject matter experts (e.g. Deputy IC, Unit Manager/Representative, local government officials, etc.)
- 9. Databases and electronic records containing fire incident and administrative records are generally open to the public. When feasible, fire progression maps and other data released on paper shall also be released at the same time or sooner in electronic form, such as disk, e-mail or FTP site download.

D. Command Considerations

This section defines general considerations for the Commander and their General Staff:

- 1. Where Unified Command, or Area Command, is not in place, local jurisdictions must be involved in making decisions concerning where media access will be allowed or restricted. When the local authority has jurisdiction or are providing law enforcement support to agency closures Incident Management Teams must recognize and respect their authority.
- 2. Include the information function in discussion or decisions regarding access into evacuated areas and areas where homes/structures are lost.
- 3. Should consider having or assigning a team liaison officer to assist with local coordination.
- 4. Determine early in the incident what access to ICP will be allowed to media representatives through the Incident Communication Plan. Consider long-term implications of where media are staged and/or access is authorized. (e.g. future threats to ICP, evacuation scenarios).
- 5. Evaluate during each operational period what areas of the incident will not be accessible to the media.
- 6. Assess what special messages or information may need to be emphasized in discussions with the media based on local issues and politics.

These guidelines are intended to be a framework for partnering with the media. It is important to remember that each incident is different and therefore must be addressed in a flexible manner.

REFERENCES

- 1. Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations 2004.
- 2. Line Officer’s Guide to Wildland Fire Decision Making, USDA Forest Service, Southwestern Region (Section 9 Delegation of Authority, page 3 Components to be included in Delegation of Authority – guidelines for media relations and incident information management)

3. "National Media Guide for Emergency and Disaster Incidents- A report by the National Press Photographers Association"
4. "United States Code of Federal Regulations"
5. "Arizona Revised Statutes"
6. "New Mexico Statutes Annotated"
7. "Fireline Handbook"

ATTACHMENT 1

Examples of Delegation language:

- Example 1: A Joint Interagency Information Center is established and reports to the host agency. The primary purpose at this point in time is to continue to manage the long-term information needs of the agency for current activities, develop and begin to implement a long-term communication and strategy plan and initiate a transition of Joint Information Center responsibilities and activities to appropriate agency staff. These activities will be coordinated with the Agency Administrator. A communication plan has been developed to identify key audiences, key messages, and protocol for release of information. The Incident Management Team will, in cooperation with the Joint Information Center (JIC) provide daily information to personnel at the JIC for their use in designing information campaigns to keep the public informed on key activities. Information activities can be coordinated with the Agency through PAO _____ (name) _____ (phone number).(List all responsible agencies). The Information Center phone number is _____.
- Example 2: A Joint Interagency Information Center has been established and reports to _____. The purpose is to handle the long-term information needs of the agencies for current activities and into the future as we transition into rehabilitation actions. Some items this group will do is; gather information and respond to inquiries from political and public interests, work with media (print, radio, TV), share information amongst all the agencies' employees, take advantage of teachable moments (National Fire Plan, learn about fire effects, homeowner fire prevention, current activities on the fire, wilderness fire management, local fire restrictions, ...), and continue to meet community information needs. _____ (Area Command, Incident Management Team) will, in cooperation with the Fire Information Center, prepare, coordinate and monitor an effective fire information plan and center operating guidelines. In addition to serving the needs of the media, the information plan should address: providing information to the media and to communities within the area, recreation sites, travelers and employees. Information sharing should include scheduling, organizing and facilitating public meeting as needed through the Incident Management Team's. Information should include good maps that show daily progress of the fire, trigger points for potential evacuation notices, and the boundaries of the fire with good reference points

listed. Additionally, information pertaining to the previous day's accomplishments, resources on board, and general operations being planned and implemented would be quite informative and valuable to our publics and employees. Potential problems such as hazardous areas, wind events, etc. should also be shared. News releases with local media should also be made frequently. This information should be formatted so that it can be added to web pages. Information activities should include coordination with congressional and local officials. All public information should be coordinated with the Fire Information Center as well as agency PAOs. You may coordinate information activities, with the agency PAO _____ (name), _____ (phone number). (List all responsible agencies). The Information Center phone number is _____.

ATTACHMENT 2

Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations 2004, Chapter 11, Appendix 11-4, page 11-25, Agency Administrators Briefing to Incident Management Team.

Incident Information

IIO Organization Reports To:

Incident Commander:

Agency Administrator:

Local Public Affairs:

Other:

Provide Incident Information Updates:

Unit FMO:

Expanded Dispatch:

Local Public Affairs:

Other:

Page 11-25, Release Date: January 2004

11. Responsibilities During the Fire

Guidelines for maintaining agency administrator's accountability during the fire and monitoring performance of the incident management team. Appointing and using a resource advisor to represent the agency's land management objectives and your direction to the incident management team. Providing for fire effects and fire suppression rehabilitation

.

11. Responsibilities During the Fire

A. General Guidelines

After assigning the incident management team to a wildland fire on your unit, the agency administrator should allow those with delegated authority and responsibility to manage the situation and resources assigned to it. You must be prepared to provide necessary oversight, guidance, and direction to each level of the incident management organization by staying informed of events and participating in intelligence and strategy discussions in order to understand the current and emerging situation, and be able to respond when decisions and direction are required.

The following are suggestions to help the agency administrator remain focused during a large fire incident on your unit.

- Recognize that every fire has potential.
- Nobody likes surprises.
- Be available and be involved, but do not micro-manage the incident. Let excellent people do excellent work, and make sure they know you are there to lead and support them.
- Review daily incident action plans and ensure that tactics and other direction are compatible with the strategic objectives provided for the incident. Firefighter and public safety must be given visible and sincere emphasis.
- Provide oversight and direction to the resource advisor.
- Daily WFSA validation.
- Ensure that unit/district welfare and caretaking is ongoing. Local personnel can become overwhelmed by the events, activities, and organization related to a large fire. Keep your folks informed and involved, but do not let them become overloaded by a combination of the fire and their normal duties, and do not let them feel left out.
- Keep your key publics and local government officials informed and involved.
- Understand the big picture; do the best you can with what you have. Increasingly, your large fire is not the only game in town, and the conventional wisdom of fire suppression may not apply.
- Know what is going on, see for yourself, stay ahead of the power curve.
- Use experienced advisors, coaches, or deputies to help you and your staff better manage the situation of increased volume and complexity of business during this period. Do not hesitate to bring in help to increase your unit's depth and situational management capability.
- In fire suppression, more often than not, that which must be done eventually should be done immediately.

B. Using the Resource Advisor

When a wildland fire is managed by an incident management team, the agency administrator should assign a resource advisor (RA) to work for you, and with the team, to represent your direction for meeting land and resource objectives during fire suppression. The RA is responsible for identifying and evaluating potential impacts of fire operations on natural and cultural resources, as well as to the social and political atmosphere affecting the unit. The RA will use their local understanding and familiarity to integrate these issues and concerns into the fire management strategy and tactics

and assist the IMT in developing mitigations which satisfy the mutual objectives of wildland fire suppression and resource protection.

The decision to appoint a resource advisor should be made early in the decision process for managing a large wildland fire incident. Ideally, the RA is appointed and briefed by the agency administrator before the incident management team is in place and assumes direct management of the objectives set for the fire. The RA should be involved in the preparation of the wildland fire situation analysis and agency administrator's briefing to the IMT. That person should be made available to the team on as near a full time basis during the team's management of the incident as possible. Consequently, the agency administrator should take necessary steps to alleviate the RA of other routine responsibilities to the extent possible.

Throughout the incident, the agency administrator should be available to the RA for consultation and monitoring of issues and events. In all events, the agency administrator and RA must remember that the RA works *for* the agency administrator and *with* the team.

C. Fire Rehabilitation

As soon as a large wildland fire incident occurs, the agency administrator must begin considering the effects and consequences of the fire itself and of the fire suppression activities on resources.

1. Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation

Fire effects are those caused by the burning fire. Those must be analyzed by a burned area emergency rehabilitation team (BAER). Specifically, BAER work is focused on emergency watershed rehabilitation to stabilize soil, control water runoff, sedimentation, and debris movement, and prevent threats to life, property, and other downstream values resulting from the loss of vegetation and other organic material consumed by the fire. The agency administrator is responsible for assembling the BAER team and directing the team leader. The objectives set for the BAER team will largely be determined by land management standards which apply to the area impacted by the fire and the severity of the fire on that area.

When the need for a BAER team is recognized and the team is assembled, its mission in the fire area must be coordinated with the incident management team and safe integration with the ongoing strategy and tactics employed by the IMT must be ensured.

Funding the BAER team's analysis work and subsequent rehabilitation activities will be provided by a special appropriation requested by the agency for only this purpose through the approved BAER plan for the fire area.

2. Fire Suppression Rehabilitation

The effects on resources and property caused by the tactical actions of fire suppression may be rehabilitated as part of the ongoing implementation of incident objectives being managed by the IMT and funded from the emergency suppression account established for the fire. Ground disturbance from fireline construction, road and trail damage from equipment use, site disturbance at incident bases, fences damaged for fire suppression access, etc., are examples of the types of fire suppression effects which may be rehabilitated in this manner.

Standards for fire suppression effects rehab must be established by the agency administrator, usually through the resource advisor, and clearly communicated to the IMT in a timeframe which allows the team to effectively incorporate this work into overall incident objectives and daily operations. Any such rehabilitation work which is not completed by the team and will be carried on by the home unit after the team has been released, must be completed promptly.

12. When Objectives Have Been Met

How to determine when you are ready to have management of the fire returned to your unit and evaluate the performance of, and release the incident management team.

12. When Objectives Have Been Met

A. Releasing an Incident Management Team

1. How to Know When to Release the IMT

The decision to release an incident management team will be mutually determined by the responsible agency administrator and incident commander when both agree that the objectives for the incident to that point have been met. One important consideration in making this decision is the consistency of the cost of the assigned team with the current incident objectives. Transition from a Type 1 IMT to a Type 2 IMT or Type 3, or from a Type 2 IMT to a Type 3 IMT at the appropriate time can result in substantial savings while still meeting remaining incident objectives. Exceptions are when incident duration exceeds the maximum number of days for the team's assignment, or when the team's capability or performance are not equal to the complexity of the assignment.

When an IMT's allowable assignment (number of days) nears, it is critical for the agency administrator to objectively review the status of the incident and the likelihood that the team will achieve the objectives set for it in the remaining days. The availability and pending release of the team should be discussed proactively with the incident commander and the geographic area coordinator to ensure all parties are aware of the range of management alternatives (for the team and the fire). It may be possible to negotiate a few additional days for the team's assignment if completion of objectives is very likely. If not, arrangements should begin several days before the team is due to "time out" for their replacement, allowing sufficient time for transition with a new team.

If an IMT is consistently failing to show positive results in managing the incident and the probability of this situation changing appears unlikely as a result of the team's capabilities and limitations, their release and replacement should be planned for as soon as that realization has been made. This is a decision that should be made in close coordination with the Regional Fire Director and Geographic Area Coordinator.

In any case, the release of an assigned team should only proceed when an appropriate organization is in place to transition and assume management over any remaining objectives for the incident (this could be a local Type 3 organization, a geographic area Type 2 IMT, or National Type 1 IMT).

The assigned incident management team should not be released by the host agency until:

- The agreed upon objectives, described in the delegation of authority and wildland fire situation analysis, have been met.
- Replacement Incident personnel levels are at or near the capabilities and numbers required to carry on final incident objectives.
- Incident base and camps have been demobilized, are being demobilized, or reduced appropriately to adequately serve the transitioning management organization.
- Planning section has completed the incident file and narrative up to the conclusion of their assignment.
- Finance section has all recognized finance issues resolved or loose ends collected for transition to new finance section or incident business advisor.

- Suppression rehabilitation work is completed or at a point where host unit is satisfied with assuming the remaining work.
- Overhead performance ratings are completed.
- Closeout has taken place or is scheduled between the host agency and the incident management team.

2. Transition of Delegated Authority

At the time of release of the assigned team, a *return of delegated authority* letter should be prepared and signed by the incident commander and responsible agency administrator. An example of such a letter follows.

Date: _____

To: _____ Agency Administrator

From: _____ Incident Commander

Subject: _____ Incident Transition

Per our agreement, on _____ (day of week) _____ (month)
_____ (date), _____ (year) at _____ (time) I relinquish my delegated authority as
Incident Commander of the _____
wildland fire incident and return management of remaining incident resources and
activities to _____ (host agency/unit).

At the time and on the date agreed to _____ (name)
will assume the responsibilities of Incident Commander under delegated authority and
direction provided by you.

The terms of this return of delegated authority and transition between this Incident
Management Team and the host agency or incoming team have been mutually discussed
and are understood by all parties involved. Specific conditions regarding this return and
transition may be attached to this letter as necessary.

_____ Incident Commander

_____ Agency Administrator

3. Fire Critique; Closeout with the Incident Management Team

The unit is responsible for hosting a fire critique and closeout meeting with the incident management team, involved agency personnel, and cooperators.

The critique and closeout should be held at a location away from the incident in an environment which allows for comfortable discussion of pertinent issues surrounding the management of the incident. The meeting should serve a constructive purpose for all parties. Significant issues should not be aired at the critique/closeout for the first time; those should have been addressed and resolved as an ongoing process during the management of the incident.

The suggested timeframe for the critique/closeout is 1 hour, but that guideline should not be a constraint when complex issues warrant additional discussion.

The following is a format to guide discussions and document an incident critique/closeout between the host unit and incident management team.

Incident Critique

Agency/Unit _____

Incident _____

IMT _____

Type ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ long ☐ short

Date Assigned _____

Date Released _____

Objectives

To lead a candid discussion of the circumstances, events, decision gates, direction, and actions which affected this incident and its management, to include key players from the host agency / unit, incident management team, and incident support organizations.

Participants (list)

Agenda

A. Mobilization and Transition from host unit to the IMT

1. Summary of initial actions by the host agency/unit:
2. Team ordering and mobilization:
3. Agency administrator briefing, WFSAs, and delegation of authority:
4. Transition with local incident management organization:
5. Pre-arrival actions made by the host agency to support the IMT (e.g. supply orders, base/camp setup, communications, incident support organization, buying team):

6. Other:

B. Interaction between Agency Organizations and Personnel and IMT

1. Availability of agency administrator, fire staff, resource advisor, incident business advisor, and other key agency personnel to the IMT:

2. Coordination with ISO:

3. Coordination with buying team:

4. Other organizational level's assistance visits/reviews conducted:

5. Other:

C. Fire Suppression Period

1. Appropriateness of strategy; effectiveness of tactics:
2. Firefighter safety; management by host agency/unit and IMT:
3. Logistics:
4. Aviation management:
5. Military use:

6. Fire suppression rehabilitation:

7. Other:

D. Finance and Accountable Property

1. WFSA cost estimates for the selected alternative:

2. Incident cost management/documentation:

3. Situations driving or controlling costs (e.g. WFSA direction, availability of resources, fire behavior, values to be protected, resource issues, tactics, equipment use, aviation use):

4. Accountable property management:

5. Other:

E. Transition and Demobilization

1. Decisions between host agency and IMT on condition of incident at time of transition to new team or back to unit:

2. Implementation of transition to new team or back to unit:

3. Support and management of demobilization process:

4. Other:

F. Closing Comments / Summary

4. Evaluating the Incident Management Team

The agency administrator must complete a written evaluation of the incident management team on completion of their assignment. That evaluation must be reviewed with the incident commander and those members of the IMT which the IC wants to have present.

The delegation of authority, WFSA, and any other agency administrator direction, as well as national fire management policy shall provide the standards against which the IMT is evaluated.

The evaluation should take place following the closeout meeting with the forest and IMT. The agency administrator and IC should reserve adequate time for this final responsibility prior to the demobilization/return travel arrangements for the IC.

The agency administrator completing the evaluation will provide written copies to the IC, fire staff, other organizational levels, and place a copy in the final fire package.

Factors to consider in evaluating the performance of the incident management team may include:

- Compliance with the delegation of authority.
- Compliance with the wildland fire situation analysis.
- Compliance with other agency administrator direction.
- Orderly transitions: Local unit to team, and team to local unit (or another team).
- Incident safety management; work/rest guidelines, LCES.
- Human resources management.
- Financial performance, including documentation of costs.
- Accountability of capitalized equipment.
- Completeness of claims investigations and documentation.
- Media relations.
- Local relations: landowners, communities, publics, government.
- Interaction with local agency personnel.
- Interaction with cooperating agencies.
- Effectiveness of suppression impacts rehabilitation.
- Effective use and documentation of trainee assignments.
- Coordination and cooperation with large fire support organization.
- Timely and orderly demobilization.
- Completeness of final fire package.

The following is an example of a generic incident management team evaluation format which may be used. However, most often it is best to develop the evaluation based on the delegation of authority and objectives from the WFSA. Whatever the format used, the evaluation should be conveyed to the IMT up front with the agency administrators briefing. This way, the IMT knows the elements upon which it will be evaluated.

Incident Management Team Evaluation

Agency/Unit _____ Incident _____

IMT _____ Type ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ long ☐ short

Date Assigned _____ Date Released _____

The agency administrator should document the team's performance in each of the following areas, as appropriate to this incident. Indicate a 1, 2, or 3 rating reflecting the following levels of performance.

3 = Team performance was superior, exceeding the normal expectation for an IMT of this type.

2 = Team performance was fully satisfactory and met the level normally expected for an IMT of this type.

1 = Team performance indicates improvement is needed to ensure consistency in meeting the expectations for an IMT of this type.

Rating Items, Ratings, and Comments

1. Mobilization and organization to take over management of incident from host agency/unit.
Rating: _____

2. Management of transitions.
Rating: _____

3. Compliance with delegation of authority, WFSA, and other agency administrator direction.
Rating: _____

4. Attention to firefighter and public safety.
Rating: _____

5. Coordination and cooperation with host agency/unit and ISO. Rating: _____

6. Sensitivity to and management of any limitations placed on the team based on resource or political concerns. Rating: _____

7. Anticipation of and response to changed conditions. Rating: _____

8. Incident information management. Rating: _____

9. Local involvement; community, landowners, government. Rating: _____

10. Coordination with and integration of cooperating agencies. Rating: _____

11. Cost management; decisions, documentation. Rating: _____

12. Adherence to fire business management. policy and direction. Rating: _____

13. Initiation and followthrough of accident investigations, OWCP claims, use of APMC and documentation. Rating: _____

14. Administration of contracts and equipment rental agreements. Rating: _____

15. Coordination with buying team/ADO Team. Rating: _____

16. Property accountability. Rating: _____

17. Initiation and followthrough of property claims. Rating: _____

18. Human resources management. Rating: _____

19. Demobilization planning and implementation. Rating: _____

20. Coordination with BAER team. Rating: _____

21. Fire suppression rehabilitation. Rating: _____

22. Incident documentation, final fire package. Rating: _____

23. Other _____

Rating: _____

24. This evaluation has been discussed by and between:

Agency administrator

Date

Incident Commander

Date

Appendix A

Agency or Tribal wildland fire management policies

Appendix B

*Tasks to be accomplished by the home unit
to prepare for large fire management by an
incident management team.*

Appendix C

Automated WSFA Guide

Appendix D

Agency Administrator's Guide to Critical Incident Management

Appendix E

Lessons Learned

Appendix F

Local Fire Management Plans.

Appendix G

Local Agreements