

## ***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. WFSAs cost estimates for the selected alternative:

2. Incident cost management/documentation:

3. Situations driving or controlling costs (e.g. WFSAs 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: \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Management of transitions.

Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Attention to firefighter and public safety.

Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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7. Anticipation of and response to changed conditions. Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

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8. Incident information management. Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

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9. Local involvement; community, landowners, government. Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

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10. Coordination with and integration of cooperating agencies. Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

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11. Cost management; decisions, documentation. Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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14. Administration of contracts and equipment rental agreements. Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

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15. Coordination with buying team/ADO Team. Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

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16. Property accountability. Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

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17. Initiation and followthrough of property claims. Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

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18. Human resources management. Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

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19. Demobilization planning and implementation. Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

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20. Coordination with BAER team. Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

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21. Fire suppression rehabilitation.

Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

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22. Incident documentation, final fire package.

Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

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23. Other \_\_\_\_\_

Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

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24. This evaluation has been discussed by and between:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Agency administrator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Incident Commander

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date