

## SOUTHWEST AREA STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

### FOR ADMINISTRATIVELY DETERMINED (AD) AND EMERGENCY FIREFIGHTERS

The Southwest Area Coordinating Group (SWCG) recognizes the importance and need for Administratively Determined (AD) emergency firefighters as an integral part of the emergency incident workforce. This document has been developed to provide fair and consistent hiring practices and to help standardize procedures for hiring, training, and certification. For guidance on hiring policies and procedures, refer to the approved, current AD Pay Plan, the Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook and specific sponsoring agencies policies.

All efforts should be made to mobilize current agency personnel, prior to utilizing the AD hiring authority.

#### **The Sponsoring Unit Will:**

- Verify that individuals are hired via the appropriate local sponsoring unit in relation to their residence. If not, the AD may be referred to a geographically closer unit or *justification prepared and maintained in records*.
- Maintain certification and training records
- Annually issue an Incident Qualification's Card, upon approval from the Sponsoring Unit's Qualification Review Committee
- Issue an agency drivers license or other appropriate documentation if required to drive an agency vehicle.
- Process appropriate hiring and travel authorization documents.
- Collect and process firefighter time reports (OF-288) and travel reimbursement documentation. All time and travel will be processed within 5 working days after the employee has submitted complete documentation to their home units whenever possible.

#### **AD's Will:**

- Provide appropriate training and certification documents to their sponsoring unit.
- Maintain their availability and status in the Resource Ordering Status System (ROSS) through their local dispatch center.
- Complete Single Resource Casual Hire form for **each** assignment, in accordance with the AD Pay Plan.
- Turn in all time and travel paperwork to the sponsoring unit within 5 days of return from assignment. If possible, all paperwork should be completed before becoming available in ROSS for a new assignment.

#### **Hiring Policies and Procedures**

Hiring of AD employees may be done to attend meetings, such as the Incident Management Team meeting, but they need to follow the protocol of the hiring agency.

AD employees hired within the Southwest Area are subject to the same conduct and performance as agency employees hired under other authorities, therefore, not everyone who desires to be hired as an AD may be hired. Inappropriate behavior or drug and alcohol use will not be tolerated. Additionally,

inappropriate conduct or poor performance will affect rehire consideration. Units considering an AD hire must first check with any past sponsoring unit to ensure appropriate sponsorship. If appropriate, the incident qualifications records will be transferred to the new sponsoring unit.

Any AD employee hired by a sponsoring unit must follow any distinct administrative guidelines or procedural instructions issued by that unit to assure timely payment or reimbursement.

### **Training and Certification**

The sponsoring unit will issue the annual incident qualifications card (red card). Red card certification will be based on the NWCG Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide 310-1 and sponsoring agencies qualifications standards. All agencies will acknowledge and accept the red cards for persons who have been certified under NWCG 310-1.

- Forest Service, FSH 5109.17
- National Park Service, RM 18
- Bureau of Indian Affairs Blue Book
- Fish and Wildlife Service Fire Management Handbook
- Bureau of Land Management, Manual 9215

State issued Red Cards are considered documentation of qualifications by all agencies. Reference the Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations, Chapter 13, which states: "Non-agency firefighters will be certified by state or local fire departments, or private training providers are approved by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) through their local GACC. Agencies will not assist in the administration, or sponsor the Work Capacity Test (WCT), as the certifying agency."

Training may be provided to maintain qualifications as needed for those positions for which individuals are currently certified or training for additional qualifications at the discretion of the sponsoring unit.

Local agency administrators have the authority to determine additional training needs and who is sponsored under these authorities based on fire activity – based on budget, local agency staffing and fire activity.

Position qualifications that require participation in fire line activities will be required to attend annual fire line safety refresher training, obtain the appropriate Work Capacity Test (WCT) and/or attend other additional training or medical examination as required by the Sponsoring Unit's policies.

### **Travel**

Travel, per diem, and subsistence will be reimbursed in accordance with the Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook and will be applied consistently throughout the geographic area.

The AD employee's method of transportation must be indicated on the Single Resource Casual Hire Information Form (PMS 934). The dispatch/mobilization center, in conjunction with the ordering unit, will determine the method of travel and document on the resource order. Air transportation will be arranged and paid for by the Government.

If the AD employee wants to deviate from what the dispatch center has determined to be the most cost effective method of travel, then it is the AD employee's responsibility to provide a cost comparison of available transportation methods. This analysis is to be completed before departing for the assignment

and reviewed by the hiring official. If there is any deviation from the approved method of travel, the expenses will be limited to the equivalent amount of the approved method of travel. Responding resources will not normally drive between the hours of 2200 and 0500. Resources traveling longer distances may be prepositioned at a hotel near the departure airport.

Vehicle transportation will be provided in the following order of preference:

1. The AD employee is driven by a current government employee to the airport or to the incident base camp. There will be no pay for a private vehicle if the employee turns down an available ride. A commercial shuttle service may also be arranged.
2. The AD employee is assigned a government vehicle if one is available. The AD employee must meet agency requirements, if applicable, before a government vehicle can be assigned.
3. Reimburse the AD employee mileage using the higher standard agency rate for using the AD's personal vehicle if/when a government or agency vehicle is not available for use.
4. Rental Vehicle

If the resource order authorizes the use of a rental vehicle by the AD employee, payment options include:

1. Government purchasing personnel will make the arrangements through established procurement regulations and will be documented on the resource order form.
2. If an AD employee is required to rent a vehicle as identified on the resource order and the rental cannot be procured through normal Government procedures, the AD employee may rent the vehicle using a personal credit card. If the sponsoring agency is self-insured, the purchase of additional insurance for the rental vehicle is at the discretion of the AD employee and **is not** reimbursable. If a rental vehicle is used for other than official business, the AD employee may be responsible in case of accident.

### **Per Diem**

Expenses while traveling to and from an assignment, such as lodging and meals, will be reimbursed to the casual hire if they use personal funds and previous arrangements have not been made in advance by the incident agency. Once at the base camp, the AD employee will be subsisted and no reimbursement will be made for lodging or meals. Actual receipts must be provided to support the claimed expenses as required by the sponsoring agency's policy. Claims that exceed standard per diem rates for lodging and meals will not be reimbursed without proper approval. AD employee will not be reimbursed for commercial meals and lodging at the assignment location when the Government provides subsistence.

If an AD employee's assignment requires commercial lodging and meals (i.e. incident base camp is not available) a Government official must approve per diem in place of subsistence with documentation.

### **Length of Assignment**

Length of assignment and assignment extension guidelines can be found in the Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook, Chapter 10, which states, "Standard assignment length is 14 days, exclusive of travel from and to home unit, with possible extensions identified below.

Time spent in staging and preposition status counts toward the 14-day limit, regardless of pay status, for all personnel, including IMT's. After completion of a 14 day assignment and return to the home unit, two mandatory days off will be provided (2 after 14). Casual hires (AD employees) are not entitled to paid day(s) off upon release from the incident or at their point of hire. Upon completion of the standards 14 day assignment, an extension of up to an additional 14 days may be allowed (for a total of

up to 30 days, inclusive of mandatory days off, and exclusive of travel). Regardless of the extension duration, two mandatory days off will be provided prior to the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of the assignment.

This supplemental for the Southwest Area will be updated annually or as changes occur.