

TUCSON DISPATCH CENTER
Annual Operations Plan
2012



BUENOS AIRES NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
CORONADO NATIONAL FOREST
GILA DISTRICT BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
TOHONO O'ODHAM NATION
SAGUARO NATIONAL PARK

Approved by:

Rod Lopez, Fire Management Officer

Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge


Date 5/23/12

Pete Schwab, Deputy Forest FMO

Coronado National Forest


Date 5-23-12

Damon McRae, Fire Management Officer

Gila District Bureau of Land Management


Date 5-14-12

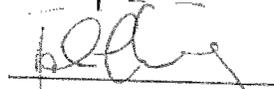
Guy Acuña, Fire Management Officer

Tohono O'Odham Nation


Date May 14, 2012

John Thornburg, Fire Management Officer

National Park Service


Date 5/17/2012

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Introduction

The Southeast Arizona Zone (SEZ) consists of Federal, State and local land management agencies responsible for managing wildland fires in southern Arizona. Federal agencies responsible for fire management in the Zone, coordinate their activities through the Tucson Interagency Dispatch Center (TDC). TDC has established an Annual Operating Plan (AOP) to document policies for dispatching resources through TDC in support of local, regional, and national incidents. The AOP provides information on agency requirements for dispatching, what kind of coordination will occur between units, and what support TDC personnel will provide for interagency wildland fire operations. The AOP does not override any individual agency authority or procedures for fire fighting.

IDENTIFICATION OF AGENCIES:

- A. The following agencies are members of the SEZ:
 1. The United States Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service: Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge, Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge, and San Bernardino National Wildlife Refuge, hereinafter called the FWS
 2. The United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service: Saguaro National Park, Chiricahua National Monument, Coronado National Memorial, Organ Pipe National Monument, and Tumacácori National Historical Park, hereinafter called the NPS
 3. The United States Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management: Gila District, Safford Field Office and Tucson Field Office, hereinafter called the BLM
 4. The United States Department of Agriculture, Coronado National Forest: Nogales, Douglas, Sierra Vista, Safford, and Santa Catalina Ranger Districts, hereinafter called the USFS
 5. The Tohono O’Odham Nation Fire Management, hereinafter called the Tohono O’Odham Nation
- B. All agencies and the Tohono O’Odham Nation may hereinafter be referred to as the Agencies.

Tucson Dispatch Center Operational Authority

Authority for TDC to coordinate support for fire management activities is granted by the Southeast Arizona Zone Fire Management Board and is described in the Joint Powers Agreement. TDC's role in support of the fire management mission includes:

- ❖ Coordinating the use of fire fighting resources between agencies within SEZ
- ❖ Initial Attack dispatching for the FWS, NPS, BLM, and USFS
- ❖ Providing a focal point for agencies to request additional resources
- ❖ Monitoring the mobilization, support, and demobilization of incidents, prescribed fire projects, and other incidents within the zone as requested under this authority.
- ❖ Verifying mobilized resources meet certification requirements
- ❖ Gathering and disseminating information about incidents, commitment of resources, and projected fire activity
- ❖ Monitoring operations for safety and cost effectiveness
- ❖ Maintaining the USFS WIMS hardware and data, and maintaining oversight of maintenance and quality of data on all agencies' stations
- ❖ Assisting with SEZ training administration
- ❖ Assisting with USFS IQCS administration
- ❖ Coordinating suppression and prescribed fire activities with the State of Arizona Forestry Division and other agencies including: U.S. Customs Border Patrol, the Department of Defense, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, and county sheriffs.

Tucson Dispatch Center General Policies

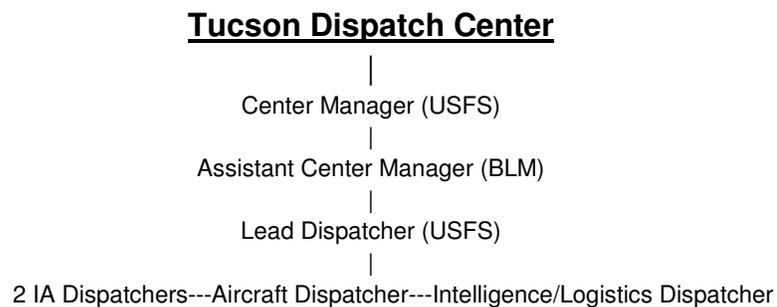
- ❖ All decisions related to mobilization, tactics, logistical support, and demobilization are secondary to the safety of fire fighting personnel
- ❖ Support of incidents occurs in accordance with local, regional, and national policies and procedures
- ❖ Prioritizing support for incidents within the zone is a collaboration between TDC, Agency fire management staff, Agency administrators, the Zone Board and the Southwest Area Coordination Center

Definitions and Descriptions

- A. **Jurisdiction**– Each Federal agency has wildland fire fighting responsibilities for the lands which they administer. The State has the responsibility to provide all wildland fire suppression for state and unincorporated private land in Arizona.
- B. **Mutual Aid** – Mutual Aid is defined as providing aid to other agencies. Aid can be provided for any type of incident.

- C. **Back Fill** – Back Fill is the system of redistributing and/or ordering resources following dispatch of initial forces.
- D. **Responsibility for Non-Fire Emergencies** – Emergencies other than wildland fire (search and rescue, medical, natural disaster) on federal, state, and private lands is the responsibility of the sheriff of the county in which the emergency occurs.
- E. **Closest Forces** – Closest Forces is defined as responding the appropriate resource (according to response time and fire situation) to a report of a new fire in an unknown location. Closest Forces may not apply to follow up actions by the jurisdiction agency.

TDC Organization



A. Supervisory Responsibilities

1. **Center Manager** - The TDC Center manager position is administratively supported by the Southeast Arizona Zone Fire Management Board. The Center Manager maintains coordination of all resources committed to wildland fire suppression activities on federal lands in SEZ. The Center Manager also provides suppression assistance to state, tribal, and local entities as needed. The Center Manager provides leadership and supervises TDC personnel to ensure:
 - A. Sufficient fire resources are available within the zone
 - B. Adequate center staffing for anticipated and ongoing incidents
 - C. Assignment of subordinate supervisory responsibilities
 - D. Coordination of work between center personnel to support suppression operations
 - E. Coordination and support for other Forest functions requiring field communications and/or resource tracking
 - F. Coordination of leave, overtime, compensatory time for all TDC personnel
 - G. Individual training and development opportunities are offered, encouraged, and managed efficiently
 - H. Performance reviews of center personnel (USFS personnel only)

2. **Assistant Center Manager** - The Assistant Center Manager coordinates responses to wildland fires on federal lands in SEZ. The position provides technical and administrative supervision to all dispatchers and specialized technical support for related functional programs and projects. This position serves as the Center Manager in the absence of the Center Manager. The position is currently filled with a BLM employee who performs Center Manager duties as needed within the limits and allowance of a non-USFS employee.
3. **Lead Dispatcher** – The Lead dispatcher supervises the mobilization of initial attack resources for suppressing wildland fires. This position directs subordinate dispatchers and oversees processing of data necessary for fire suppression activities.
4. **Initial Attack Dispatcher** – receives reports of incidents and dispatches resources to manage the incident according to the guidelines set by the agency with jurisdiction.
5. **Aircraft Dispatcher** – orders, tracks and coordinates aircraft assignments and movements. Ensures airspace deconfliction is performed consistently.
6. **Intelligence Dispatcher** – responsible for gathering and disseminating data about incidents, fire conditions, and projected fire activity.
7. **Logistics/Support Dispatcher** – provides logistical support of incidents, including entering orders in ROSS, and ensuring efficient mobilization of logistical support.

Jurisdiction Summaries

- A. **Protection Agency:** Each agency in SEZ provides fire suppression on lands they have protection responsibilities for. Without jeopardizing their own response capabilities, agencies within the zone will provide personnel, equipment, and supplies for mutual aid when requested by TDC.

Federal agencies requiring local fire department personnel and/or equipment for wildfires will coordinate those requests through TDC. TDC will then process the requests through the Arizona Interagency Dispatch Center (AIDC).

- B. **Neighborhood Policy:** TDC is authorized to order resources directly from adjacent zones for initial attack, extended attack, project fires, fire use, prescribed fire, and other

all-risk incidents when Region 3 is in Preparedness Level 1, 2, or 3. The Neighborhood policy allows for National resources to be mobilized directly between zones for initial attack only.

- C. **Map and/or legal description of incidents:** Current maps are maintained at TDC. Field units will use GPS units as much as possible to report fire locations in the zone.

D. Initial Attack Capabilities:

Southeast Zone

	Engines	Air Attack	Airtankers	Helicopters	Hand Crews
USFS	10	1	*	3	1
BLM	3	1	2		1
NPS	0				
FWS	2				
Tohono O’Odham	3				

*Quantities vary dependant upon actual or anticipated fire activity.

Operational Procedures

- A. **Determination of Preparedness Levels:** TDC dispatchers will track available and committed resources throughout SEZ. Dispatchers will gather situation and resource information from field units, organize it into reports, and advise appropriate personnel. Dispatchers will monitor weather and fire danger predictions, and will advise agencies of threatening fire potential and drawdown of resource availability.

TDC dispatchers will gather weather observations daily. Observations will be entered into WIMS and fire danger indices will be publicized. Morning and afternoon weather forecasts, special weather reports, and lightning detection maps will be made available to suppression resources and fire management. Fire personnel and equipment levels will be broadcast daily along with weather reports. Determination of staffing and preparedness levels will be according to procedures outlined in specific agency suppression plans. Information from the Predictive Services branch of the SWCC will be incorporated into determination of preparedness levels.

- B. **Fire Notification and Size Up:** Wildfires occurring on each Federal agency’s land will be reported to TDC. Fires occurring on Private/State lands that threaten federal agency

lands boundary will be reported to TDC and AIDC. Fires occurring on Private/State lands with no threat to federal lands will be reported to AIDC.

During the period of about April through October, TDC will maintain an interagency list of available resources throughout the zone. The list will be updated daily for all agencies. All suppression resources will update TDC each morning where they will be stationed or working during the operational period. Resources that change locations during the day will notify TDC and update their location. Current intelligence on resource location and availability is crucial to efficient and safe incident response. The local agency fire manager and/or duty officer is responsible for ensuring that resources keep TDC apprised of status updates.

When a fire is reported to TDC, dispatchers will determine probable location and ownership as best as possible. Checkerboard areas and/or areas where ownership is difficult to determine will be treated as multi-jurisdictional until a precise location is determined. If a fire is determined to be a threat to a federal agency served by TDC, resources will be sent under the appropriate initial attack protocol until jurisdiction is determined in the field. TDC shall notify the appropriate duty officer or agency administrator and utilize the following guidelines for dispatching resources:

National Wildlife Refuge Lands – Notify the FWS unit duty officer. The Duty Officer will respond appropriate forces and request aid from TDC as needed.

National Park Service Lands – No action should be taken without duty officer or agency administrator approval. In the case of imminent danger to the public and/or private land, TDC will take appropriate actions to protect values at risk and inform the duty officer as soon as possible.

Bureau of Land Management Lands – Appropriate local ground resources will be dispatched and the Duty Officer will be notified as soon as practicable. Duty Officer will be notified of any report of threat to BLM lands, roughly defined as fires within four miles of BLM land. TDC will coordinate actions with the Duty Officer after size up information is reported to center personnel. For fires reported when TDC is closed, the On-Call Dispatcher will notify the Duty Officer before responding resources.

Tribal Lands - Notify the Tribe's fire management duty officer or Fire department. The Duty Officer will respond appropriate forces and request aid from TDC as needed

USFS Lands – Closest forces will be dispatched to the reported fire location utilizing the Fire Matrix. The Ranger District duty officer (or acting) will be notified. Upon size-up the duty officer will coordinate additional suppression response with TDC. In the case of imminent danger to life or property, TDC will take appropriate actions to protect values at risk and notify the Duty Officer as soon as possible. The Forest Duty Officer will be notified, as soon as practicable, of any significant commitment of resources or any incident that has potential of escalating on Forest lands. When convenient, TDC will provide the Forest Duty Officer with a synopsis of Forest-wide activity.

State and Private Lands – Notify state dispatch, AIDC. The state will request aid from TDC if needed. If a fire on state and/or private property threatens USFS, NPS, FWS, or BLM lands, treat the response as multi-jurisdictional using agency procedures described in this section.

Fire Names and Numbers will be tracked by TDC. All agencies will use the same name once the fire has been officially named. A fire name will be assigned by TDC.

- C. 1. **Initial Attack:** TDC will respond Initial Attack resources for agencies in SEZ utilizing a “Closest Forces” concept. The appropriate duty officer for the lands involved will be promptly notified and may provide additional fire management direction. TDC will be responsible for mobilizing, tracking, providing communication services for, and demobilizing these resources. TDC will also provide logistical support for these resources. The Center Manager or designated assistant will prioritize initial attack actions on all incidents in the zone based on agency plans and directions. Agency level duty officers and/or SEZ board “MAC” group should be consulted in making decisions relative to prioritizing resource allocations to multiple incidents.

When an initial attack resource provides a size-up on an incident, the duty officer for the appropriate agency will be notified and briefed on the fire status. If approved by the duty officer, the Incident Commander for the incident will have appropriate action responsibility. The Duty Officer, however, has the option of changing out the incident commander or suppression resources as he/she deems appropriate and may request additional resources be dispatched to the incident. The Incident Commander will be notified by TDC of all resources ordered for the incident. The duty officer will be promptly notified of significant changes in the fire status.

A fire burning on land administered by one agency may be considered a threat to another agency. Prior to action on another agency’s land, TDC will notify the duty officer

with jurisdictional responsibility to reach agreement on action to be taken. This doesn't preclude any agency from taking actions they feel appropriate on their lands or responding to an immediate threat without confirmation of permission to act.

Agency policies will be followed for the suppression of structure and vehicle fires. Highway/road Right-of-Way fires will be determined by whose land the highway/road crosses as identified on the land ownership maps in TDC.

2. Law Enforcement: All human-caused fire on Forest Service lands will be investigated. All Forest Service fires in the border-zone, generally accepted to be located south of Interstate 10, will be assigned a law enforcement officer at the request of responding forces. Other agencies requesting law enforcement on fires on their lands will be provided with law enforcement support.

D. **Aircraft:** TDC will process resource orders for all use of aircraft for firefighting in the zone. This includes incident use for all agencies, and also includes administrative aircraft use by the Forest Service. Flight following procedures will be implemented as per specific agency requirements. TDC will deconflict all tactical flights occurring in the zone with appropriate Military, Federal, and State agencies. Flight plans for non-fire suppression activities will be prepared by the requesting agency and submitted to TDC according to standard operating procedures. TDC will notify participating agency Aviation Officers of all indiscretions or improper flight situations in compliance with specific agency regulations. Aerial Attack (air attack, lead plane, retardant and helicopters) will only be used when authorized by the agency with jurisdictional responsibility or according to predetermined suppression plans.

USFS – Authority for use of aircraft for fires on Forest Lands is granted to TDC through a preplanned dispatch system (CNF Matrix) or upon request from a duty officer, Incident Commander, or the Aviation Officer.

BLM – Authority for use of aerial attack on BLM lands rests with the Duty Officer, Aviation Officer, or Incident Commander.

NPS – Authority for retardant use on lands under jurisdiction of the National Park Service rests with the Superintendent or acting. Authority for use of all other aerial attack on NPS lands rests with the Duty Officer or Incident Commander.

FWS – Authority for use of all aerial attack on FWS lands rests with the Duty Officer.

E. **Overhead, Equipment, and Hand Crews:** TDC will receive and process orders for personnel, equipment, and crews through the Resource Ordering and Status System (ROSS) using standard dispatch ordering channels and the Southwest Area's neighborhood policy.

F. **Resource Order Process and Assistance by Hire:** All requests for resources (personnel, aircraft, crews, etc.) will be processed through TDC utilizing ROSS.

TDC will utilize personnel, equipment and supplies from local units only to the extent that they do not impact initial attack capabilities. Orders for additional resources outside of SEZ will be provided through existing cache and ordering agreements within the southwest area.

TDC will contact, arrange travel for, and dispatch agency overhead personnel. All personnel will meet the minimum NWCG qualifications for the assignment they take. Personnel are responsible for their availability status and notifying their supervisor if they take an assignment.

Any agency requiring equipment owned by private contractors will place orders through TDC or Expanded Dispatch. Billing for the equipment will be sent to the ordering agency.

Casual Hires (AD's) will be hired by respective agencies per their policies.

G. **TDC Communications Systems and Frequencies:** Reports of fire or other requests for assistance from TDC will be processed either through TDC's main telephone number 520-202-2710 (24 hours/day) or via radio frequencies that are assigned to agencies in the zone and monitored by TDC.

TDC dispatchers will monitor radio frequencies for administrative, fire, and law enforcement operations as required by agency agreements and procedures. The following primary frequencies are authorized under this plan:

1. Coronado National Forest	Tx/Rx
• Administrative Net	170.525/169.600
• Fire Net	172.275/168.150
2. Saguaro National Park	167.350/166.350
	164.7750/171.1625
3. Buenos Aires FWS	163.150/164.625
4. Gila District BLM	173.8250/168.5375
5. Southeast Zone Air-to-Air	135.625
6. Southeast Zone Air-to-Ground	171.4250
7. Air Guard	168.625
8. National Flight Following	168.650

- H. **Hours of Operation and Contacts:** TDC is staffed seven days a week year round. The office is normally closed Thanksgiving Day, Christmas, and New Year’s Day. Hours of operation expand up to 24 hours/day in support of incidents. TDC normal hours of operation are 0700-1800 during the summer season, and 0700-1730 from late fall until early spring. The amount of current fire activity determines when TDC expands or contracts the hours of operation with the summer season generally considered to be April through September and the winter season October through March.
- I. **Expanded Dispatch:** TDC will establish a dispatch organization to meet the logistical needs of complex incidents. The expanded operation will include a dispatch coordinator, supervisory dispatcher and support dispatchers. The initiation of an expanded dispatch operation will be coordinated with or communicated to the SEZ board and SWCC.
- J. **Back-Fill:** Back-fill options are outlined in agency preparedness plans. TDC will assist the agencies with resource orders to maintain their Initial Attack capability.

General Procedures

- A. **Updating of the Plan:** The TDC Manager will update and incorporate any changes to the Operating plan and distribute the plan to the Agencies.
- B. **Public Information:** Each agency is responsible for public information for lands under their jurisdiction. The TDC Manager or Assistant Manager will provide the media with proper contacts for obtaining incident information until a Public Information Officer is assigned to an incident.
- C. **Severity Funding:** Severity funding is requested according to each agency's policy. All agencies should coordinate their severity resource requests through TDC to get the best combination of resource assistance in the zone.
- D. **Weekly Zone Fire Management Group** conference calls including the TDC Manager or Assistant Manager will be initiated and scheduled by the zone board as needed during the fire season.
- E. **Weekly Regional Zone Center Managers** conference calls including the Center Manager or Assistant Center Manager will be initiated and scheduled by the Southwest Coordination Center during the fire season.

Appendix A

Zone Contacts

Tucson Dispatch Center

	WORK	CELL
Center Manager - Chuck Holt	520-202-2708	977-4178
Asst. Center Mgr. - Mike Wilke	520-202-2709	977- 4240
Lead Dispatcher - Chris Massingill	520-202-2710	603-3538
Logistics Dispatcher - Sara Sexson	520- 202-2710	977-4259
IA Dispatcher - Sean Depp	520-202-2710	991-7749
Dispatcher- Vacant	520-202-2710	
Seasonal Dispatcher - Pete Dobbins	520-202-2710	

Southeast Arizona Zone Fire Management Board

Guy Acuña – Tohono O’Odham FMO	520-383-4770/8904	349-3565
Pete Schwab – Coronado Deputy Fire Staff	520-202-2702	400-5874
Damon McRae – Gila District BLM FMO	928-348-4508	651-4480
Rod Lopez – Az. District USFWS FMO	520-823-4292x101	
Kristy Lund – Coronado FMO	520-202-2701	991-7844

