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Date: February 4, 2013

To: Great Basin Coordination Group Members
Western Great Basin Coordination Center
Eastern Great Basin Coordination Center

From: Mike Morcom, Chair Great Basin Coordinating Group

Subject: Great Basin 2013 Initial Attack Air-to-Ground Frequency Identifier Standard

Due Date: March 1, 2013

During the November 2012 Great Basin Coordinating Group meeting, the Operations Committee recommended to the Coordinating Group that the Great Basin continue using a standardized frequency identifier system for initial attack zone air-to-ground frequencies and recommend to the National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC) that a national *Air- Ground Frequency Identifier Standard* be adopted. The Coordinating Group voted affirmatively to continue using *the 2012 Air- Ground frequency Identifier Standard* for the 2013 fire season. This memo serves as the Great Basin Coordinating Group guidance for implementation of the standard.

The NIFC National Interagency Incident Communications Division (NIICD) is working to obtain permanently assigned air-to-ground VHF FM frequencies for all 100+ initial attack zones (ARMZ – All Risk Management Zone). It is anticipated that the effort will be complete within 1 to 2 years. There will be a minimum of two air-to-ground frequencies per zone issued by NIICD and possibly more frequencies available from zone interagency partners (i.e., State, DHS: V-TAC). The NIICD will issue the air-to-ground FM frequency assignments and maps with frequencies only to the Geographic Area Coordination Center Managers each year by January 1.

The Great Basin Coordinating Group-Aviation Working Committee will set the *IA Zone Air-to-Ground Frequency and Identifier* pair information, and Jack Sheffey, Utah BLM Fire GIS Specialist will produce the 2013 Great Basin Frequency Maps (Geographic area and each state), and provide the GACC Managers with the maps and excel spreadsheet of frequency assignments. The GACC Managers will distribute the frequency maps to Dispatch Center Managers, Unit Aviation Mangers and Communication Program Coordinators.

The only frequency change for 2013 is in the UT-01 Zone and will be reflected in the 2013 maps. All 2012 or prior years maps/ frequency assignments are invalid. The following geographic areas will be operating under the same frequency naming convention as the Great Basin: Rocky Mountain, Southwest, and Pacific Northwest.

The following guidelines will need to be followed by each dispatch center, local frequency coordination group, and air and ground operations personnel:

- Local frequency user coordination groups will need to set up their radio plans with the IA Zone (ARMZ) Air-to-Ground Frequency and Identifier pairings.
- Unit Aviation Managers will need to include the new frequency plan into their Aircrew Orientation Guides, Unit Aviation Plans and functional interagency operating plans.
- ROSS and local aircraft dispatch forms will need to have both the frequency and the corresponding Identifier listed by function - i.e., Air / Ground 27, 168.4275 tx/ rx.
- The standardized naming will not eliminate the requirement for reading off, by dispatchers, the frequency with the name whenever a frequency assignment is made via radio or phone.
- Unit Aviation Managers or FMO's will need to present the frequency plan, operations procedures etc. to aviation refresher workshops and firefighter refresher sessions.

The Department of Homeland Security SAFECOM program has identified through Statewide Communications Inter-Operability Planning – SCIP¹ that inconsistent channel nomenclature, common language and radio codes are impediments to interoperability between multiple incident responders. The Great Basin Coordinating Group *IA Zone (ARMZ) Air- Ground Frequency Identifier Standard* will assist in achieving frequency interoperability.

¹ (SCIP national summary 2009,
<http://www.safecomprogram.gov/SAFECOM/interoperability/default.htm>)

If you have any questions, please contact Steve Banks at 208-373-3853.

/s/ Mike Morcom
Chair, Great Basin Coordinating Group