



# Southern Area Coordinating Group Charter

# 2024 - 2030

The Southern Area Coordinating Group (SACG) is established to provide agency management policy interpretation/support, to improve interagency cooperation, communications, and coordination, and to provide interagency fire and appropriate all-risk (incident management) direction within the boundaries of the Southern Area Geographic Area.

REVIEWED:

# **SOUTHERN GEOGRAPHIC AREA COORDINATING GROUP CHARTER**

## **AUTHORIZATION**

The Southern Area Coordinating Group (SACG) members are authorized by each of their respective agency administrators and operate under the various State Master Cooperative and Stafford Act agreements to meet the intent of holistic collaborations as defined within the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy and National Response Framework.

This Charter is valid for a period of six (6) calendar years from the date of final signature, or unless conditions are no longer consistent with the intent and language found within. This charter will be reviewed annually by the SACG Chair, Vice Chair, and SACC Center Manager.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The SACG is established to provide agency management policy interpretation/support, to improve interagency cooperation, communications, and coordination, and to provide interagency fire and appropriate all-risk (incident management) direction within the boundaries of the Southern Area.

## **PURPOSE**

1. Provide interagency leadership and safe, coordinated implementation of current agency policies, directions, and standards for interagency fire management and appropriate all-risk management activities.
2. Instill professionalism in all elements of fire and appropriate all-risk management activities and maintain a full partnership, trust, and mutual assistance among the member agencies.
3. Recommend a unified course of action to agency administrators, promote safety, and provide oversight in all aspects of fire management and appropriate all-risk management activities.
4. Serves as a geographic area forum for exchanging ideas to identify problems and propose solutions to appropriate interagency issues.
  - a. Support and promote interagency cooperation in:
    - i. Safety
    - ii. Preparedness/Pre-suppression
    - iii. Wildland/Urban/Rural Interface
    - iv. Education and Prevention
    - v. Fuels and Resource Management
    - vi. Incident Management
  - b. Coordination of interagency aviation issues.
  - c. Establish task groups/teams as needed to address these and other area wide issues.
5. Serves as a geographic focal point for requests for interagency action to and from the national and local level.
6. Provide a communication link between local, state, tribal, and federal entities.
7. Facilitate the following operations:
  - a. Selection and management of incident management teams.
    - i. National Complex Incident Management Teams

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- ii. Area Type III Teams
- b. Oversight of jointly funded operations budgets.
- c. Encourage establishment of local or state MAC Groups to provide operational direction as needed.
- d. Provide oversight and approval of the Southern Area Mobilization Guide updates.
- e. Provide oversight for interagency severity planning.
- f. Other tasks as assigned by agency administrators.
- g. Supervises the Southern Area Coordination Center (SACC), Center Manager and provides oversight of Southern Area Coordination Center operations. The principal mission of SACC is to provide the cost-effective and timely coordination of emergency response for all incidents within the Southern Geographic Area. SACC is also responsible for determining needs, coordinating priorities, and facilitating the mobilization of resources from the Southern Area to the other Geographic Areas..

## MEMBERSHIP

The SACG membership will consist of:

1. United States Forest Service, Region 8
2. National Park Service, Southeast Region
3. United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Southeast Region
4. Southern Group of State Foresters
5. Bureau of Indian Affairs, Eastern Region
6. Bureau of Land Management, Southeastern States Region
7. The Southern Area Coordination Center Manager will serve as a non-voting ex officio member.

## CHAIR & VICE CHAIR

The Chair and Vice Chair will serve a two-year term (calendar year) on a rotational basis and follow the order of succession below. The Vice-Chair will succeed the Chair. If a vacancy should occur at either the Chair or Vice Chair, the rotation order will move-up to fill the vacancy or until the Agency can provide a replacement.

Rotation of the Chair will be in the following order:

- \*Bureau of Indian Affairs {January 2023 – January 2025}
- U.S. Forest Service {January 2025 – January 2027}
- Bureau of Land Management {January 2027 – January 2029}
- National Park Service {January 2029 – January 2031}
- Southern Group of State Foresters {January 2031 – January 2033}
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service {January 2033 – January 2035}

*\*Indicates current Chairperson*

1. The Chair is responsible for calling meetings, setting agendas, and coordinating with SACG. The Chair assures that necessary reports/memos are submitted, and agendas are prepared for each meeting.

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Annually review the Southern Area Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (SAMAC) governing documents and provide a Delegation of Authority to the to the SAMAC Coordinator (SACC Center Manger).

2. The Vice-Chair assumes the duties of the Chair in the Chair's absence.

## MEETINGS

The SACG will meet at a minimum once a year, however the established [meeting schedule](#) will be monthly, every third Thursday, at 1300 EST. There will be a formal agenda for each meeting, which the SACG chair (or vice) will complete. Members will provide agenda items to the Chair before each session. The Chair or Vice (in the Chair's absence) will complete meeting facilitation in their absence. Decisions and recommendations will be made by consensus of the membership. The Center Manager is responsible for recording the minutes of each meeting and will ensure that all records related to the SACG will be stored at the SACC, with copies being forwarded to the membership.

## COMMUNICATIONS

Holistic communication is crucial for the effective functioning and coordination of the SACG between its members, the Coordinating Group Advisory Council (CGAC), National Multi Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC), and the SAMAC, for Wildland Fire and All-Risk Emergency Response.

Holistic communication is vital for several reason, including but not limited to:

1. Sharing information and situational awareness: Holistic communication enables the exchange of critical information, updates, and real-time situational awareness between the SACG, its members, CGAC, NMAC, and SAMAC. This helps all involved parties to have a comprehensive understanding of the current situation, including the nature and extent of wildfire or emergency incidents, available resources, and potential risks.
2. Coordinated decision-making: Through holistic communication, all stakeholders can contribute their perspectives, expertise, and insights to support decision-making processes. This collaborative approach ensures that decisions are well-informed, balanced, and consider various factors such as local conditions, resource availability, and operational constraints. It helps in prioritizing response efforts and allocating resources effectively.
3. Integration of resources and capabilities: Effective communication among the SACG, its members, CGAC, NMAC, and SAMAC allows for the seamless integration of resources and capabilities across different agencies and jurisdictions. This integration ensures that the response efforts are coordinated, efficient, and optimized. It helps in avoiding duplication of efforts, gaps in coverage, or the misallocation of resources.
4. Standardization and consistency: Holistic communication supports the establishment and maintenance of standardized procedures, protocols, and guidelines across the southern area, other geographic areas, and coordinating groups. This ensures consistency in communication practices, facilitates interoperability among different agencies, and enables smooth integration during joint

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operations. Standardization also promotes clarity, reduces the potential for misunderstandings or misinterpretations, and enhances overall coordination.

5. Continuous learning and improvement: By facilitating communication and information sharing, holistic and collaborative communication allows for ongoing evaluation, analysis, and learning from previous incidents and response efforts. Lessons learned can be shared, best practices can be identified, and recommendations can be made to improve future emergency response operations. This continuous learning cycle drives improvements in preparedness, mitigation, response strategies, and overall coordination effectiveness.

In summary, holistic communication is essential for fostering collaboration, coordination, and effectiveness among the SACG members, the other geographic areas, and coordinating groups. It ensures shared situational awareness, coordinated decision-making, resource integration, standardization, and continuous improvement in responding to wildland fires and all-risk emergencies within the southern area, nation, and during international response.

To ensure a common operating picture that will meet this intent, the SACG will communicate and share information in a holistic and collaborative by;

Ensuring that correspondences from SACC, SACG Chair (or Vice), or it's members to the CGAC NMAC, and SAMAC will provide carbon copy to the SACC Center Manger, SACG Chair, and Vice Chair. This effort should also be reciprocated for correspondences from CGAC, NMAC, and SAMAC to the SACG.

Maintaining a SACG text group. Group text groups offer several valuable benefits for real-time information sharing in a high reliability response organization. These benefits can significantly enhance communication, and overall effectiveness in the coordination of incidents by providing Instant widespread information dissemination, efficient collaborations facilitating the exchange of ideas, timely sharing of updates and alerts, enhanced response agility, and promoting situational awareness.

## **STANDING COMMITTEES**

Standing Committees are identified to assist the SACG. The SACG will provide direction and oversight of committee activities and will provide a representative to support the committee. Additional committees may be stood up as commensurate with operational tempo and response needs.

A committee charter with a mission/purpose statement will be proved to the SACG for approval.

1. Training Working Team – STATE Representative
2. Decision Support Working Team – USFS Representative
3. Dispatch Working Team – SACC Representative
4. Critical Incident Stress Management Working Team – BIA Representative
5. Interagency Incident Business Working Team – FWS Representative
6. Prevention & Mitigation Working Team – NPS Representative
7. Southern Area IMT Working Team – BLM Representative

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Approved:

**BEN MARTIN** Digitally signed by BEN MARTIN  
Date: 2024.02.20 11:10:03  
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Dave Martin, U.S. Forest Service, Assistant Fire Director Operations, Southern Region

**ANTHONY CARVER** Digitally signed by ANTHONY CARVER  
Date: 2024.02.20 12:06:36 -05'00'

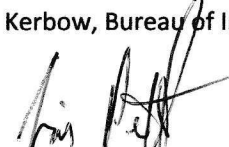
Vince Carver, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Chief, Division of Fire Management, IR 2 and 4

**SHAWN NAGLE** Digitally signed by SHAWN NAGLE  
Date: 2024.02.21 09:27:56 -06'00'

Shawn Nagle, National Park Service, Fire Management Officer, Interior Region 2

**REESE KERBOW** Digitally signed by REESE KERBOW  
Date: 2024.02.27 10:52:15 -05'00'

Reese Kerbow, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Chief - Division of Fire Management, Eastern Region

  
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Jim Prevette, Southern Group of State Foresters, Fire Director

  
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KICKLIGHTER  
Date: 2024.02.27 09:16:46 -06'00'

Bart Kicklighter, Bureau of Land Management, State Fire Management Officer