

CALIFORNIA WILDLAND FIRE COORDINATING GROUP



May 1, 2014

To: CWCG Federal and State Agency Administrators

Subject: 2014 California Incident Management

As we embark on the 2014 wildland fire season, the California Wildland Fire Coordinating Group (CWCG) would like to update you on a several items.

Attached are the Coordinating Group's expectations of California Incident Commanders (ICs) for 2014. Please be aware the Coordinating Group has emphasized the importance of the Incident Commanders to make contact with you or your representative upon an Incident Management Team (IMT) order to clarify team size, number of trainees, any special needs, and your expectations. It is CWCG's expectation that to be successful as Agency Administrators you need to make time to establish a working relationship with the Incident Commander on your incident. We expect this relationship to include establishing joint incident expectations and as well as how the IMT and host agency will handle communications and coordination with affected stakeholders.

The 2014 California Mobilization Guide is available to further clarify the current California IMT configuration and operating procedures. http://gacc.nifc.gov/oncc/mob_guide/index.html

The California Incident Management Team Operating Guide contains the IMT Evaluation and is referenced in Appendix B of the 2014 CA Mobilization Guide. The IMT evaluation has been modified to increase your ability to document in more detail your final evaluation and includes additional evaluation factors such as cost management. We recommend that you use this version to evaluate all teams your unit may host, including Buying Teams, Administrative Payment Teams and Incident Management Teams.

2014 IMT composition – In California there are 11 IMTs rostered this year (4 Type I, 7 Type 2). CAL FIRE retains 6 Type I IMTs they manage exclusively for command and control. CWCG continues to see issues with succession resulting in shortages of Federal Agency Incident Commanders and Command and General Staff positions with very few in the pipeline. We continue to see challenges maintaining 11 IMTs in the geographic area for the future. The current IMT composition is 55% local government, 44% Federal and 5% AD/supplemental. While this continues to be a national issue we encourage you to promote federal employees involvement, whether qualified or trainees, on incident management teams to ensure adequate qualified teams into the future. NWCG continues to move forward with Evolving Incident Management (EIM) under the direction of its member agencies. You can follow implementation from the following web site. <http://www.nwcg.gov/imosp/index.htm>

There are a number of national initiatives you should be aware of: <http://www.nifc.gov/nicc/administrative/nmac/index.html>, including the USDA FS Chief's Letter – 2014 Fire Season and 2014 Direction to Wildland Fire Leadership . We encourage you to review and utilize these documents throughout the summer when working with stakeholders and IMTs.

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The California Incident Commanders supported by California CWCG Operations Committee, sponsored the 2014 CA Incident Management Team Workshop held at the Wildland Fire Training and Conference Center April 22-24. We thank you for supporting attendance of team members that are part of your organization. The meeting continues to be closely evaluated for value of agenda items, utilization of current information, and team building benefits.

CWCG member fire agencies utilize three main agreements: California Master Cooperative Fire Management and Stafford Act Agreement (CFMA), California Fire Assistance Agreement (CFAA), and local cooperative fire agreements.

CWCG annually reviews and updates the **California Master Cooperative Fire Management and Stafford Act Response Agreement - 2013-2018** and the exhibits. The purpose of the CFMA is to document the commitment of agencies to improve efficiency by facilitating the coordination and exchange of personnel, equipment, supplies, services and funds among the agencies to the agreement. The agreement is posted at the following web site: <http://gacc.nifc.gov/oscc/cwgc/cfma/>.

Two main issues that continue to require extensive negotiation and communication at the executive and local level:

- **Structure defense** – defined “The protection of homes or other structures from wildland fire before the fire reaches the structure; exterior fire protection measures.”
 - Payment for Structure Defense - “For Wildfires in or threatening local jurisdictions that border or overlay State or Federal DPA, local agencies will bear their own agency's costs for defending structures within their jurisdiction.”
- **Law enforcement and prevention activities** - Protecting agency has the responsibility to protect and document the origin and cause area of a fire. This action may be done by prevention personnel who are not necessarily approved fire investigators.

While the agencies were satisfied with the language that was incorporated, the use of the agreement will still require monitoring at all levels to assure successful implementation. Relationships are the foundation of successful implementation. Each agency has enabling authorities and policies that provide the basis for implementation of their missions and that define responsibilities when operating in an inter-agency environment.

As described under the CFMA is the annual updating of **Direct Protection Areas (DPA)**. DPAs are intermingled and adjacent lands delineated by boundaries regardless of jurisdictional agency. Wildfire protection in these areas are negotiated, created and agreed to by the administrative units of either the Federal Agencies or the State. Updates are to be submitted annually in December. **We suggest you take the 2014 field season to refine, update and collaborate with your state and federal cooperators on changes for 2015.**

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Signatory agencies are working on a the **2014-2019 California Fire Assistance Agreement** which includes many updates for billing rates and process. The CFAA is used when federal fire agencies and CAL FIRE need additional resources for large incidents. The agreement is used to request assistance from and reimburse California Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid System Agencies, it is not a reciprocal agreement, nor is it an authority for cost sharing activities. This agreement provides rates, formulas and methodologies for standardized reimbursement for overhead personnel and emergency apparatus and allows local government to local government request and reimbursement.

Finally, the safety of our Firefighters is our number one priority each year. It is imperative that supervisors, leaders and Incident Management Teams are providing oversight, supervision and leadership to individuals working on your units. Please ensure that duties and assignments given are understood, roles and responsibilities are defined, and employees are acting within the scope of their duty in a responsible manner.

If you have questions or concerns please contact your Agency Representative on the California Wildland Fire Coordinating Group.

Sincerely,

/s/ Christie Neill
for Jason Weber Chair, California Wildland Fire Coordinating Group

Attachment 1 – CA Incident Commander Expectations for 2014
Attachment 2 – CWCG Standing Committee updates

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Attachment 1

To: California Interagency Incident Commanders

April 21, 2014

From: California Wildland Fire Coordinating Group

Subject: Incident Commander Expectations for 2014

Thank you for your continued commitment to California Interagency Incident Management Teams. In an effort to maintain the highest standards of professionalism and leadership, the California Wildland Fire Coordinating Group (CWCG) has outlined principles by which all Incident Commanders (IC) sanctioned by the CWCG are expected to adhere. These are described in the 2014 CA Mobilization Guide Appendix A, California Federal Incident Management Team Operating Guidelines at:

http://gacc.nifc.gov/oncc/mob_guide/index.html

The mission of the Type 1 and Type 2 California Interagency Incident Management Teams is to provide Agency Administrators (AAs) a pool of organized, highly skilled and qualified personnel to respond to emergency incidents within California and across the nation. ICs must demonstrate professionalism at all times, on incidents, in-between incidents, and at meetings where they are representing the California Agencies. Individual ICs must be personally committed to and responsible for their team's performance.

The current composition of CA IMTs continues to be a concern as we continue to see shortages of Federal Agency Incident Commanders and Command and General Staff positions with few Type I trainees in the pipeline. CWCG and Agency Administrators expectations include utilization of the Geographic Area priority trainee list to provide opportunities, particularly on Type I incidents for completion of type 1 positions task books. While implementation of Evolving Incident Management (EIM) is expected to take several years, we may call your IMTs to volunteer to pilot and host any necessary projects or training to support continuity of CA IMTs into the future.

When a decision is made to engage in any fire management activity, employees are exposed to hazards. IMTs will utilize a risk management process to continually weigh/evaluate the values at risk against the safety and exposure of fire personnel and the public, the cost of implementation, and the diminished number of available resources. Appropriate hazard assessment and risk mitigation is a critical step before undertaking any wildland fire action.

CWCG expects that pre-planning to deal with injuries and other health related emergencies during wildland fire actions will include providing qualified and appropriate supervision and preparing employees to conduct medical evacuation operations. These expectations are outlined in the CWCG 2012 CA IMT Incident Emergency Response Plan (ERP) document found at:

http://gacc.nifc.gov/oscc/cwgc/standing_committees/safety/index.html

It is expected that in early summer, NMAC will release a new template for the ERP to the Geographic Areas. Please take full advantage of the opportunity to test and revise this template and provide feedback on its use to CWCG.

NWCG has issued the 2014 IRPG which includes new references for planning for medical emergencies and use of new medical incident reporting formats. Additionally, it is recommended for standardization

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that your IMTs utilize the new Medical Plan ICS 206wf because it directly ties to the IRPG Medical Incident Report.

To be successful as Incident Commanders, it is important to make time to establish positive working relationships with the Agency Administrators you support. . We expect this relationship to include establishing clear expectations that describe how the IMT and AA will be successful in coordination and communications with affected stakeholders.

Incident Commanders need to be mindful of the internal costs of IMT members and incident related support costs including personnel time. Specifically, shift lengths need to reflect the operational and environmental complexities that affect incident objectives. Agency administrators may require documentation of cost savings measures.

Before departing the incident, ICs will obtain an evaluation from the local unit. This evaluation needs to be forwarded to the FS North or South Ops Assistant Director for Operations within two weeks of demobilization. That Assistant Director for Operations will then forward the evaluation to the CWCG Operations Committee Chair. CWCG has provided a standard template for team evaluations in the IMT Guidelines. IC's may need to remind AAs of these standard templates upon receiving their delegation of authority.

Continue to reference the California Cooperative Fire Management and Stafford Act Response Agreement (CFMA) 2013-2018 which includes important items relative to the payment for structure defense as well as templates for cost share. Reference: <http://gacc.nifc.gov/oscc/cwcg/index.html>

CWCG is making an effort to become more involved with the IMTs so you can expect members of CWCG to make visits to your incidents throughout the summer. While individual agency visits are normal, Agency Fire Leadership may also be representing CWCG.

There are a number of national initiatives you and your team should be aware of: <http://www.nifc.gov/nicc/administrative/nmac/index.html>., including the USDA FS Chief's Letter – 2014 Fire Season, Please get familiar with these helpful references as we proceed into this fire season.

Lastly, regardless of what changes we face in fire, we want to emphasize that safety of firefighters and the public has always been and always will be our main priority on every wildfire.

Again, we would like to thank you for your continued commitment and long standing dedication to incident management. We look forward to working with you to meet our shared goals and expectations. Sincerely,

/s/ Paul Bannister

Paul Bannister
CWCG Vice Chair

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Attachment 2

CWCG Committee Update

California Wildland Fire Coordinating Group – CWCG Chair Jason Weber, Contract Counties Representative

- Completed rewrite of a new California Master Cooperative Fire Management and Stafford Act Response Agreement for 2013-2018. <http://gacc.nifc.gov/oscc/cwgc/cfma/>
- Working with Cal EMA on current year updates and new 2014 -2019 California Fire Assistance by Hire Agreement (CFAA).
- Sponsored CA Incident Management Team Meetings April 2014.
- Updating annual Direct Protection Areas (DPA) in California.
- Representation on Evolving Incident Management (EIM) work groups and Geographic Area Coordination and Advisory Council.
- Coordinates with National Multi Agency Coordination Group (NMAC)
- Agency members serves as Agency Representative to California Multi-Agency Coordination Group (CALMAC) when/if activated at Preparedness Level 5.

CWCG Operations Group - Liaison Paul Bannister, BLM

- Implements Incident Management Team (IMT) and Incident Commander (IC) application and selection process.
- Works with Training Working Team and IMTs on succession planning for Command and General Staff positions. Helped prioritize CA S520 nominees.
- Ongoing oversight of CA IMT through implementation of IMT Operating Guide. Reviewed the 2013 California IMT performance evaluations.
- Facilitated post-season after action review with Incident Commanders, identifies issues for improvement, whether local, regional, or national.
- Review and update of 2014 CA Mobilization Guide.
- Team roster statistics indicate 50% federal and 50% non-federal team composition. The current year rosters show the greatest shortages in Type I Federal Agency Incident Commanders, Safety Officers, Logistics, Finance and Air Operations.
- Facilitated the annual IMT electronic nominations and selection meeting.
- Facilitated the annual IMT workshop and training.

CWCG Wildland Fire Safety Officers Committee – Liaison Christie Neill, NPS

- Coordinates annual CWCG Interagency Safety & Risk Management Workshop.
- Working with CA IMTs to implement use of new medical ICS 206wf
- Evaluating new templates to update CA Standardized Emergency Response Plans for IMTs uses.
- Issuing pre-season safety alert for Exertional Heat Related Illness training and awareness of Rhabdomyolysis leading to heat stroke and Compartment Syndrome.

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CWCG CA Interagency Incident Business Advisors (CIIFA) – Liaison Glen Gibson, FWS

- Implements annual updates and training on Cost Share, Cost Apportionment.
- Develops and updates CA Fire Bill Operating Plan.
- Meets regularly to settle cost share agreements.
- Reviews/updates the cost apportionment values.

CWCG Training Working Team (TWT) – Liaison Shawna Legarza, USFS

- Implementation of the CA priority trainee list for IFPM with GATRS & GACCs
- Continued planning & implementation for “Academy” course delivery – example, Finance academy 2014, Plans Academy 2015, Logistics Academy 2016, Fuels Academy 2015
- Prioritizing annual training calendar of courses based on needs of agencies vs wants of students due to declining budgets.
- Host annual training officers and training allocation meeting.
- Prioritize S 520 Advanced Incident Management Candidates with Operations Committee

CWCG Interagency Fire Prevention, Communication Education Committee – Liaison Clare Frank, CAL FIRE

- Developing on line version of the revised Interagency Camp Fire Permit.
- Developing Interagency Training in April, 2014.
- Develops unified messages - One Less Spark and Ready Set Go.
- Assessing CFMA items related to Exhibit I Law Enforcement & Fire Prevention Activities.
- Coordination with CA Fire Safe Council.