

A Publication of the  
**National Wildfire  
Coordinating Group**

*Sponsored by*  
United States  
Department of Agriculture

United States  
Department of the Interior

National Association of  
State Foresters



# **Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook**

**NWCG Handbook 2  
PMS 902  
NFES 2160**

**APRIL 2004**

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*Sponsored for NWCG publication by the Incident Business Practices Working Team, April 2004.*

*This publication is available at [www.nwcg.gov/teams/ibpwtnew/ibpwtnew.htm](http://www.nwcg.gov/teams/ibpwtnew/ibpwtnew.htm)*

*Copies of this publication may be ordered from the National Interagency Fire Center, Great Basin Cache Supply Office, 3833 S. Development Ave., Boise ID 83705. Order NFES 2160.*

# INTERAGENCY INCIDENT BUSINESS MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK

## ZERO CODE

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INTERAGENCY INCIDENT BUSINESS MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK

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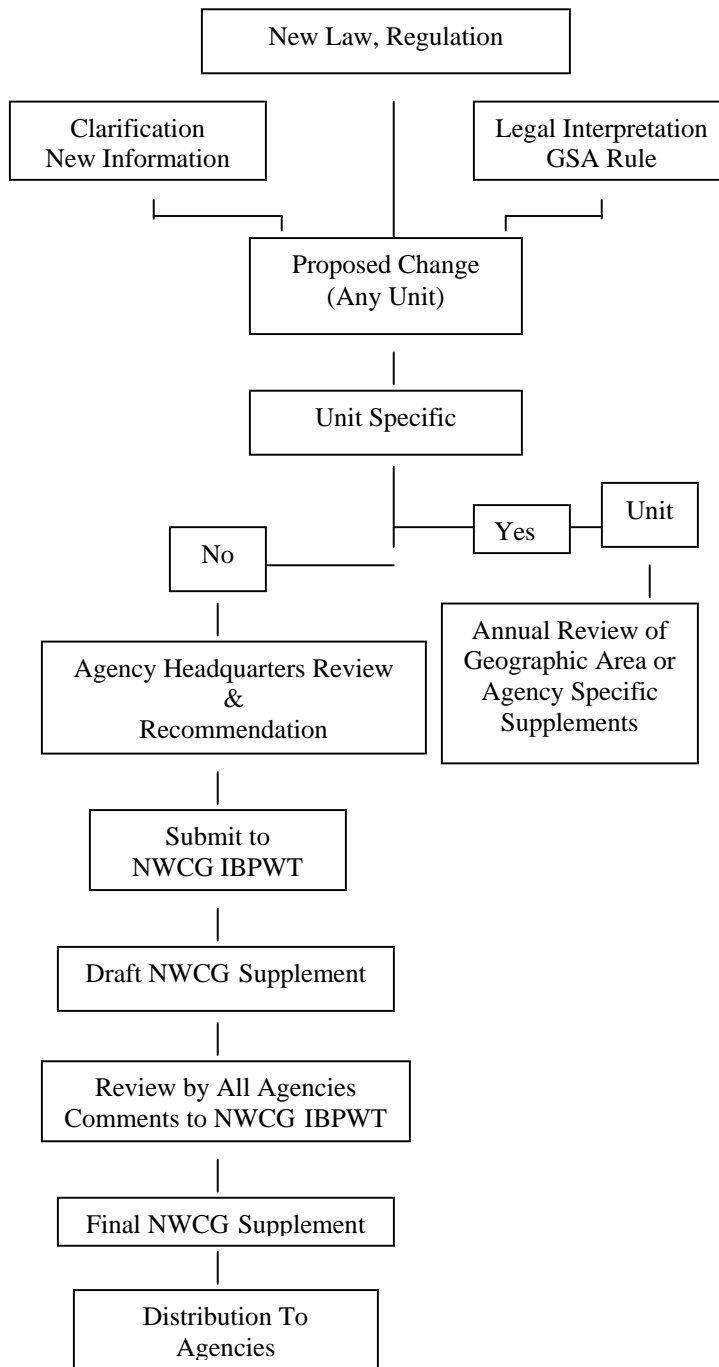
01 – AUTHORITY. This handbook was developed under the auspices of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG). The NWCG was formed March 18, 1976, by cooperative agreement between the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior.

02 – OBJECTIVES. This handbook was developed to assist participating agencies of the NWCG to constructively work together to provide effective execution of each agency's incident management program by establishing procedures for:

1. Uniform application of regulations on the use of human resources, including classification, payroll, commissary, injury compensation, and travel.
2. Acquisition of necessary equipment and supplies from appropriate sources in accordance with applicable procurement regulations.
3. Managing and tracking government property.
4. Financial coordination with the protection agency and maintenance of finance, property, procurement, and personnel records and forms.
5. Use and coordination of incident business management functions as they relate to sharing of resources among federal, state, and local agencies, including the military.
6. Investigation and reporting of accidents.
7. Investigating, documenting, and reporting claims.
8. Documenting costs and implementing cost-effective criteria for managing incident resources.
9. Non-fire incidents administrative processes.

03 – POLICY. Uniform application of interagency policies and guidelines are necessary. Agencies will follow the direction set forth in this handbook in all incident business management functions except where specific agency legal mandates, policies, rules, or regulations direct otherwise.

This handbook must be kept current and made available to incident and agency personnel. Changes to the handbook may be proposed by any agency for a variety of reasons; new law or regulation, legal interpretation or opinion, clarification of meaning, etc. If the proposed change is relevant to other agencies, the proponent agency should first obtain national headquarters review and concurrence before forwarding to the NWCG Incident Business Practices Working Team (IBPWT). The NWCG IBPWT will prepare draft NWCG amendments for all agencies to review before finalizing and distributing. (See the following chart.)



04 – RESPONSIBILITIES.

1. Each agency is responsible for establishing controls to ensure that handbooks are maintained in a current status. Handbooks must be available and up-to-date, and the latest revision of forms must be on hand and available to agency and incident personnel.
2. Each agency shall maintain a master distribution list for the handbook and ensure distribution of NWCG amendments. ([www.nwcg.gov](http://www.nwcg.gov))
3. Agencies, field offices, or NWCG geographic areas may supplement this handbook for clarification or information, as long as policy or conceptual data is not changed. Agencies must make supplements available to incident personnel. ([www.nwcg.gov](http://www.nwcg.gov))
4. Agencies may request the IBPWT to review supplements and make changes to the parent text of this handbook if applicable to all agencies.

05 – DEFINITIONS. Definitions contained in this chapter are used throughout the handbook. Specific definitions unique to a chapter are found within that chapter.

1. Accounting Code. Agency-specific accounting data. Each agency assigns a specific accounting code to an incident.
2. Administrative Payment Team (APT). APT's support incident agencies by processing payments for resources, such as emergency equipment, casualties, local vendors for supplies, etc.
3. Administrative Representative. Individual responsible for incident agency business management functions, such as personnel, procurement, fiscal, etc.
4. Administrative Workweek. Period of seven consecutive calendar days designated in advance by the head of a department (5 U.S.C. 6101(a)).
5. Agency Administrator (AA). The individual responsible for an established organizational unit, such as Forest Supervisor for the Forest Service, Field Office Manager for the Bureau of Land Management, Agency Superintendent for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Park Superintendent for the National Park Service, Refuge Manager for Fish and Wildlife Service, or state agency equivalent.
6. Area Command. An organization established to oversee the management of multiple incidents that are each being handled by an incident management team organization or to oversee the management of a very large incident that has multiple IMTs assigned to it.

7. Area Commander (AC). The individual responsible for overall management of an established area command.
8. Base Hours. The number of hours in a daily tour of duty.
9. Basic Workweek. Refers to the scheduled workweek of the employee (individual) at the home unit.
10. Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation (BAER). BAER teams are formed to take immediate action to prevent soil, water, and ecosystem resource damages and ensure all National Environmental Protection Act compliances are met. Appropriation usage can vary from agency to agency for BAER work. BAER teams should request direction from the incident agency in order to ensure the correct usage of funds for BAER team participation.
11. Buying Team. Buying teams support incident procurement through the local administrative staff by procuring a wide range of services and supplies as well as renting land and equipment.
12. Casual. A person hired and compensated under the Pay Plan for Emergency Workers. Also referred to as emergency firefighter (EFF), AD, and emergency worker.
13. Contracting Officer (CO). Agency personnel with specific delegation of procurement authority, also known as warranted contracting officer.
14. Contracting Officer's Representative (COR). An individual designated by the contracting officer to serve as CO representative in matters dealing with contract administration.
15. Contractor. Private sector personnel, vendors or businesses contracted to provide goods and services to a government agency.
16. Cooperator. An agency with whom resources are shared as authorized in a cooperative agreement.
17. FireCode. One FireCode project number per fire is assigned for use by all five federal wildland firefighting agencies. Fire codes may be any combination of four digit alpha-numeric characters. Each agency's finance community incorporates the FireCode project number into the accounting code.
18. Fireline. For purposes of pay administration for hazardous duty, a fireline is defined as the area within or adjacent to the perimeter of an uncontrolled wildfire of any size in which action is being taken to control fire. Such action includes operations, which directly support control of fire (e.g. activities to extinguish the fire, ground scouting, spot fire patrolling, search and rescue operations, and backfiring).

19. First Aid Cases. Injuries/illnesses involving treatment by paramedics, EMTs, the incident Medical Unit, or a military facility where no billings for services or supplies are required and no lost time beyond the date of injury is expected.

20. General Schedule Employee. A regular federal government employee who is compensated under the General Schedule (GS) Pay Plan.

21. Home Unit. The employing office where the individual is regularly assigned or agency location where the individual is hired.

22. Incident. An occurrence, either human-caused or natural phenomena, that requires action by emergency service personnel to prevent or minimize loss of life or damage to property and/or natural resources.

23. Incident Agency. The organizational unit responsible for the incident planning, logistics, and/or finance activities.

24. Incident Business Advisor (IBA). A liaison and advisor to the agency administrator (AA) or area commander (AC) who works directly for the AA or AC. The IBA serves as a bridge to the AA, incident management team and other incident support functions.

25. Incident Commander (IC). The individual responsible for overall management of the incident. The IC reports to the Agency Administrator for the agency having incident jurisdiction.

26. Incident Management Team. The incident commander and command and general staff personnel assigned to an incident.

27. Incident Order Number. The number assigned to an incident. This number follows a standard format where the first 2 letters indicate the state, the next 3 letters are the incident agency, and the last 4-6 digits are agency assigned. (See the National Interagency Mobilization Guide, NFES 2092, Chapter 10, Section 13.2 or Unit Identifiers, NFES 2080.)

28. Incident Support Unit. Administrative and support units that are ordered by and reports to the agency administrator or designee, (e.g., expanded dispatch, buying team, administrative payment team).

29. Jurisdictional Agency. The agency having land and resource management responsibility for a specific geographical or functional area, as provided by federal, state, or local law.

30. Local Resource. Resources within a dispatch center's area of responsibility.

31. NWCG Geographic Area. A political boundary designated by the wildland fire protection agencies, where these agencies work together in the coordination and effective utilization of resources within their boundaries. The National Interagency Mobilization Guide, Chapter 20, Section 21.1, identifies the area encompassed by the eleven NWCG Geographic Areas.

32. Off Shift. Non-compensable time, (e.g., eating, sleeping or other activities of a personal nature).

33. On Shift. Time of actual work, ordered standby, or compensable travel that has a specific start and ending time.

34. On-Call. An employee will be considered off duty and time spent in an on-call status shall not be considered hours of work if: (1) The employee is allowed to leave a telephone number or to carry an electronic device for the purpose of being contacted, even though the employee is required to remain within a reasonable call-back radius; or (2) The employee is allowed to make arrangements such that any work which may arise during the on-call period will be performed by another person. (5 CFR 551.431(b) January 2003 edition)

35. Operational Period. The period of time scheduled for execution of a given set of tactical actions, which may be specified in the Incident Action Plan.

36. Ordered Standby. An employee is on duty, and time spent on standby duty is hours of work if, for work-related reasons, the employee is restricted by official order to a designated post of duty and is assigned to be in a state of readiness to perform work with limitations on the employee's activities so substantial that the employee cannot use the time effectively for his or her own purposes. A finding that an employee's activities are substantially limited may not be based on the fact that an employee is subject to restrictions necessary to ensure that the employee will be able to perform his or her duties and responsibilities, such as restrictions on alcohol consumption or use of certain medications. (5 CFR 551.431(a)(1) January 2003 edition)

37. Prescribed Fire. Any fire ignited by management actions to meet specific objectives. Also referred to as management ignited.

38. Prevailing Rate Employees. Employees who are compensated under the Federal Wage System. They are frequently referred to as wage grade (WG), wage leader (WL), or wage supervisor (WS) employees.

39. Prevention Teams. Prevention Teams provide support to fire prevention and wildland fire educational needs preceding and during periods of high wildland fire danger or prescribed fire activity. The teams provide assistance to wildland fire managers with coordination of fire loss mitigation efforts with public, state or local agencies.

40. Procurement Officer. Agency personnel with specific delegation of procurement authority, acting within the limits of agency policy of said authority.

41. Protection Agency. The agency responsible for providing direct incident management to a given area pursuant to a cooperative agreement, contract, or other authority.

42. Regular Government Employees. Includes all those people hired under authorities other than the Pay Plan for Emergency Workers. Federal general schedule and prevailing rate employees are included in this category.

43. Resource Order Number/Request Number. As resources are ordered to respond to an incident, Resource Order Numbers (occasionally referred to as a request number) are issued. The order number includes the incident number, an alpha character (S = Supplies, E = Equipment, O = Overhead, A = Aircraft, C = Crews, M = Agency Provided Medical Care) followed by a sequential number (e.g., MT-LNF-076, O-95). Since the Incident Order Number remains the same, usually only the alpha character and sequential number are shown. (National Interagency Mobilization Guide, Chapter 10, Section 13.2.)

44. Severity Funding. Suppression funds may be used to increase the level of presuppression capability and fire preparedness when predicted or actual burning conditions exceed those normally expected, due to severe weather conditions.

45. Spot Change. The second continuous day of an incident, a regular government employee's normal daily tour of duty is "spot changed" to where the first 8, 9, or 10 hours worked are base hours.

46. Supporting Agency. An agency providing suppression or other support and resources to the protection agency. Services and support provided must be covered under an agreement, lease or other contractual document.

47. Timekeeping. Tracking on-shift time of incident resources by the supervisor. Timekeeping is accomplished on the Crew Time Report, SF-261, or the Emergency Equipment Shift Ticket, OF-297.

48. Time Recording. Recording all time presented by others. Personnel time recorders record time from the Crew Time Report, SF-261, to the Emergency Firefighter Time Report, OF-288. Equipment time recorders record time from the Emergency Equipment Shift Ticket, OF-297, to the Emergency Equipment Use Invoice, OF-286.

49. Tour-of-duty. The hours of a day (a daily tour of duty) and the days of an administrative workweek (a weekly tour of duty) that constitutes an employee's regularly scheduled administrative workweek.

50. Warrant. The official delegation of authority to contracting officers and procurement officers establishing the dollar amount and type limits for acquisitions.

51. Wildland/Urban Interface (WUI). The line, area, or zone where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels (as defined in NWCG Glossary of Wildland Fire Terminology, PMS 205).