

National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group

3833 South Development Avenue; Boise, ID 83705

NMAC Correspondence #2015-18

August 17, 2015

To: Geographic Area Coordination Group Chairs
From: National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group
Subject: National Preparedness Level 5 Talking Points

Situation Summary:

- There is little or no resource availability nationally, including Incident Management Teams.
- NMAC is actively seeking military assistance (MAFFs, ground firefighters, aircraft), through both National Guard and DOD channels.
- NMAC is actively seeking international assistance (Canada) and reviewing options with Australia and New Zealand.
- There are four Geographic Areas in Preparedness Level 4 or 5 (Pacific Northwest, Great Basin, Northern California, and Northern Rockies); this level of fire activity has not occurred since 2007.
- Numerous incidents are occurring in multiple Geographic Areas that have burned structures, are causing evacuations, and are threatening large communities and key infrastructure.
- Many incidents will take weeks or months to manage to conclusion.

Key Messages:

- While we expect some short-term moderation in the weather over the next 48 hours in these Geographic Areas, long-term assessments indicate that no season-ending or slowing events are on the horizon.
- Geographic Areas need to be prepared for a “marathon” rather than a “sprint”.
- Information flow from Geographic Areas to NMAC and upwards through agency channels is critical.
- Please make sure your GMACs/coordinating groups are operational and in place, even for Geographic Areas that aren’t active, to ensure national coordination is occurring.
- Please make sure your local dispatch centers and incidents are providing updated and timely ICS-209s, especially on new emerging wildland fires. The ICS-209s need to include detailed information about threats, strategy, and plans for requested critical resources.

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- Please think about options for managing emerging and existing fires without a “new” IMT:
 - Relocating/reassigning IMTs within your Geographic Area to cover the highest priorities;
 - Managing multiple fires with a single IMT;
 - Increased use of Type III organizations;
 - Forming Task Forces or “force packages” of high-value resources (e.g. IHCs, aircraft) controlled by the GMAC. These “packages” can move from incident to incident for short durations to accomplish key or critical short-term objectives;
 - Look for opportunities to consolidate incident management functions wherever possible.
- Remember that Geographic Area, incident, and initial attack objectives, strategies, and tactics need to be commensurate with capabilities.
- Safety: consider the “weak signals” that are beginning to appear:
 - Heavy use of aircraft- we are seeing more incidents and unavailability due to mechanical issues. Examples include avionics failures, broken windshields, bird strikes, and tail rotor strikes. Please stay vigilant with your rotor and fixed wing operations.
 - Firefighter injuries- Heat Related Illness (HRI), vehicle roll overs, snag/hazard tree strikes, vehicle accidents are occurring. Please remind firefighters that we have a lot of fire out there, and a long way to go this season. Slow and steady wins the race.
- Please watch out for each other, communicate, be flexible, and work together. Remember to take care of yourselves!

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