June 2008

Position Description – Northern Region
Communications Coordinator (COMC)
Exception Position 5 – AD-K

MAJOR DUTIES

The incumbent is assigned to a Geographic Area Coordination Center (GACC) whenever incident levels requires an on-site communications coordination and reports directly to the NIICD-Communications Duty Officer (CDO).

The incumbent:

Manages the allocation of communications resources at the Geographic Area level including communications equipment, communications personnel and associated supplies. The COMC, while reporting to the NIICD-CDO, directly supports the assigned Geographic Area.

Provides operational guidance in the areas of incident radio frequency spectrum management for the Geographical Area including all frequencies for ground tactical, command, logistics, and air operations.

Has responsibility for the resolution of incident radio frequency interference problems to incident radio systems within the Geographical Area. This includes international interference problems with Mexico and Canada.

Maintains an accurate inventory of all air/tactical/command/logistics frequencies, communications equipment, and personnel (COMT, COML) assigned to the GACC.

Tracts all frequencies assigned to the GACC

Keeps current on the availability of communications resources for future Geographic Area and National requirements.

Maintains frequent contact with NIICD-CDO to coordinate resources in adjacent Geographical Areas. When other Geographic Areas have and assigned COMC maintains continual contact to coordinate communications assignments between the two GACCs.

Provides problem solving recommendations and advice on communications issues to the respective Geographic Area Coordinators, the Area Coordinators, the Area Command Teams managing an incident complex, and/or to incident management teams within a complex or an incident. National as well as geographical area priorities will be considered when making recommendations and providing advice.

Maintains daily contact with individual incidents coordinating equipment and frequencies.

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FACTORS

Knowledge Required by the Position

The following knowledge and abilities are required.
Expert knowledge at the professional level of incident radio communication system design, management and operation, with extensive experience in the management and utilization of the related radio frequency spectrum at the incident and GACC level.

Ability to make necessary technical evaluation of incident radio interference problems and by analysis (including applications of computer programs where appropriate) determines the cause and appropriate remedy.

Ability to apply standard electronic and electrical engineering practices in the evaluation of a wide variety of incident radio facilities including a comprehensive and expert knowledge of special symbols and terminology related to frequency management activities, e.g. high frequency (HF), very high frequency (VHF), frequency bands, propagation methods, modulation, class of station, types of emission, high and low-band, wide and narrow band, power output, bandwidth, etc.

A comprehensive technical knowledge of the various types of emergency communications equipment available to support all-risk incident. In addition, the incumbent has the experience and ability to respond to all types of situations and to decide the proper course of action and then to rapidly develop viable concepts for communications support that meets the needs of the assigned incident. The incumbent must organize, manage, and meld this equipment into a functioning emergency communications traffic flow in relation to system use and the expansion or contraction of the system to meet user requirements.

A comprehensive knowledge of state-of-the-art communications technologies and how to apply them either in an effective manner when designing emergency communications system or with the processes associated with designing communications systems for agency use. These designs take into account the need for digital encryption, cellular radio, satellite communications techniques and the current digital requirements.

A complete and comprehensive technical and field operational knowledge of the radio propagation characteristics of low power, portable communications equipment operating in the VHF Lo-band, VHF Hi-band, and UHF frequency bands utilizing analog and/or digital signaling, frequency modulation (FM), and well as equipment operating in the VHF frequency band of 118-136 MHZ utilizing amplitude modulation (AM). In addition, a comprehensive knowledge of L and KU band microwave propagation characteristic is needed for the installation and operation of emergency satellite and terrestrial microwave systems used in conjunction with the low power systems. This includes a complete comprehension of the path/power limitations and the effect of various terrain/foliage types of both FM and AM modulation schemes for all frequency bands from HF to KU band microwave.

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Knowledge of, and experience as Communications Technician and Communications Unit Leader in Type I, II, and All-Risk Incidents. Knowledge will include duties, theory, and practice, and must be at sufficient level to design and explain complex linking systems to field units.

Interpersonal skills required for meeting and dealing with people for a wide variety of background and occupations.

A complete and comprehensive understanding of the dispatch organization is required. This includes ordering, mobilizing, tracking and demobilizing resources.

Ability to develop, organize, prepare and present in both written form and orally.

Required courses are:

Incident Communication Technician S-258,
Communications Unit Leader S-358,
Communications Coordinator (no S-number).

/s/ Jane M. Haker
Incident Business Coordinator
Region One - USFS