

SAFETY ALERT

*United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service
National Headquarters*

FILE CODE: 5100/6710/7130

SUBJECT: Ground Transportation of Contract Fire Crews

RE: Work/Rest Guidelines

TO: Incident Commanders, Dispatch Centers, and Affected Employees

DATE: June 27, 2002

Alert Information:

In some cases, estimated times of departure (ETD) and estimated times of arrival (ETA) that contract fire crews are given do not allow sufficient time for mandatory rest periods. Contract crews use ETD/ETA timeframes to report to incidents by the requested hour. As a result, some contract fire crews may be unknowingly violating Federal work/rest guidelines. This can lead to driver/crew fatigue, stress, and a loss of concentration that could result in a vehicle accident.

Federal work/rest guidelines apply to contract fire crews ordered to report to an incident under Federal jurisdiction. Incident commanders and dispatch centers ordering crews must ensure that the work/rest guidelines found in the Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook, NWCG Handbook 2, PMS 902, NFES 2160, Section 12.7, are communicated to all crews before driving to incidents. Current work/rest ratios require a minimum of 1 hour of rest for every 2 hours of work or travel.

Contract crews must be given both the opportunity and encouragement to take appropriate rest breaks during travel.

Released by:

/s/Thomas J. Mills
THOMAS J. MILLS
Deputy Chief for Business Operations

/s/Joel D. Holtrop
JOEL D. HOLTROP
Deputy Chief for State and Private Forestry