

Southern Area Mobilization Guide

Chapter 10 – Objectives, Policy, and Scope of Operation

11 MISSION STATEMENT

The principal mission of the Southern Area Coordination Center (SACC) is the cost-effective coordination of emergency response with logistical assistance of its partner agencies of the Southern Area. This is accomplished through planning, communications, situation monitoring, projecting needs, and expediting resource orders between Federal Land Management Agencies, State Agencies, and other cooperators. In addition:

- A. SACC serves as the focal point for providing intelligence and logistical support relating to ongoing and anticipated incident activity for all Federal and cooperating State wildland fire suppression agencies in the southern geographic area.
- B. SACC facilitates the movement of resources between State Coordination Centers, while it ensures the state's continued fire suppression capabilities to support fire potential by monitoring weather and prescribed fire activity within the area.
- C. SACC plays a significant role in providing logistical support to all-risk incidents such as hurricanes, floods, and other natural disasters as well as human-caused, all-risk incidents.
- D. SACC also responds to requests for support from other geographic areas through the National Interagency Coordination Center.

11.1 TOTAL MOBILITY

The Southern Area Coordinator has authority, through the Southern Area Multi-Agency Coordination Group (MAC), to move personnel and equipment throughout the Southern Area and to/from adjacent areas, to meet wildland fire preparedness or suppression needs, as outlined in the Interagency Agreement between the National Park Service, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U. S. Forest Service (please see Section 44), and from the Administrators of the Southeastern and South Central (State) Forest Fire Protection Compacts (as set forth in Public Law 642).

11.2 PRIORITIES

When competition for resources exists within the Southern Area, the Southern Area Coordination Center Manager, Emergency Operations Manager, or the Southern Area Multi-Agency Coordination Group will establish priorities.

The standard criteria to be used in establishing priorities is:

1. Potential to destroy:
 - a. Human life.
 - b. Property and Resource Values.
2. Initial Attack.

Southern Area Mobilization Guide

Chapter 10 - Objectives, Policy, and Scope of Operation

3. Escaped fires and emerging fires:

Units will be asked to describe the probability of meeting wildland fire objectives within the specified time frame documented in the Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) to assist in determining priorities.

4. Support of ongoing incidents.

Prescribed fire, wildland fire use, and wildland fire will receive the same consideration when the Southern Area MAC provides decisions on the assignment of resources.

Requests for non-fire or "all-risk" incident support will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the Southern Area Coordinator and the Southern Area Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC) Group, and a decision on dispatch/coordination system involvement will be made using the following criteria (these same criteria can be used as a checklist at the local level by State MAC Groups):

1. Is the incident an emergency, Extreme Emergency, Declared either an Emergency or Disaster at the Presidential/Gubernatorial levels?
2. Is emergency travel authorized for non-exempt personnel? (For example, "compensable because it results from an event which could not be scheduled nor controlled administratively by agency management.")
3. Is the incident a planned "special event?"
4. What is the anticipated magnitude and duration of this event?
5. Is it appropriate for agency personnel/resources to assist in this incident?
6. Are ground and aviation safety standards in place?
7. Can the resources we've been asked to send safely operate on the incident?
8. Is it expected to impact other agency or other Geographical Area resources and to what extent?
9. Are there any laws or policies that would prohibit any Federal or State agencies from assisting the requesting agency?
10. Do MOUs or agreements exist (or need to be developed) in order to reimburse other agencies for all associated costs?
11. If law enforcement personnel are requested, are jurisdictional issues covered by an MOU (or need to be developed) for other agencies to assist?
12. If dispatch/coordination system assistance is desired by the requesting agency, will overtime authorization(s) be completed to reimburse overtime salaries for support personnel at the State Coordination Center, SACC, and Fire Cache level?
13. Are there any constraints on the use and reimbursement of detailers to process resource requests at the State Coordination Center and SACC level?

Southern Area Mobilization Guide

Chapter 10 – Objectives, Policy, and Scope of Operation

14. Is there any "value added" to the mobilization and demobilization process by dispatch/coordination system involvement? (For example, will the dispatch/coordination system be tasked with networking incident requests, or will the resource order process be used only to document and pass information on "name requested" resources after the requesting agency/unit locates and identifies these resources?)

12 SCOPE OF OPERATION

12.1 GENERAL – The Southern Area Mobilization Guide is a supplement to the National Mobilization Guide. The Southern Area Mobilization Guide is an extension of Agency Manual/Handbook Systems, Directories, and Instruction Memorandums relating to logistical support operations to provide dispatching policies, procedures, and organization. The Guide includes a directory and a catalog of personnel, equipment, aircraft, and supplies in order to assist in obtaining timely and cost-effective incident support services.

12.1.1 NATIONAL RESPONSE PLAN

Cooperating Agencies of the Southern Area will normally function in a supportive role in coordinating responses to emergencies and incidents of a nature other than wildfire. An Agency may take the lead role for purposes of expediency in life-or-death situations or when non-Government Emergency Service Programs are not capable of providing the service.

Specific agency policies will provide direction to determine the availability of resources, in conjunction with existing programs, to support and cooperate with local authorities and organizations.

12.1.2 OFFICE OF FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Due to the unique ability of the wildland fire community to respond to disasters, SACC may be tasked by the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) for international assistance. This may be in the form of personnel, equipment, supplies, or aircraft. Requests for foreign disaster assistance will be made by the Forest Service Disaster Assistance Support Program (DASP) Manager to the Forest Service Southern Region Operations Officer, who will determine availability of the resource(s) requested. In some cases, the requests for assistance will be made through NICC to SACC.

Southern Area Mobilization Guide

Chapter 10 - Objectives, Policy, and Scope of Operation

12.2 SOUTHERN AREA COORDINATION CENTER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Provide a Center for information concerning the overall incident situation in the Southern Area, including but not limited to fire danger, number of fires, and number of personnel and equipment committed to fires.
2. Anticipate needs and stay ahead of the Logistics curve.
3. Provide, on a year-round basis, a Predictive Services unit responsible for the situation reporting program, incident status summaries, weather data, resource status reports, fire activity forecasting, and the Southern Area Coordination Center website.
4. Determine the amounts and locations of available overhead, other personnel, equipment, aircraft, transportation, and supplies. Establish criteria and priorities for sharing available resources.
5. Coordinate the movement of personnel, equipment, aircraft, and supplies from one State or Area of Federal Land Management Agencies and Cooperators to another within and outside the Southern Area. Provide coordination between other Geographic Areas concerning presuppression needs.
6. Coordinate with Agency Directors of Fire and Aviation Management or designated alternates to determine priorities for personnel, equipment, aircraft, and supplies when multiple fire situations make it difficult to fill all requests for assistance.
7. Keep Federal land management agency heads, supervisors, chief's office(s), NICC, and cooperators informed of current and critical fire situations and major fires. Establish needs and priorities for resource allocation.
8. Develop and maintain an accurate summary of crew assignments to fire suppression and prescribed fire projects so that crew use can be weighed against the desired delivery time and transportation efficiency and economy.
9. Provide liaison between ordering Units and Fire Cache on equipment needs and delivery methods.
10. Monitor dispatch organizations for compliance in meeting dispatch standards.
11. Participate in incident closeouts and in the analysis of coordination and dispatch activities.
12. Provide leadership in dispatch training programs to facilitate current dispatch and coordination needs.
13. Publish tours of duty and staffing levels for the various suppression resources in Specific Action and Readiness Guide(s). Negotiate requested deviations from planned actions with host State Coordination Centers.

Southern Area Mobilization Guide

Chapter 10 – Objectives, Policy, and Scope of Operation

14. Determine needs to preposition suppression resources at the most strategic locations, and initiate moves through host State Coordination Centers.
15. Assist during State compact activity.

12.3 RESPONSIBILITIES OF STATE COORDINATION CENTERS

1. Responsible for all initial attack dispatch. Centers may not actually engage in initial attack activities (for example, Virginia Coordination Center, Mississippi Coordination Center, etc.); however, they will be responsible for establishing standards and monitoring initial attack activity.
2. Responsible for mobilizing and dispatching of resources within their area of jurisdiction.
3. Ensure adequate staffing of all incidents through the State Coordination Center's dispatch system.
4. Inform the Southern Area Coordination Center of any anticipated critical fire situations, fire activity, or all-risk activity that may exhaust the State Center's capabilities.
5. Maintain a written log of all suppression activities up until the time the formal Resource Order dispatch begins, and continue the log on essential items not covered by Resource Order.
6. Maintain a record of the locations of personnel, equipment, and aircraft during presuppression activities.
7. Provide Southern Area Coordination Center with incident status information on all large fires, or small fires that threaten life or property on a daily basis.
8. Determine needs for prepositioning resources or for deviations from published staffing levels. Additional shared resources which are needed will be requested on a Resource Order through normal dispatch channels with the concurrence of the Southern Area Coordination Center.
9. Request resources from one State Coordination Center's jurisdiction to another (unless covered by an MOU or initial attack agreement) through the neighborhood concept or through SACC.

Southern Area Mobilization Guide

Chapter 10 - Objectives, Policy, and Scope of Operation

12.4 SACC OFFICE STAFFING

The Southern Area Coordination Center Manager will ensure SACC is staffed to service the needs of the field units. The Southern Area Coordination Center will be staffed seven days a week during fire season (normally mid-March through late November—to also accommodate Western fire season) from 0700-1830.

During periods of incident activity, SACC will extend the staffing hours as determined by the Southern Area Coordination Center Manager. Responses to after-hours activity will be provided by a designated Duty Officer.

13 MOBILIZATION/DEMOBILIZATION

The Southern Area Coordination Center provides for the cost-effective mobilization and demobilization of resources between the State Coordination Centers and the National Interagency Coordination Center.

1. **SAFETY – Safety is the highest priority.** All personnel will make the extra effort to ensure a safe, all-risk emergency operation. All dispatchers, fire managers, and incident personnel must assume responsibility for following safety policies.

2. **EMERGENCY INCIDENT HOURS OF DRIVING**

Refer to the National Mobilization Guide.

13.0 WORK/REST GUIDELINES

Refer to the National Mobilization Guide, Chapter 13.

13.1 INITIAL ATTACK DEFINITION

Refer to the National Mobilization Guide, Chapter 13..

13.1.1 INCIDENT COMMANDER DESIGNATION

Dispatch Centers will ensure that all assigned resources responding to an incident will know the name of the designated Incident Commander on the incident. The designated Incident Commander's name will be identified and documented on the written dispatch log of the incident.

13.1.2 GACC TO GACC INITIAL ATTACK ORDERING OF AIRTANKERS AND LEAD PLANES

The Southern Area Coordination Center (SACC) may order initial attack airtankers and lead planes directly from the Southwest Area Coordination Center

Southern Area Mobilization Guide

Chapter 10 – Objectives, Policy, and Scope of Operation

(SWCC). SWCC may order initial attack airtankers and lead planes or Air Supervision Modules directly from SACC.

The Eastern Area Coordination Center (EACC) may order initial attack airtankers and lead planes or Air Supervision Modules directly from SACC.

13.2 RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

A standard Resource Order numbering system will be used. (see **National Mobilization Guide**, Chapter 10, Section 13.2).

Resource order numbering will be established on a calendar year basis to conform with the National Interagency Coordination Center standards for Resource Order Numbering in order to facilitate statistical and data gathering.

Resource order numbering in the Southern Area will commence at the beginning of each calendar year. An individual who is committed on a resource order prior to December 31 will remain on the resource order until the resource is released. An individual who is being ordered on the same management code after December 31 must be ordered on a resource order for the new year.

Southern Area Mobilization Guide

Chapter 10 - Objectives, Policy, and Scope of Operation

13.2.1 RESOURCE MOBILIZATION PRIORITIES

The Southern Area Multi-Agency Coordinating Group, in concert with various Agency Unions and Affiliates, has established priorities for resource mobilization.

The priorities are as follows:

1. Resources represented by the National Wildland Fire Coordinating Group (U. S. Forest Service, National Park Service, U. S. Fish and Wildlife, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of Defense, and Southern States),
2. Contractors,
3. Administratively Determined (AD) hires.

13.3 NATIONAL RESOURCES

National Area Command Teams
Airtankers
ATMU/REMS
Critical Cache Items
Infrared Aircraft
Large Transport Aircraft (40+ passengers)
Lead Planes
Modular Airborne Firefighting Systems (MAFFS)
National Commissary Units
National Interagency Caches
National Mobile Food Units
National Shower Facilities
NIRSC (NIFC) Telecommunications Equipment
Smokejumpers
Smokejumper Aircraft
Type 1 Crews
Type 1 and 2 Helicopters
National Type I Incident Management Teams

13.3.1 AREA RESOURCES

Mobile Cache Support Vans
Portable Retardant Bases
Southern Area Radio Systems or Equipment
Type 2 Incident Management Teams
Type 3 Helicopters
Water-handling Vans

Southern Area Mobilization Guide

Chapter 10 – Objectives, Policy, and Scope of Operation

13.4 NOTIFICATION OF USE/COMMITMENT OF NATIONAL/AREA RESOURCES

State Coordination Centers will notify SACC within 15 minutes of commitment when the status of National or Area Resources change or when they are dispatched directly to adjacent Forests, States, or other agency units. A commit message will be sent by electronic mail (Dispatch Messaging System) to SACC (gasac_a@dms.nwcg.gov) for Area and National Resources. SACC will forward messages to NICC for National Resources.

Use of National resources for monitoring or assignment to prescribed fires will require prior approval by the Area Coordinator.

To facilitate tracking of limited and critical area resources, Interior agencies ordering a Type III helicopter under an ARA will immediately notify their respective State Coordination Center and the State Coordination Center affected by the order.

13.5 FILL OR KILL PROCEDURE

Refer to the National Mobilization Guide.

13.6 STANDARD CUBES, WEIGHT, AND GEAR POLICY FOR ALL PERSONNEL

Refer to the National Mobilization Guide.

13.7 STRIKE TEAMS

Refer to the National Mobilization Guide.

13.8 WILDLAND FIRE WEATHER FORECASTS

Dissemination of Fire Weather Information (see National Mobilization Guide).

The National Weather Service will distribute morning fire weather forecasts, afternoon updates, fire weather watches, and red flag warnings as specified in their annual operating plan.

1. *State Coordination Centers* will be responsible for distributing the weather information to firefighters and incident management personnel at initial attack bases, staging areas, field locations, and incidents with resources committed to initial/extended attack.
2. *Wildland Fire Agencies* will post the fire weather reports at all stations, including helibases and airtanker bases, etc.

Southern Area Mobilization Guide

Chapter 10 - Objectives, Policy, and Scope of Operation

3. ***Incident Commanders*** on all incidents will be responsible for briefing all suppression and prescribed fire resources assigned to them on current and expected fire weather information prior to any line assignment.

In addition, SACC will provide daily red flag warning and fire weather watch information as part of the daily Executive and Morning Reports, which will be distributed to the field.