

## Washington Interagency Incident Management Teams Fire Information – 2006 Season

### Staffing For Fires

**Washington Incident Management Teams** - Team members include a wide variety of federal, state, county and local agencies that come together to manage emergency incidents throughout the Pacific Northwest Region. The teams are equipped to manage all hazard incidents, but predominantly manage the many wildfires prevalent in the summer months. The Incident Command System (ICS) is the management system and command structure used to direct all operations at the incident scene. There are five Type 2 Incident Management Teams (IMT's) located throughout the state. Listed below are the Incident Commanders, the Lead Public Information Officers and a contact number for all five teams:

Team #	Incident Commander (s)	Incident Public Information Officer	Phone #
1	Gary Jennings/	Koshare Lomnicki – WA DNR	Cell. (360) 485-5318
2	Rex Reed/Chris Schulte	Josie Williams – Fire Service	Cell. (206) 940-1458
3	Gary Berndt/Dave LaFave	Dale Warriner – WA DNR	Cell. (509) 660-0100
4	Mikal Bennett/Marsh Haskins	Cynthia Reichelt – Forest Service Wade Alonzo – WA DNR	Cell. (509) 675-5924 Cell. (360) 609-4174
5	Dick Gormley	Roland Emetaz - Forest Service	Cell. (503) 475-1668

(Additional details on each Type 2 Team, contact numbers, and websites are listed at the end of this document.)

### WA Incident Management Type 2 Teams

In the United States there are three types of Incident Management Teams (IMTs) distributed across the nation. Approximately 35 of these teams are categorized as Type 2 Regional Teams.

Teams are strategically located, with a majority of these teams in the 11 western fire prone states. Each team consists of members from a wide variety of federal, state, county and local agencies.

As a general rule, Type 2 Teams manage wildfires with approximately 500 - 1000 people assigned and address the logistical, fiscal, planning, operational, safety and community issues related to wildland fire or all-risk incidents. These Teams are managed on a rotational basis year round through the nine Geographical Areas.

A wildland fire is initially managed by the local agency that has fire protection responsibility for that area. Engines, ground crews, smokejumpers, helicopters with water buckets, and airtankers may all be used for initial suppression. Various local agencies may work together, sharing personnel and equipment, to fight new fires and those that escape initial action. If a wildland fire grows to the point where local personnel and equipment are not enough, the responsible agency contacts the Geographic Area Coordination Center (GACC) for help. The GACC will locate and dispatch additional firefighters and support personnel throughout the geographic area.



When the GACCs can no longer meet the requests because they are supporting multiple incidents, or when GACCs are competing for resources, the request for equipment and supplies are referred to the National Interagency Coordination Center at Boise, Idaho:

<http://www.nifc.gov/nifctour/nicc.html>

### WA Integrated Geographic Board

The WA Incident Management Teams (IMTs) operate under direction provided by the Washington State Geographic Board. The mission of the Board is to coordinate and maintain interagency management teams to manage complex incidents for the benefit of the citizens of Washington State. The Board is also responsible for the following:

- Establish and maintain a suitable number of Interagency Incident Management Teams (IMT's) in Washington State
- Ensure IMT's are staffed with qualified team members trained to National Wildfire Coordination Group Standards
- Establish and maintain a dispatch process and rotation schedule for the IMT's
- Provide operating policy, procedure, and direction to the IMT's

- Provide review and oversight of IMT performance
- Develop interagency agreements to facilitate effective IMT operations
- Serve as a link between the IMT's and agency administrators

The Board meets monthly most of the year and is available for conference calls during fire season to deal with any issues that may arise. To contact any of the Geo Board Members:

Joe Shramek, Chair	WA Department of Natural Resources	<a href="mailto:joe.shramek@wadnr.gov">joe.shramek@wadnr.gov</a>
Scott Boyd	USDI Bureau of Land Management	<a href="mailto:sboyd@blm.gov">sboyd@blm.gov</a>
Dan Johnson	WA State Fire Marshal's Office	<a href="mailto:dan.johnson@301.wsp.wa.gov">dan.johnson@301.wsp.wa.gov</a>
Pam Ensley	USDI Fish & Wildlife	<a href="mailto:pam_ensley@r1.fws.gov">pam_ensley@r1.fws.gov</a>
Vacancy	USDI Bureau of Indian Affairs	
Debbie Bird	USDI National Park Service	<a href="mailto:debbie_bird@nps.gov">debbie_bird@nps.gov</a>
Carl Gossard	USDA Forest Service	<a href="mailto:cgossard@or.blm.gov">cgossard@or.blm.gov</a>
Vacancy	Washington Fire Service	

### **Media Safety / Travel Tips**

It is the policy of federal and state agencies to provide news media access to incidents including wildland fires, prescribed fires and wildland fire-use fires. These guidelines are designed to provide news media with safe, consistent approaches and opportunities to cover various aspects of wildland fires and all-risk incidents.

The Public Information Officers at an incident base are your primary contact. If possible, try to contact them prior to your arrival for tips about travel to the fire. Check in with the Public Information Officer as soon as you arrive. Look for a Public Information Officer sign near the fire camps' main entrance or ask to speak to a Public Information Officer and you will be directed to their location. The Public Information Officer will be able to provide you with the most current information relative to the fire event. It is through them that you will be able to gain access to people and places of interest. Check with your incident escort before photographing inmate firefighters working on a fire. Generally, photographs of these firefighters are not permitted on fire incidents.

**What To Wear** - News media representatives will be required to wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) on all wildland fire incidents. If you desire access on or near a fire you will need to bring the following safety gear:

- All leather boots with at least an 8" high top, lace-type work boots with non-slip, melt-resistant soles (Vibram soles) and heels.
- Pants and shirt made of Nomex fabric.

- Hard hat with chinstrap
- Leather gloves

**Safety** - For your safety and the safety of fire personnel, please do not venture out on your own. Stay with your escort who is assigned to take you out to the field. A Public Information Officer will escort you as close to the front line as is safe. Entering barricaded access routes may subject you to a wildfire that can move fast and unpredictably or could possibly interfere with suppression efforts or personnel safety.

**Transport To Remote Fires** - Incident Air Operations Staff cannot airlift media representatives to remote fire camps. Helicopter space is extremely limited and typically in use by command staff and fire resources. Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFRs) are often standard procedures over fires with aircraft in use on the operations. All media requests to over fly with non-incident aircraft shall be coordinated with Incident Operations, and cleared with the local dispatch. If you plan to visit the Helibase on an incident you will need to be escorted by a Public Information Officer for your safety.

#### Informational Websites

National Fire News	<a href="http://www.nifc.gov/fireinfo/nfn.html">http://www.nifc.gov/fireinfo/nfn.html</a>
National Interagency Coordination Center	<a href="http://www.nifc.gov/nifctour/nicc.html">http://www.nifc.gov/nifctour/nicc.html</a>
National Interagency Fire Center Geographic Map	<a href="http://www.nifc.gov/news/gacccs_map.html">http://www.nifc.gov/news/gacccs_map.html</a>
Current Wildfire Information	<a href="http://www.wildfires.nifc.gov">http://www.wildfires.nifc.gov</a>
Active Fires - All fire information can be found on this site for Teams in WA & OR	<a href="http://www.activefires.net">http://www.activefires.net</a>
<b>State IMTs</b>	
WA Incident Management Team 1	<a href="http://www.activefires.net">http://www.activefires.net</a>
WA Incident Management Team 2	<a href="http://www.wa-imt2.org">www.wa-imt2.org</a>
WA Incident Management Team III	<a href="http://www.waimt3.com/upper_frame.htm">http://www.waimt3.com/upper_frame.htm</a>
WA Incident Management Team 4	<a href="http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/colville/WIMT/index.htm">http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/colville/WIMT/index.htm</a>
Central WA Incident Management Team 5	<a href="http://199.134.225.50/nwcc/t2_cwa5">http://199.134.225.50/nwcc/t2_cwa5</a>

#### Commonly Asked Questions

**Question:** What is the mission of these teams and why?

**Answer:** The Teams operate under the direction provided by the Washington State Geographic Board. The mission is to coordinate and maintain interagency management teams to manage complex incidents for the benefit of the citizens of Washington State and to the nation or neighboring states as available.

**Question:** Why are the IMTs in Washington integrated between personnel from Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Fire Services, and Federal Wildland Fire Agencies?

**Answer:** The complexity of fires and other incidents requiring IMTs have increased across the State, and agencies responsible for managing these incidents have experienced budget and personnel shortages. Incidents that involve multiple jurisdictions are more and more commonplace. Changing demographics within the State have a corresponding increase change in incident complexity. Agency managers, legislators, and taxpayers are very concerned about the high costs associated with managing emergencies. Finally, the citizens of the State expect professional response to emergencies and they are not as concerned about who responds as they are about the quality of the response.

**Question:** Who manages these processes and what is their mission and role?

**Answer:** The Washington Incident Management Team Geographic Board (Board) has been founded to provide leadership to this process. The Board consists of membership from the DNR, State Fire Defense Board, State Fire Marshall's Office, and Office of Emergency Management and the fire federal wildland fire agencies (National Park Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs and US Forest Service): From the outset, the Board placed a premium on "Organizing for success", recognizing the challenges ahead with this endeavor. The mission of the Board is to coordinate and maintain IMTs to provide maximum benefits for the citizens of Washington.

The Role of the Board is to:

- ../ Establish IMTs in Washington
- ../ Ensure IMTs are staffed with qualified members
- ../ Establish a dispatch schedule for IMTs.
- ../ Provide operating policy and direction to IMT's.
- ../ Provide oversight and review of IMT performance and costs.
- ../ Develop interagency agreements to facilitate IMT operations.
- ../ Act as a link between agency executives and IMTs.

**Question:** How were the selections made to fill positions on the IMTs?

**Answer:** The Geographic Board worked with the five Incident Commanders to fill vacancies, with emphasis on integrating the teams with personnel from DNR, fire service, and federal agencies. Team vacancies were filled from a pool of applicants that applied through their Agency to a formal advertisement.

**Question:** Are all the IMT positions filled with qualified personnel?

**Answer:** Yes. Early on, the Geographic Board agreed to recognize the individual agency training requirements for each ICS position; provided, the minimum requirements of the National Incident Management System 310-1 were not negotiable. Personnel filling positions on each of the five IMTs were certified by their agency as having met those minimum requirements.

**Question:** How will these IMTs be dispatched?

**Answer:** Once a request for an IMT is received, the "up" Incident Commander will be notified. After communicating with the requesting unit, the Incident Commander will contact Olympia DNR ECC and relay the location, date, and time for the IMT to report. Olympia DNR ECC will then dispatch team members, alternates, and trainees using standard procedures.

**Question:** What type of incidents are these teams assigned?

**Answer:** As a general rule, Type 2 IMTs manage wildfires and address the logistical, fiscal, planning, operational, safety and community issues related to wildland fires.

**Question:** Will these IMTs be considered for "all hazard" incidents?

**Answer:** Ultimately, it is the position of the Geographic Board that these IMTs will be available for "all hazard" assignments. There are obviously some hurdles to overcome with this decision; however, the Board has moved in that direction. This is consistent with the position taken by Governor Christine Gregoire with respect to the use of the Incident Command System (ICS) by State agencies.

**Question:** Are these IMTs available for out-of-State dispatch?

**Answer:** Yes, however, the number of IMTs available for out-of-State dispatch at any one time will be affected by the situation within the State at the time of the request.