

**National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group
Operating Plan
2024**

Fire Director, NIFC
National Association of State Foresters

Director, Wildland Fire Operations
Bureau of Indian Affairs

Chief, Fire Operations
Bureau of Land Management

Deputy Chief, Fire Operations
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Assistant Director, Operations
U.S. Forest Service

Branch Chief, Wildland Fire
National Park Service

Wildland Fire Program Manager
U.S. Fire Administration

Overview:

The National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC) is comprised of members who have been delegated authority to provide an essential management mechanism for national level strategic coordination to ensure that wildland firefighting resources are efficiently and appropriately managed in a cost-effective manner.

Membership:

National Association of State Foresters (NASF)
Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
U.S. Forest Service (USFS)
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
National Park Service (NPS)
U.S. Fire Administration (USFA)

NMAC Secondary members:

Primary NMAC members will identify a secondary NMAC member representing their agency when the primary is unavailable. Secondaries will be identified pre-season and provided to the NMAC Chair. Primary NMAC members are responsible for briefing their secondaries on NMAC issues and topics and vice versa.

Mission:

National wildland fire operations management, priority setting, and resource allocation through multi-agency coordination.

NMAC Roles/Responsibilities:

- Establishes national priorities among the Geographic Areas (GAs)
- Directs, allocates or reallocates resources among or between GAs to meet national priorities.
- Determines National Preparedness Levels (PLs)
- Anticipates and identifies future national fire management resource requirements.
- Provides oversight of general business practices between NMAC and the Geographic Multi-Agency Coordination (GMAC) groups
- Provide management/directional oversight of the Interagency Standards for Resource Mobilization
- Provides an NMAC member as the media spokesperson assisting NIFC External Affairs for issues of national importance (as requested)
- Serves as liaison to a specified GA. NMAC liaisons provide two-way communication between the assigned GA and NMAC to streamline communications to better work together for national coordination and management of resources. Current liaison assignments are as follows:
 - Rocky Mountain - NASF rep
 - California - NPS rep
 - Great Basin - BLM rep
 - Northern Rockies - USFA rep
 - Northwest - BIA rep
 - Alaska, Southern Area - USFWS rep

- Southwest, Eastern Area - USFS rep
- Determines national fire resource availability to support non-fire incidents supporting the National Response Framework during periods of simultaneous fire and non-fire incidents.
- Determines activation, coordination, and involvement of military and international resources, and ensures NMAC representation at key events such as military training sessions, international briefings/orientations, and other necessary functions.
 - Charter, coordinate and provide liaison to:
 - Incident Commander Advisory Council (ICAC).
 - Coordinating Group Advisory Council (CGAC).
- Facilitate the continued implementation of Complex Incident Management
- Manage all interagency Incident Management Teams as necessary to achieve national priorities, team experience objectives, ensure proficiency, manage fatigue, or for other reasons.
- Hosts VIP briefings
- Ensures national fire information is coordinated internally and externally by implementing the [*NMAC and External Affairs Structure and Duties*](#)
- Determines timing and frequency of National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC)/National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) "daily briefing."
- Charter, coordinate and provide a liaison to the Coordinating Group Advisory Council (CGAC).
- Hosts annual NMAC/GMAC coordination meeting with CGAC.
- Hosts NMAC/GMAC coordination calls as needed.
- Approves assignment extensions for national resources. This may be delegated to the NICC.

NMAC National Priority Setting:

The single, overriding priority in all actions is protecting human life - both that of firefighters and the public. In setting national priorities and drawdown levels, the following criteria will be considered:

- Protecting communities and community infrastructure, other property and improvements, and natural and cultural resources.
- Maintaining initial attack capability.
- Limiting costs without compromising safety.
- Meeting agency suppression objectives.
- Support to National Response Framework (NRF) taskings.

NMAC will communicate priorities to agency, department, and executive level leadership.

NMAC Chair Rotation:

The NMAC Chair rotates on a two-year cycle starting January 1st. Rotation order:

- National Association of State Foresters (NASF)
- Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)
- Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- US Forest Service (USFS)

- US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- National Park Service (NPS)
- US Fire Administration (USFA)

If an agency cannot fill the Chair, the responsibility rotates to the next agency. The next agency in the rotation will assume the Vice Chair.

NMAC Chair Responsibilities:

- Signs NMAC documents.
- Determines the need and schedule for NMAC meetings.
 - At least once daily weekdays during PL4 & 5
 - At least once per week during PL3
 - At least once monthly during PL 1 & 2
- Works with NMAC Coordinator and members to develop meeting agendas.
- Facilitates and leads VIP briefings.
- Facilitates the consensus decision process within NMAC.
- Provides the primary NMAC representation for briefings, outside meetings, and coordination.
- Manages and monitors NMAC meeting attendance and participation.
- Determines the need for NMAC executive sessions.
- Leads NMAC annual after-action review.
- Signs the annual delegation to the NICC Center Manager and the NICC.

When an acting is in the Chair position, the Chair’s responsibilities rotate to the Vice Chair or the next primary member.

NMAC Vice Chair Responsibilities:

- Serves as NMAC Chair in absence of designated NMAC Chair.
- Serves as NMAC Liaison to Coordinating Group Advisory Council and ICAC.
- Identifies a Fire Safety SME to act as liaison/point of contact for NMAC and safety community as needed.

NMAC Executive Secretary

- The NMAC Executive Secretary is designated by the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) Manager, and documents meeting notes and decisions.

NMAC Coordinator:

- The NICC Manager normally fills this role. NMAC regularly evaluates the need for stand-alone NMAC Coordinator to allow NICC staff work/rest, reduce workload, and provide developmental opportunities.

NMAC Coordinator responsibilities:

- Coordinates with the NICC Intelligence staff, national resource specialists, and other SMEs to analyze and compile raw national data from multiple sources for presentation to NMAC.
- Facilitates NMAC meetings and calls.

- Assists NMAC in collective and timely decision making for:
 - Resource shortages
 - Anticipated needs
 - Allocation recommendations
- Provides oversight and direction to NMAC Support Group.
- In coordination with NICC Manager, ensures NMAC decisions are communicated and implemented.
- Distributes and archives NMAC:
 - Decisions
 - Direction
 - Best management practices

NMAC Support:

During high tempo periods, an NMAC Support Group may be implemented and may consist of one, or more of the following positions:

- NMAC Coordinator
- Incident Management Team Coordinator
- Crew Coordinator
- Other National Resource/Subject Area Specialists (e.g. aviation, smokejumper, international mobilization, incident business, information technology, airspace coordination, safety)

NMAC Consensus Decision Process:

A quorum for conducting NMAC business shall be a minimum of five of the NMAC membership. Decisions will be based on a consensus of those present or their designated acting. All decisions will be recorded.

The NMAC consensus process focuses on a cooperative dynamic. Only one proposal is considered at a time; NMAC works together to make the best possible decision for the group. Decisions are adopted when all NMAC members consent to the result of the discussion about the original proposal. NMAC members who disagree with a proposal are responsible for expressing their concerns. No decision is adopted until there is a resolution of every matter. When concerns remain after discussion, NMAC members can agree to disagree by acknowledging that they have unresolved concerns, but consent to the proposal and allow it to be adopted. Therefore, reaching consensus does not assume that everyone must be in complete agreement.

NMAC Written Correspondence, Dissemination, and Documentation:

- See Appendix 1

NMAC Accident Notification

- See Appendix 2

NMAC Briefing/Meeting Format/Outline:

The Chair determines frequency and timing for NMAC briefings and meetings, typically in consultation with NMAC members, NMAC coordinator and NICC Center Manager. Briefings may be held without conducting a follow-up NMAC meeting.

Regular NMAC general briefings are open for anyone at NIFC. When visiting officials, groups or VIPs are present, seating may be reserved for them and limited in availability to others.

General Briefing

Items covered during general briefing:

- Fire Situation Briefing (8-10 minutes) NICC Manager, acting, or designee.
- Fire Weather/Fuels Briefing (8-10 minutes) Predictive Services.

NMAC Group Meeting - Operations and Information

Immediately following the briefing, the NMAC group may convene. The NMAC group meeting is limited to:

- NMAC Group members and secondaries
- NMAC Executive Secretary
- DOI Office of Wildland Fire - 1 rep
- NMAC Support Group and SMEs. SMEs consist of representatives for each functional area:
 - Aviation - 1 BLM, 1 FS
 - Predictive Services - 3 (Meteorologist, Fire Analyst, Intel Rep)
 - Military Liaison -1
 - International Liaison – 2
 - External Affairs – 1
 - NICC Deputy Manager-1 BLM, 1 FS
 - National Interagency Incident Communications Division – 1
 - Cache Liaison -1
 - Airspace Liaison - 1
 - Safety Liaison - 1
 - Other SMEs may remain at the request of a Primary NMAC Member, NICC Manager, or NMAC Coordinator.

Operations and Information Outline:

NMAC Coordinator and or NICC Manager provides an overview of national resource shortages and capabilities, critical needs, overall national assessment. Topics include:

- NMAC round table briefing, every NMAC member is allowed to address agency and GA issues. This should be brief and only cover information significant for all the NMAC Group.
- Short NMAC SME input, around the room (NMAC members may ask SMEs questions):
 - NMAC Support Group (if operational)
 - Aviation
 - Radio (Cache and Frequency management)
 - Cache
 - Military liaison
 - International liaison
 - External Affairs
 - IMT Coordinator
 - Crew Coordinator
 - ES/BAR (PL4 and higher)
 - Validation of Preparedness Level /NMAC Group

NMAC Group Prioritization, Resource Allocation

NMAC SMEs and NMAC support are excused unless a specific representative is asked to stay. Primary NMAC members, secondaries, and acting's, NMAC Coordinator, NICC Manager, Meteorologist, Fire Analyst, External Affairs, Office of Wildland Fire representative, and Executive Secretary remain in the meeting. Topics to be discussed include:

- Establish Geographic Area priorities/NMAC Group.
- Consensus on the allocation of scarce resources, repositioning /NMAC Group.
- Other NMAC issues identified, decisions, actions, business/NMAC Chair.
- Review and confirm meeting decisions and actions/Executive Secretary.
- NMAC Coordinator implements decisions through NICC Coordinator.
- Address any other issues/Determine need to go into Executive Session/NMAC Chair.

NMAC Executive Sessions:

NMAC members may request an executive session through the NMAC Chair. NMAC executive sessions will be composed of the seven NMAC members, secondaries, NICC Manager, and NMAC Coordinator.

Subject matter experts and invited guests may be included in executive sessions upon request by NMAC members.

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Appendix 1

National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC) Written Correspondence, Dissemination, and Documentation Procedures

- There are two types of NMAC correspondence: Memoranda and Letters.
 - Memoranda contain direction to the field, request action by an NMAC subgroup or other standing group or communicate information essential to maintain efficient and safe operations or support functions. Memoranda are typically addressed to groups such as the National Incident Commander/Area Commander Council (NICACC), the Coordinating Group Advisory Council (CGAC), Geographic Area Coordination Centers, Geographic Area Coordinating Groups, to individual agency leadership, to incident responders/wildland fire community, and/or other groups such as the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) and the Fire Management Board (FMB). Memoranda are distributed via e-mail and are posted to the NMAC website.
 - Letters are typically addressed to a particular person or entity, and the subject matter is not appropriate or of little interest to the greater fire community. Examples include Requests for Assistance (RFAs) and letters of gratitude to individuals or groups. Letters are distributed via e-mail, but generally are not posted to the NMAC website.
- Numbering: all NMAC correspondence is numbered by the year (preceded by “M” denoting memorandum, or “L” denoting letter), followed by a discreet number in sequence for calendar year. For example, the first memorandum of the year in 2023 is numbered “M2023-01”; a letter is issued a month later and is numbered “L2023-01”.
- Subject line: subject lines should be short but descriptive. If the correspondence establishes a task group, the subject line should begin with “Task Group:...” If the correspondence tasks an NMAC group to accomplish something, the subject line should begin with “Tasking:...”
- All NMAC correspondence will utilize a standard template with NMAC letterhead maintained by the NMAC Executive Secretary. All correspondence will utilize 12-point Times New Roman font, will have the signature of the NMAC Chair affixed, and will be released in PDF format (508 compliant).
- All NMAC correspondence will be released via e-mail by the NMAC Executive Secretary using the NMAC Executive Secretary e-mail account.
- NMAC correspondence will also be posted in the appropriate section of the NMAC website and distributed to NMAC membership.
- NMAC members are responsible for dissemination of written correspondence to their respective agencies.
- Drafting, reviewing, and approving NMAC Correspondence:
 - Typically, a member of NMAC (or the NICC staff) will draft the correspondence; every correspondence will have a Point of Contact (POC). NMAC should have a short discussion prior to drafting the correspondence to determine the type of correspondence (letter or memorandum), addressees/recipients and “copied” recipients (if any), main points of the correspondence, and timeframe for review and finalization.

- Once drafted, comments/edits will be due to the POC by the date/time agreed upon. Positive response is required from all NMAC members prior to finalization.
- The final draft is then provided to the NMAC Executive Secretary for formatting, numbering, file type conversion and Section 508 Compliance, and release.
- The NMAC Executive Secretary will also provide the final document to the NICC webmaster for posting.
- Correspondence from the National Wildfire Coordinating Group utilized by NMAC will be coordinated as appropriate and follow NWCG guidelines found at the NWCG website.

Each January, NMAC will review the prior year's correspondence and determine the disposition of each letter/memorandum. Guidance contained in memorandums should either be placed into the *Interagency Standards for Resource Mobilization* or should be left in memorandum form in effect for a short duration or archived. All correspondence should also be placed into the appropriate section of the NMAC website at the beginning of each calendar year; this website contains sections for "current year correspondence", "prior year correspondence still in effect", and "archived correspondence".

Appendix 2

2024 NICC Accident / Serious Incident Notification Flow

Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations states that accident notifications should occur in the dispatch/coordination system, from the local dispatch center to the NICC through the GACC.

This should occur after a serious wildland fire operations accident as any of the following:

- Fatalities
- Serious Aviation Accident
- Entrapments/shelter deployments
- Total vehicle loss
- Serious injuries requiring hospitalization (not out-patient or “treated and released”).

* Not all “red medical” injuries need to be reported (i.e. injured firefighters who are currently being medi-vac), unless they meet the above criteria.

- Initial call/notification is directed to the Coordinator-on-Duty (COD) from the Geographic Area Coordination Center (GACC) or reporting party.

- COD notifies Center Manager (CM) and Assistant Center Managers (ACM). – **Verbal / Text**

- NICC CM/ACM makes preliminary notification to affected agency(s) NMAC Member(s). - **Verbal**

- CM or ACM notifies the affected GACC’s NMAC Liaison. – **Verbal**

- If the affected GACC(s) primary NMAC member is immediately unavailable, contact the secondary NMAC member for that GACC(s).

-CM or ACM will notify primary NMAC Leads. – **Group Text**

-CM or ACM will then notify NMAC via NMAC group text.

- Official Accident Notification is sent out by COD, as directed by CM or ACM, once information is confirmed by affected agency/GACC. – **Email** (address email to: accident.notification@firenet.gov)