



NWCG Standards for Unit Identifiers

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NWCG Standards for Unit Identifiers

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The *NWCG Standards for Unit Identifiers* details standardized processes and outlines business rules and practices for developing and utilizing NWCG Unit Identifiers (Unit IDs). Within this publication, users can find instruction regarding appropriate creation, maintenance, and application of wildland fire unit identifiers and associated information for incident management as it relates to land-based and non-land-based record creation, cooperator resource providers, and incident support functions, i.e., dispatch, equipment/radio cache and training centers. Additionally, the publication describes interdependencies between Unit IDs and interagency wildland fire information technology (IT) integrated applications.

The *NWCG Standards for Unit Identifiers* applies to member agencies, organizations, and individuals who utilize Unit IDs and/or associated information. Ultimately, the intent of these standards is to assist the user in understanding all things encompassing Unit IDs and associated information. This publication will be reviewed annually and updated as business rules evolve.

The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) provides national leadership to enable interoperable wildland fire operations among federal, state, tribal, territorial, and local partners. NWCG operations standards are interagency by design; they are developed with the intent of universal adoption by the member agencies. However, the decision to adopt and utilize them is made independently by the individual member agencies and communicated through their respective directives systems.

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Introduction

Unit IDs and associated information are fundamental elements for the interagency incident management community because they provide a common interagency identification of participating organizations and the roles they play.

Unit IDs are created by the interagency incident management community, and together with their associated information are the standard way organizational units communicate who they are, report the incidents they are hosting, and account for the resources they provide. From the markings on a wildland fire engine, to every incident on the Incident Management Situation Report (IMSR), the Unit ID, and its associated information is an integral piece of information.

Due to the significance of Unit IDs and associated information, NWCG assumed responsibility to manage unit identifier data under their authority, via the Data Management Committee (DMC) and specifically the Unit Identifier Board (UIB). Information regarding Unit IDs is conveyed to the users through these standards.

Unit Identifier Board

UIB membership will be comprised of a combination of individuals who are educated on the subject matter of Unit IDs and associated information. Board membership will consist of chair, co-chair, and personnel designated from their respective NWCG member agencies and organizations. Visit <https://www.nwcg.gov/> for a list of NWCG member agencies. Additionally, an individual from the Geographic Area Unit Identifier Data Custodians will round out UIB membership.

Other agencies and organizations that are not NWCG member agencies may be selected for UIB membership with appropriate approval via the DMC.

Agency Representation

Agency representatives on the UIB will have the authority from their respective agencies to represent their best interest in relation to Unit ID creation, modifications, and deletions. Representatives will actively participate in the internal decision-making process while ensuring data standards, business rules, and recommended business practices are followed. Current UIB members can be found on the Unit Identifier website <https://www.nwcg.gov/committees/unit-identifier-board>.

Geographic Area Unit Identifier Data Custodians

Geographic Area Unit Identifier Data Custodians (GACC Custodians) will be appointed by each Geographic Area Coordination Center's center manager. Upon receipt of written requests, GACC Custodians are responsible for timely entries of modifications of Unit IDs and associated information in the System of Record (SOR). Refer to the National Interagency Mobilization Guide for additional information. Current GACC Custodians can be found on the UIB website: <https://www.nwcg.gov/committees/unit-identifier-board>.

Unit Identifier and Associated Information

Unit Identifier Code (NWCG Data Standard for Unit Identifiers)

Unit ID is a code used within the interagency incident management community to uniquely identify a particular governmental or non-government organizational unit recognized by NWCG as a wildland fire cooperator.

An organizational unit represents the smallest area or lowest level of an entity's organization responsible for any one or more of the following:

- Managing land-based incident records (e.g., incidents or projects) based on jurisdiction.
 - Example: wildfire, RX burn.
- Managing non-land-based incident records (e.g., incidents or projects) supported by the wildland fire and all-risk community.
 - Example: support, public assistance, natural disasters, agency program support, WO/regional/state severity
- Providing resources to the wildland fire or all-risk community.
 - Example: overhead, equipment, aircraft etc.
- Providing incident support services for incident management.
 - Example: dispatch center, equipment/radio cache, training center.

Not every level within an organization has a business requirement or business need for a Unit ID. Wildland fire organizational reference data includes agency specific organization codes and hierarchies regardless of Unit ID assignment. Unit IDs are only necessary if an official agency organizational unit will be functioning in one of the four roles defined above. Correct, consistent use of Unit IDs is critical for interagency IT applications to create update and share data for planning, response, decision-making, and reporting.

Go to Wildland Role section of this document for additional clarification.

Business Rules

- The Unit ID must be unique.
- There will be one Unit ID per organizational unit.
- Unit IDs are/will be designated for: 1) government (federal, state, tribe, and local) entities and 2) non-government organizations recognized by NWCG, i.e., The Nature Conservancy or Timber Protective Associations.
- Non-government organizations must meet one of the following criteria:
 - Are a wildland fire cooperator with land-based jurisdictional responsibilities.
 - Provide nationally available pool of resources to wildland fire efforts.
- Unit IDs must be associated with an official name of the unit within an organization and found on official documents and websites.
- A unit must specify primary Wildland Role to receive a Unit ID.
- The Unit ID's country subdivision code (State) is assigned based upon the state the unit resides within. If the organizational unit's jurisdictional boundary spans multiple states or the administrative offices are located in another state than the unit's perimeter, the country subdivision code will be based upon the physical location of the administrative offices.

- A land-based/jurisdictional Unit ID with land management responsibilities may be assigned to more than one geographic area and Geographic Area Coordination Center (GACC) if the associated land area spans multiple geographic area boundaries.

See the Organizational Unit Requirements section of this document for additional business rules specific to associated information.

Associated Business Rules for Incident Record Creation

- Incident records created due to a specific NWCG Event Kind Event Category on a piece of ground will be created using the appropriate Unit ID. Incident records will be created by the dispatch center with delegated authority for the benefiting agency and associated Protecting Unit based on the point of origin (POO) of the incident. In terms of Unit IDs this relates to Incident Host Wildland Role.
- Typically, the Jurisdictional Unit is also the Protecting Unit for incident record creation. However, when protection is offset from jurisdiction an operational agreement allows for another Jurisdictional Unit to provide protection and thus is associated with the incident record as the Protection Unit. Agencies and bureaus review, update, and develop agreements that clarify the jurisdictional inter-relationships and define the roles and responsibilities among local, state, tribal, and federal fire protection entities. Additional information can be found in the *Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy*.
- For non-land-based incidents, without a corresponding Jurisdictional Unit ID, records will be created using the Unit ID with the non-land-based Incident Host Wildland Role as appropriate. In terms of Unit IDs this relates to Non-Land-Based (formally known as Incident Host Functional) Wildland Role.
- Dispatch/Coordination Centers Unit IDs may be used to create non-land-based incident records when appropriate i.e., Incident/Event Support (SU) records.

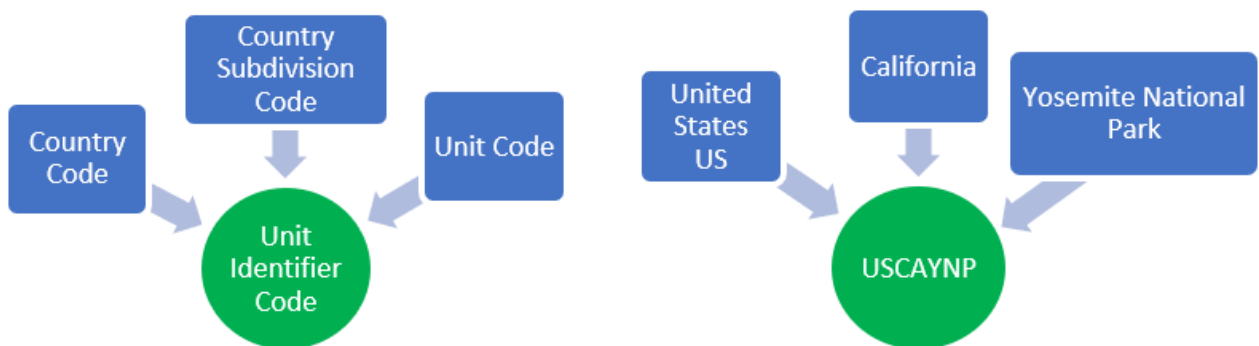
*See NWCG Event Kind Event Category Standard <https://www.nwcg.gov/data-standards/approved/event-kind-category> for more information regarding data standard values and business rules for incident record creation.

Architecture

The Unit ID is a concatenation of an approved country code, country subdivision code, (e.g., state), and organizational unit code resulting in a unique identifier distinct to that organizational unit.

- International Organization for Standardization (ISO) publication 3166-1, contains the standard for Country Code.
- ISO publication 3166-2 contains the standard for Country Subdivision code (State).
- The organizational unit code is a three to four alpha-numeric character code. It is specific to an existing unit within a government or NWCG approved non-government administrative organization.

Figure 1: An example showing Yosemite National Park's Unit Identifier code and how three data elements, when combined, create a Unit Identifier Code for a given unit.

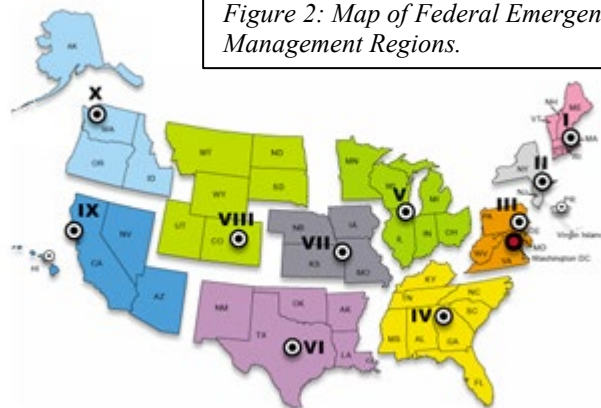


Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Organizational Unit Codes

State specific FEMA identifiers are the exception to Unit IDs being tied to the physical location of the unit's administrative offices. They provide a clear incident numbering mechanism that synchronizes with FEMA mission assignments, which are currently issued for a particular state/territory after a formal request for assistance by state/territory has been made through the FEMA Region. Using state specific FEMA identifiers affords the incident business a mechanism to easily track cost by state and by mission assignment to ensure expenditure oversight, adherence to cost share agreements and simplified billing. Additionally, state specific FEMA identifiers provide clarity of GACC jurisdiction in cases where the FEMA regional office falls in one GACC and the affected state/territory in another.

Regional FEMA identifiers will continue to be used for region-wide incidents or Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC) staffing mission assignments as needed.

Figure 2: Map of Federal Emergency Management Regions.



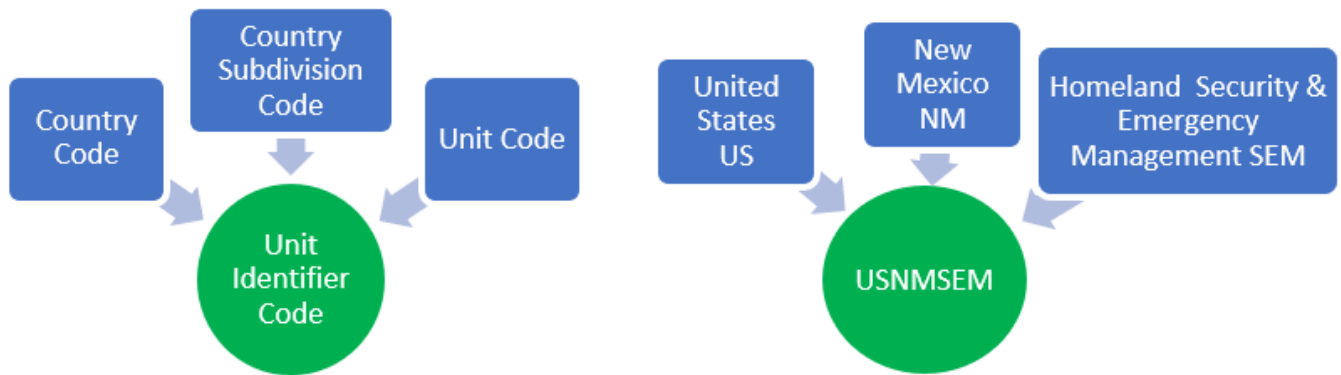
All proposed FEMA Unit IDs will be created with:

- CCSSRegion# example: USWAFE10.
- Naming convention = FEMA Region Number and the respective state example: FEMA Region VI New Mexico USNMFE6.
- Each state’s respective FEMA Regional Office address will be used, with the notable exception of the state field. The specific state will be entered to ensure the Unit ID reflects accurately.

All proposed State Emergency Management Unit Identifiers will be created with:

- CCSSSEMA example: USMSSEM
- Naming Convention – use the official name from the unit’s website or official documents example: New Mexico Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management.

Figure 3: An example showing New Mexico Homeland Security & Emergency Management’s Unit Identifier code and how three data elements, when combined, create a Unit Identifier code state specific Office of Emergency Services.



Organizational Unit Requirements

Unit Identifier Requestor Requirements

Requestor must be an NWCG member agency

- Within the Department of Agriculture.
- Within the Department of the Interior.
- Recognized by NWCG as a cooperator.

Associated Information to Request a Unit ID:

- ✔ Name (Org Unit Name)
- ✔ Organizational Unit Type (Unit Type)
- ✔ Tier 1 (Dept)
- ✔ Tier 2 (Agency)
- ✔ Wildland Role (Org Unit Role)
 - Managing Dispatch Center is a required field for Unit IDs with Incident Host and Non-Land-Based wildland fire role.
- ✔ Organizational Unit Code
- ✔ Geographic Area
- ✔ GACC
- ✔ Address
- ✔ Country
- Latitude/Longitude
- ✔ Phone
- Email

✔ Indicates required field

Figure 4: Data Entry in Unit ID SOR

The screenshot shows a data entry form for a Unit ID. The form is organized into several sections. The top section is for 'Name (Org Unit Name)'. Below that are three dropdown menus for 'Unit Type', 'Tier 1 (Dept)', and 'Tier 2 (Agency)', all currently set to 'None'. The next row contains four dropdown menus: 'Wildland Role (Org Unit Role)' (None), 'Org Unit Code' (with a dark blue selection box), 'Geographic Area' (None), and 'GACC' (None). Below these are two text input fields for 'Street1' and 'Street2'. The next row has three input fields: 'City', 'State/Prov/Terr' (None), and 'Zip Code'. Below that is a 'Country' dropdown set to 'United States of America (US)'. The next row has two input fields for 'Latitude' (range: -90.0000 to 90.0000) and 'Longitude' (range: -180.0000 to 180.0000). The final row has two input fields for 'Phone' and 'Email'. Red checkmarks are visible in the top-left corner of each input field, indicating required fields.

1. Organizational Unit Name

The full name of the organization found on official documents or web sites. Organizational unit names will not be abbreviated.

2. Organizational Unit Type (Unit Type)

The type of organizational unit within the interagency incident management community represented by the Unit ID.

- Interagency
- International National
- International Country Subdivision
- Sovereign Nations
- US Federal
- US State
- US County and Local
- Non-government (NWCG recognized as a wildland fire cooperator)

3. Tier 1 (Organizational Unit Department)

All States and Their Two Letter ID
AS – American Samoa
DHS – Department of Homeland Security
DOC – Department of Commerce
DOD – Department of Defense
DOE – Department of Energy
DOI – Department of Interior
DOL – Department of Labor
DOT – Department of Transportation
FM – Federated States of Micronesia
GU – Guam
HHS – Department of Health and Human Services

IA/GC – Non-Departmental Agencies {i.e., NASA, EPA, FCC}
MH – Marshall Islands
MP – Northern Mariana Islands
NG – Non-Government
PR – Puerto Rico
PW – Palau
ST/L – State or Local Government
UM – U.S. Minor Outlying Islands
USDA – Department of Agriculture
USTSN – US Tribes and Sovereign Nations
VI – Virgin Islands of the U.S.

4. Tier 2 (Organizational Unit Agency)

AG	Air Guard
ANC	Alaska Native Corporation
APHIS	Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BOEM	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
BOR	Bureau of Reclamation
BSEE	Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement

C&L	County and Local
CDF	California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection
DC	Department of Corrections
DEMA	Department of Emergency and Military Affairs
DFE	Division of Forest Environment
DFP	Division of Forestry Fire & State Lands
DFL	Division of Forests and Land

DFPC	Division of Fire Prevention and Control
DFR	Division of Forest Resources
DL	Department of Lands
DMA	Department of Military Affairs
DMA/CNG	Department of Military Affairs/Colorado National Guard
DMAPS	Department of Military Affairs and Public Safety
DMNA	Department of Military and Naval Affairs
DNR	Department of Natural Resources
DNRC	Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
DNRF	Department of Natural Resources Forest Service
DOC	Department of Conservation
DOF	Department of Forestry
DVF	Division of Forestry
DWF	Division of Wildland Fire
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FC	Forestry Commission
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency

FFC	Bureau of Forest Fire Control
FFP	Forest Fire Protection
FFS	Forest Fire Service
FS	Forest Service
FWS	Fish & Wildlife Service
JB	Joint Base
JC	Job Corps
MD	Military Department
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NG	National Guard
NL	National Laboratory
NNSA	National Nuclear Security Administration
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NPS	National Park Service
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NSA	National Security Agency
NWS	National Weather Service
OAS	Office of Aviation Services
OES	Office of Emergency Services
OES	California Office of Emergency Services Fire and Rescue
OF	Office of Forestry

OSMRE	Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement
PRI	Private
SF	State Forestry
SFS	State Forest Service
SP	State/Highway – Patrol/Police
SP	State Parks
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
TPC	The Parks Conservancy
TVA	Tennessee Valley Authority
USA	United States Army
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USAF	United States Air Force
USCG	United States Coast Guard
USGS	Geological Survey
USN	United States Navy
USSS	United States Secret Service

5. Wildland Role (Organizational Unit Role)

Requesting organizations must specify their need for the Unit ID within the following categories. If the requested Unit ID meets the requirement at the highest-level Wildland Role i.e., Incident Host, they will inherently meet the data entry guidelines as a resource provider. It is important to note that with this publication and completion of a refresh of the technical tool used to manage Unit IDs, wildland fire IT applications will transition to hard validation.

5.1. Incident Host (formally known as Incident Host Geographic)

- An organizational unit with jurisdictional authority responsibility for interagency incident management.
- An organizational unit with this role may also provide resources.

5.2. Non-Land-Based (formally known as Incident Host Functional)

- An organizational unit that may be used for other incident types such as severity or support records.
- Non-land-based organizational units will not be used as Jurisdictional Unit or Protecting Unit for a wildland fire (wildfire or prescribed fire) or all-risk incident record within any fire application.
- Examples of non-land-based organizational units are Regional or State Offices.
- An organizational unit with this role may also provide resources.

5.3. Resource Provider (only)

- An organizational unit with no jurisdictional authority or responsibilities but has resources to support the interagency incident management community.
- To be assigned this role, the organizational unit must not fit into any other wildland role.

5.4. Incident Support Organization (inclusive of the following wildland roles)

- Dispatch/Coordination Center
 - An organizational unit responsible for initial attack dispatching, coordination of communications, intelligence gathering and dissemination, and logistical support for local incidents and field operations for their respective organizational unit e.g., local dispatch or Command Center.
 - Local dispatch centers organizational units are commonly funded by multiple agencies and as such their Unit ID will be indicated as interagency. If their organizational unit is funded by a single agency, that agency will be reflected in their organizational structure.

OR

- An organizational unit responsible for managing the effective coordination, mobilization, and demobilization of emergency management resources for their respective organizational unit e.g., GACC.
- Coordination centers are commonly funded by multiple agencies and as such their Unit ID will be indicated as interagency. If their organizational unit is funded by a single agency, that agency will be reflected in their organizational structure.
- Training Facility
 - An organizational unit limited to a training center that coordinates the delivery of national or geographic area/regional training.
 - Local area organizations e.g., ranger districts or field offices will not be issued a Unit ID for the sole purpose of hosting a training. Those will likely be captured in another system i.e., OIS.
 - Training facilities support an interagency effort; however, their organizational unit will be associated to the agency they are funded by.

- Incident Supply Cache (fire/radio cache)
 - An organizational unit representing a facility where tools, equipment, and/or supplies are stored and made available for incident use through the national ordering system.
 - Local area's organizations, i.e., ranger districts or field offices local caches will not be issued a Unit ID unless other units can order from them.
 - Incident supply/radio caches support an interagency effort; however, their organizational unit will be associated to the agency they are funded by.

****Unit IDs are requested and issued to an organization based on Wildland Fire Roles****

Unit IDs generated for the Wildland Fire Role of Incident Host are issued for a Unit Organization with jurisdictional responsibilities. Unit IDs may be used as a Protection Unit but are not issued based on that specific business case. Most commonly the Jurisdictional Unit is also the Protection Unit for incident record creation. However, when protection is offset from jurisdiction an operational agreement allows for another Jurisdictional Unit to provide protection and is thus associated with the incident record as the Protection Unit.

6. The Organizational Unit Code

The organizational unit code is three to four alpha-numeric characters specific to a unit existing within the agency's official organizational structure. The organizational unit code identifies the unit within the interagency incident management community in a common manner.

The organizational unit code should be assigned in a manner that makes it generally recognizable and applicable as an abbreviation of the unit's name. If an identifier is proposed for an organizational unit:

- Tribal Sovereign Nation Unit IDs shall strive to end with a T.
- DOI BIA Unit IDs shall strive to end with an A.
- DOI BLM Unit IDs shall strive to end with a D.
- DOI NPS Unit IDs shall strive to end with a P.
- DOI FWS Unit IDs shall strive to end with a R.
- DOI BOR Unit IDs shall strive to end with a L.
- USDA USFS Unit IDs shall strive to end with a F.
- Department of Defense Unit IDs shall strive to end with a Q.
- State Unit IDs shall strive to end with an S or a U.
- County and Local Government Unit IDs shall strive to end with an X, M, or an N.
- Caches shall strive to end with a K.
- Dispatch centers/coordination centers shall strive to end with a C.

7. Geographic Area (Name)

The organizational unit's geographic area name that identifies a boundary designated by governmental agencies (wildland fire protection agencies) within which they work together for the interagency, intergovernmental planning, coordination, and operations leadership for the effective utilization of emergency management resources within their area.

8. Geographic Area Coordination Center (GACC)

The organizational unit's GACC is the physical location of an interagency, regional operation center for the effective coordination, mobilization, and demobilization of emergency management resources. A coordination center serves federal, state, and local wildland fire agencies through logistical coordination of resources throughout the geographic area, and with other geographic areas, as well.

9. Address

The organizational unit's address will reflect the physical location of the administrative office.

Required Fields:

- Street – not post-office box
- City
- State/Province/Territory – this field determines the Country Subdivision Code
- Zip Code
- Country

10. Latitude/Longitude

The organizational unit latitude/longitude will reflect the geometry of the physical location of the headquarters. Data can be entered in any format (decimal degrees, degrees/minutes, degrees/minute/seconds, etc.)

Incident Host, Non-Land-Based, and Dispatch Center Unit Identifiers will have an address, latitude, and longitude associated with their administrative office, they have an associated land area and/or Jurisdictional Unit polygon. Currently, geospatial data is not represented within UnitIDx.

11. Organizational Unit Phone (Phone)

The organizational unit phone will reflect the phone number for the main line of the physical location of the administrative office.

12. Organizational Unit Email (Email)

The organizational unit email is optional; however, if organizational unit email is included, the agency will use an appropriate email which reflects the administrative individual with responsibility over the Unit ID and associated information.

Processes for Maintaining Unit Identifiers

Creating, Modifying, and Deactivating a Unit Identifier.

At the unit level, a user submits a written request for a new, modification, or deactivation of a Unit ID to their GACC Custodian representative for consideration. Some agencies may have additional specific processes outlined where the unit level must seek agency approval prior to submitting a request to the GACC Custodian. Agency specific supplements can be found on NWCG UIB website at <https://www.nwcg.gov/committees/unit-identifier-board>.

GACC Custodians have the responsibility to ensure respective agency internal decision-making processes have been adhered to prior to acting within the SOR. The GACC Custodian is also responsible for entering the requests into the SOR in advance of the UIB monthly meeting the third week of every month.

Prior to requesting deactivation of a Unit ID, organizations shall contact the UIB Chair or Co-Chair. There may be resources associated to the Unit ID in Interagency Resource Ordering Capability (IROC) or the qualification systems which need to be distributed to an alternate new or existing Unit ID prior to deactivation. Deactivating a dispatch center Unit ID requires additional considerations and notifications to address Virtual Incident Procurement (ViPR) resources because the awards will need to be relocated. The process can take several months and communication with the UIB should be initiated well in advance of the proposed deactivation date.

The chair and co-chair have the responsibility to publish decisions from the UIB in a timely manner. Upon completion, the chair/co-chair will notify the GACC Custodian and extended community of the approvals/rejections or additional conversations needed. UIB chair and co-chair have final approval authority. They will refer any proposals in opposition to established business rules and practices to the DMC chair and co-chair for their assessment. In these circumstances, business rules may be reevaluated, updated, and documented if deemed necessary.

Deleting a Unit Identifier and Associated Information.

The Unit Identifier System provides a historical record of all Unit IDs. Organizational units that no longer exist are archived, and rarely deleted. The rationale is to maintain historical integrity of Unit IDs. Although the unit no longer exists, there is a need to maintain the Unit ID for historical reporting and records management purposes. If the incorrect Unit ID and/or associated information is published in error, the chair, and co-chair possess the roles to delete.

Unit Identifiers and Integrated Applications.

Wildland fire applications utilize Unit IDs and/or associated information. They are required to utilize the most current, approved, published Unit IDs reflected in the SOR's Rest Application Programming Interface (API) Reports. At a minimum, applications should update the Unit IDs in their system once a month to ensure they have the most current list. It should be noted the national geospatial data set is updated biannually. A best practice is to update Unit IDs at the beginning of a month to catch any changes made at the UIB meeting. This is especially important for applications in the Integrated Reporting of Wildland Fire Information (IRWIN) data exchange environment.

Contact the chair or co-chair if an issue with a specific Unit ID and/or associated information is discovered. They will advise the UIB of the situation and solicit consensus with a quorum before action is taken within the SOR. Depending on urgency, this may be accomplished during the monthly meeting, by convening a special session or email correspondence. Once action is taken, the chair/co-chair will notify the user/application and the GACC Custodians. Unit Identifier Points of Contact are located on the UIB website at <https://www.nwcg.gov/committees/unit-identifier-board>.

Access Unit Identifiers

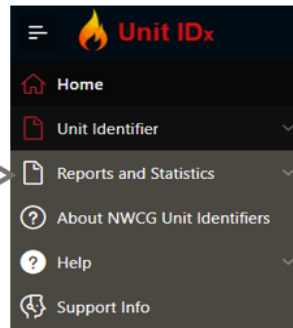
To access Unit Identifiers, go to <https://unitid.nifc.gov/>, select Agree to accept the Terms of Service Statement and Application Terms of Use.



Select Read Only
(No Login Required)



For list of Unit IDs
select Reports and
Statistics



Select Unit
Identifier to search
a specific Unit ID

The *NWCG Standards for Unit Identifiers*, PMS 931, is developed and maintained by the Unit Identifier Board (UIB), under the direction of the Data Management Committee (DMC), an entity of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG).

Previous editions: None.

While they may still contain current or useful information, previous editions are obsolete. The user of this information is responsible for confirming that they have the most up-to-date version. NWCG is the sole source for the publication. Prior to 2022, the PMS 931 was used for the NWCG Unit Identifier Report.

This publication is available electronically at <https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/931>.

Submit comments, questions, and recommendations to the appropriate agency program manager assigned to the UIB using the NWCG Publication Review Form, <https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/publication-review-form>. View the complete roster at <https://www.nwcg.gov/committees/unit-identifier-board/roster>.

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