



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

DIRECTOR'S ORDER #55: INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Approved: Mary A. Bonner
Director

Effective Date: 1-2-2008

Sunset Date: This order will remain in effect until amended or rescinded

Director's Order #55, in conjunction with the associated Reference Manual (RM-55) and the All-Hazard Incident Qualification System Guide, establishes and defines standards and procedures for the National Park Service all-hazard (non-fire) Incident Management Program. Incident management policies and procedures for wildland fire can be found in Director's Order #18: Wildland Fire Management.

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1. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

1.1 Background.

In the early 1980's, the National Park Service began using the Incident Command System (ICS) to manage fires. Subsequently, many parks began using ICS to manage other types of incidents. As parks gained experience, ICS significantly improved the safety, effectiveness and efficiency of emergency operations. The use of ICS to manage emergencies and planned events was mandated in the 1988 edition of the NPS *Management Policies*. Furthermore, in 2003, Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 (HSPD 5) mandated the use of ICS for all Federal agencies.

1.2 Purpose.

The purpose of this Director's Order (DO) is to set forth NPS policy and a procedural framework for managing all-hazard incidents and events and for operating an Incident Management Program. The policies, procedures, and standards in this document are to be implemented uniformly throughout the NPS. The details for implementation may be found in Reference Manual 55 (RM-55) and the All-Hazard Incident Qualification System Guide.

2. AUTHORITY

2.1 Authority for this Director's Order.

The authority to issue this order is contained in:

- The NPS Organic Act (16 USC 1-4), which establishes the National Park Service to manage the National Park System, protect park resources, and serve those who visit the System; and
- Delegations of authority contained in Part 245 of the Department of the Interior Manual, which authorize the Director to exercise the program authority of the Secretary of the Interior with respect to the supervision, management and operation of the National Park Service.

This order is intended only to improve the internal management of the NPS and it is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by a party against the United States, its departments, agencies, instrumentalities or entities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

2.2 Other Pertinent Authorities.

Other pertinent authorities for the Service to conduct an incident management program include:

- 16 USC 12. The Service may provide aid to visitors in emergencies.
- 16 USC 13. The Service may provide aid for employees in remote locations, including moving those employees to medical attention.
- 16 USC 14d. The Service may reprogram funds to resolve law enforcement and search and rescue emergencies.
- 16 USC 17c. The Service may provide supplies and equipment for employees and cooperators during an emergency.
- 16 USC 19jj. The National Park System Resource Protection Act allows the NPS to recover its costs for actions taken in responding to incidents that cause injury to park system resources, and actions taken to abate or minimize the imminent risk of injury to park system resources caused by the incident.
- 42 USC 5144. The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act provides for emergency support teams, and the National Response Plan established Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) under which Federal agencies take the lead to provide critical Federal resources, assets and assistance.

- 42 USC 5192. This portion of the Stafford Act allows (through Presidential direction) any agency to assist States and local jurisdictions, provide emergency assistance through Federal agencies, remove debris and provide temporary housing.
- 42 USC 5195-5197g. The Stafford Act also provides a system of emergency preparedness for the protection of life and property in the United States and vests responsibility for emergency preparedness jointly in the Federal Government and the States and their political subdivisions. This preparedness includes measures taken to prepare for or minimize the effects of an incident, to deal with the immediate emergency conditions caused by the incident and to restore normal conditions. FEMA may reimburse Federal agencies for such activities.

Also, under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act), the Oil Pollution Act, and the Comprehensive Response, Compensation and Liability Act, the NPS takes appropriate actions necessary to protect and restore the natural resources, and services provided by those resources, injured by a release of hazardous substances or discharge or substantial threat of discharge of oil.

3. RESPONSIBILITY

3.1 Director and Deputy Director.

Delegation from the Secretary of the Interior (as outlined in the Departmental Manual) gives the Director and Deputy Director (Operations) the line authority for the incident management program as well as the management of actual incidents. They also have the ultimate responsibility to ensure that the Service has the ability to respond to all kinds and types of emergencies and events in parks and other areas, in accordance with the National Response Plan.

3.2 Associate Director, Visitor and Resource Protection.

The Associate Director is responsible for developing mission-oriented policy, procedures and standards, and providing effective review, oversight and evaluation of the NPS Incident Management Program.

3.3 Chief, Division of Law Enforcement, Security and Emergency Services.

The Chief, Division of Law Enforcement, Security and Emergency Services is responsible for implementing mission-oriented policy, procedures and standards and for ensuring effective review, oversight and evaluation of the NPS Incident Management Program.

3.4 Chief, Division of Fire and Aviation.

The Chief, Division of Fire and Aviation is responsible for providing advice and consultation on the development and implementation of the all-hazard Incident Management Program.

3.5 Branch Chief, Emergency Services.

The Branch Chief, Emergency Services is located in the Division of Law Enforcement and Emergency Services, WASO. This staff position is responsible for providing management and direction to the Service-wide Incident Management Program. The incumbent evaluates program effectiveness and needs and makes recommendations to the Associate Director, Visitor and Resource Protection, and the Chief, Division of Law Enforcement, Security and Emergency Services.

3.6 Incident Management Program Steering Committee.

The Incident Management Program Steering Committee is a working group of incident management professionals, program users and other stakeholder representatives chartered by the Associate Director, Visitor and Resource Protection, to provide strategic oversight, to develop consensus within the Service regarding the program, to establish program goals, to seek needed funding, to prepare standard operating procedures, and to improve the overall effectiveness of the program. The Committee includes representatives of Incident Management Teams, regional chief rangers, regional emergency services coordinators, superintendents and others. The Branch Chief, Emergency Services will convene the Steering Committee to advise and work on issues regarding the program on a regular basis.

3.7 Emergency Incident Coordination Center.

The Emergency Incident Coordination Center (EICC) at Shenandoah National Park will serve as the national dispatch and coordination center for National Park Service all-hazard incident and event response. EICC will maintain the database of all-hazard ICS qualified personnel, as well as the rosters of all-hazard Incident Management Teams and unique teams and resources.

3.8 Regional Director.

Regional directors provide the line authority for program management and are responsible for ensuring that regions have the ability to properly respond to all kinds and types of incidents for which they have jurisdiction. In addition, they may serve as the “Agency Administrator” for incidents and events of regional significance or that requires that level of authority.

3.9 Regional Emergency Services Coordinator.

Each of the seven regions will assign a staff person to coordinate emergency preparedness and response within their region. This position or its designee may serve as a “regional” Incident Management Teams coordinator. One of these coordinators will serve on the Incident Management Program Steering Committee, with each region providing a coordinator on a rotating basis. The incumbents evaluate program effectiveness and needs and make recommendations to the regional director and superintendents. During a period of active incidents, all of these positions may sit on the Multi-Region Coordinating Group (MRCG), as described in the National Park Service National Emergency Response Plan (NERP).

3.10 Superintendent.

Each superintendent has the line authority for program management and is responsible for ensuring that the park can properly respond to the kinds and types of incidents and events that are normally encountered and have the procedures in place to adequately guide those managing the incidents. The superintendent is responsible for ensuring that the incident or event is managed at the appropriate complexity level and that an adequate Delegation of Authority is presented to incoming Incident Management Teams.

3.11 Park Emergency Services Coordinator.

The responsibility of the Park Emergency Services Coordinator is assigned to a park employee by the superintendent. This position ensures that systems are in place to respond to emergencies and events; it also prepares or coordinates the preparation of park-level incident management standard operating procedures and interagency agreements. The coordinator documents the training and experience of incident management personnel and ensures their qualifications and certifications. S/he evaluates program effectiveness, identifies needs and revises program elements as needed.

3.12 “Chain of Command.”

The “chain of command” follows the line authority established by law. This chain is the Secretary of the Interior, the Director, the Deputy Director, the regional directors and the park superintendents. During emergencies or special events, the chain of command still exists. However, any level of the chain may delegate authority to an Incident Commander or Area Commander.

4. POLICIES

4.1 National Policy.

The White House has issued Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 ([HSPD 5](#)), which mandates the development of the National Incident Management System (NIMS). One of the key elements of NIMS is the incident command system (ICS). All Federal agencies, as well as State and local agencies receiving Federal funds, are required to use NIMS and ICS to manage all emergencies.

4.2 Department Policy.

The following outlines the policy of the Department of the Interior: [Note: 145 DM 7 means Part 145, Chapter 7, of the Department of the Interior Manual.]

- [145 DM 7](#). The scope of operations managed by the Associate Director, Visitor and Resource Protection, is outlined. This scope includes law enforcement, emergency services, risk management and public health.

- [245 DM 1](#). The Director is authorized to exercise the program authority of the Secretary of the Interior with respect to the supervision, management, and operation of the National Park System.
- [350 DM 1](#). Bureaus are responsible for the effective implementation and execution of Departmental policies related to all aspects of aviation operations.
- [900 DM 1](#). The Department's Emergency Management Program spans the continuum of prevention, planning, preparedness, response, and recovery. The program encompasses all types of hazards and emergencies that impact the Department's lands, facilities, infrastructure, and resources; Tribal Lands and Insular Areas; the ability of the Department to execute essential functions; and for which assistance is provided to other units of government under Federal laws, Executive Orders, interagency emergency response plans such as the National Response Plan (NRP), and other agreements.
- [905 DM 1](#). In a major disaster or emergency declared by the President, all elements of the Department will provide equipment, supplies, facilities, personnel and other resources as possible.
- [910 DM 4](#). This chapter prescribes Departmental policy, functions and responsibilities for responding to discharges of oil and releases of hazardous substances (incidents) pursuant to the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Contingency. Among other things, requires that DOI bureaus respond appropriately to these incidents and notify the National Response Center.

4.3 National Park Service *Management Policies*.

Management Policies (2006) mandates the protection of resources, the protection of employees and the public, and the provision of visitor services. The policies concerning emergency incident and event management are quoted from that document:

5.3.1.1 Emergency Management

Measures to protect or rescue cultural resources in the event of an emergency, disaster, or fire will be developed as part of a park's emergency operations and fire management planning processes. Designated personnel will be trained to respond to all emergencies in a manner that maximizes visitor and employee safety and the protection of resources and property.

And,

8.2.5.2 Emergency Preparedness and Emergency Operations

The National Park Service will develop a program of emergency preparedness in accordance with Title VI of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 USC 5195-5197g); National Security Decision Directive 259 (February 4, 1987); Department of the Interior policy; and other considerations at the Washington headquarters, regional, and park levels. The program will (1) provide guidance for incident management at the park level and management and relief for emergency incidents and events beyond park capabilities; (2) ensure the agency complies with the Presidential Homeland Security Directives, the National Emergency Response Plan, and the National Incident Management System standards; and (3) support interagency and national response to major incidents. The purpose of the program will be to provide for visitor and employee safety and the protection of resources and

property to the extent possible. This program will include a systematic method for alerting visitors about potential disasters and evacuation procedures.

Superintendents may assist other agencies with emergencies outside of parks, as authorized by 16 USC 1b(1). To the extent practicable and in accordance with Director's Order #20, written agreements with other agencies must first be in effect. NPS employees who are outside the area of their jurisdiction and who are directed by their supervisors to provide emergency assistance to other agencies will be considered to be acting within the scope of their employment.

NPS emergency operations will be conducted using the Incident Command System of the National Interagency Incident Management System (NIIMS). The Unified Command System (within the Incident Command System) will be used when other agencies are involved. Each park superintendent will develop and maintain an emergency operations plan to ensure an effective response to all types of emergencies that can be reasonably anticipated.

As one element of the emergency operations plan, or as a separate document, each park must have an oil and chemical spill response management plan for spills that result from NPS activities or from activities that are beyond NPS control (such as commercial through-traffic on roads that pass through a park). The plans will place first priority on responder and public safety.

Employees will not be permitted to respond to hazardous material spills unless they are properly qualified and certified in accordance with Director's Order #30B: Hazardous Spill Response. The Service will seek to recover all allowable direct and indirect costs for responding to oil or hazardous materials spills.

Parks that have their own aircraft or contract for the use of aircraft must have an aircraft crash rescue response plan or other planning document in place.

And,

8.6.2 Special Events

8.6.2.1 General

... Large-scale events will be managed using the Incident Command System.

5. OPERATIONAL POLICIES, STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

5.1 All-Hazard Incident Qualifications.

5.1.1 National Park Service All-Hazard Qualifications. The National Park Service has developed an "All-Hazard Incident Qualification System Guide" that outlines the qualification system requirements for all NPS employees participating in all-hazard incident management.

5.1.2 Qualification Policy. Incident management personnel, at the Type 3 level or higher, must be qualified for the ICS positions to which they are assigned. The contents of the NPS All-

Hazard Incident Qualifications System Guide represent the qualifications required for each ICS position assigned to manage all-hazard incidents and events

Personnel who are certified in a position prior to the implementation of the NPS All-Hazard Incident Qualifications System Guide may retain certification at the discretion of the Park Emergency Services Coordinator or Superintendent. However, to qualify for other positions, the individual must meet the standards set forth in the Guide.

Personnel mobilized beyond their home unit for Type 3 or higher incidents will be expected to meet the minimum standards set forth for the position as shown in the NPS All-Hazard Incident Qualifications System Guide. These requirements apply to parks and Incident Management Teams.

While it is recognized that there will need to be a period of transition, parks, regions and WASO are expected to begin a reasonable effort to qualify and certify ICS personnel. This transition period will expire five years from the date that Reference Manual 55 is issued.

Parks are encouraged to develop training for personnel to meet the All-Hazard qualification standards. However, this policy recognizes that parks may manage type 4 and 5 incidents where positions are filled by individuals who do not meet these qualifications.

5.2 Employee Development.

5.2.1 Needs Assessments. Each Regional and National Incident Management Team, at its annual meeting, will conduct a needs assessment. This assessment will include a prediction of positions that will need to be filled in the next five years, an identification of sources of potential candidates and a projection of training needs for those candidates.

Parks are encouraged to identify employees interested in incident management and other incident management employee development needs and share those needs with their Regional Emergency Services Coordinators.

5.2.2 Employee Development Planning. Each year, the Regional Emergency Services Coordinators and the WASO Branch Chief, Emergency Services, will review the results of the Incident Management Team and park needs assessments. They will identify and plan employee development opportunities to meet as many of the needs as possible, in accordance with the Incident Qualifications System Guide.

5.2.3 Trainee Assignments. Regional and National Incident Management Teams must include trainees and such trainees must be ordered and assigned to incidents and events. Each Incident Commander will be responsible for coordinating trainee positions and assignments with the Regional Emergency Services Coordinators and the WASO Branch Chief, Emergency Services.

5.2.4 Incentives. Incentives will be provided for employees to participate in the incident management program. (See Reference Manual 55 for options.)

5.3 Incident and Event Management.

5.3.1 Types of Incidents. The complexity of an incident or event determines its “type.” Incidents range in complexity from “Type 5” (least complex) to “Type 1” (most complex). See the Incident Complexity Guide (RM-55, chapter 7, exhibit 2, page 16) for more details.

5.3.2 Type 5 and 4 Incidents. All parks must have plans in place to be able to properly manage Type 4 and Type 5 incidents. Parks in areas with robust emergency service capabilities may depend on local agencies to respond to some or all of these incidents. Such parks should have agreements with these agencies in place so that the responders will be aware of special circumstances (such as fragile resources or unusual visitation).

5.3.3 Type 3 Incidents. All parks must have plans in place to transition to and properly manage Type 3 incidents. This can be through local response agencies, local and nearby park staff or a combination of the both. Parks may develop local Type 3 Incident Management Teams to manage such incidents, tailored to the incident through staffing only necessary command and general staff positions.

5.3.4 Type 2 and 1 Incidents. If an incident or event is projected to be more complex than the local staff/local agencies can manage, then the park must consider ordering a Type 2 or Type 1 incident management team. All parks must have plans in place to be able to order a Type 2 or Type 1 Incident Management Team. [See RM-55](#), chapter 7 for details.

5.3.5 Funding and Incident Management. Parks must use the appropriate funding source for all incidents and events. [See RM-55](#), chapter 7 for details. Furthermore, all incidents and events will be managed efficiently and in a manner commensurate with the complexity of the situation. Critical emergency incident operations must not be curtailed just because funding has not been identified, although such funding is a requirement. Planned events that cannot be adequately funded and managed should not be held.

5.3.6 Incident Status Reporting. Parks and Incident Management Teams must report incident status in accordance with National Park Service and interagency policy:

- *NPS Significant Incident Reporting.* All significant incidents (listed by WASO as level 1 and level 2) must be reported in a timely manner no matter what the complexity, using the National Park Service Significant Incident Reporting System. (See the WASO memorandum on Significant Incident Reporting, [RM-55](#), chapter 7, page 19.)
- *Interagency Incident Status Reporting System.* Parks are encouraged to report significant Type 3 incidents with either version of an ICS 209, Incident Status Summary or Incident Intelligence Report. Type 2 and Type 1 incidents must be reported using an ICS 209. The report must be submitted through the interagency coordination system with courtesy copies being sent to the same report recipients identified in the NPS significant incident reporting system. The WASO Branch Chief, Emergency Services or Regional Emergency Services Coordinators may direct Incident Management Teams to post status reports on the Interagency Fire and Aviation website (FAMWeb).

5.3.7 After Action Review (AAR). After action reviews (AAR) will be conducted for all incidents. AARs for Type 5, 4 and 3 incidents will be conducted locally. Formal after action

reviews will be conducted for all Type 2 and Type 1 incidents. The Regional Emergency Coordinator will be responsible for coordinating reviews of Type 2 incidents. The WASO Branch Chief of Emergency Services will coordinate Type 1 incident reviews. These reviews are considered to be a part of the incident and will be so funded.

5.3.8 Audits of Incidents. All incident and events costing more than 1 million dollars will be audited. Regional Emergency Services Coordinators and the WASO Branch Chief, Emergency Services will coordinate with finance personnel and administrators to conduct these audits.

5.4 Incident Management Teams

5.4.1 Number and Type of Teams. The Division of Law Enforcement and Emergency Services, Visitor and Resource Protection Directorate, Washington Office and the regions are authorized to establish and fund standing Incident Management Teams. The number and types of these teams may be changed to meet shifting needs.

5.4.2 Team Use Coordination. All Type 3, 2 and 1 incidents must be evaluated by using the NPS All-Hazard Incident Complexity Guide ([see RM-55](#), chapter 7, pages 17 and 18). Any deviation from requesting the appropriate type of Incident Management Team must be done in consultation with the WASO, Division of Law Enforcement, Security, and Emergency Services, Branch Chief of Emergency Services.

5.4.3 Team Development. The intent of establishing standing Incident Management Teams, rather than just assembling qualified individuals on a case-by-case basis, is to allow each team to work through the group dynamics process before they are assigned to an incident. To advance the group dynamics process, all Regional and National Incident Management Teams will meet at least once each year unless frequent incident assignments preclude the meeting.

5.4.4 Team Membership. AD casual employees may be used on teams so long as they participate in the group dynamics process. Every effort should be made to have trainees work with these casual employees to learn from them and gain valuable experience.

5.4.5 Standard Operating Procedures. Incident Management Teams should develop their own Standard Operating Procedures, consistent with the requirements and standards of this Director's Order and its accompanying Reference Manual.

5.5 Incident Business Management.

5.5.1 Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook. NPS is a signatory agency to the [Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook](#). This Handbook contains the most correct information for fires and all-hazard incidents and events, the Service will abide by the principles, requirements, guidance and other provisions of that handbook. Supplements will be issued by the incident management program for issues specific to the NPS or for special circumstances (for example, in oil and hazardous materials incidents where U.S. Coast Guard or EPA cost accounting and cost recovery procedures may apply).

5.5.2 Safety Issues. All incidents will have a Safety Officer role filled, by the Incident Commander on small incidents and by the IC/or a designated Safety Officer on larger/more complex incidents.

5.5.3 Work/Rest Requirements, Days Off and Travel. The provisions and guidance found in the Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook, including incident operations driving, will apply to all-hazard incidents and events.

In addition, non-emergency travel related to all-hazard incidents and events (such as demobilization travel from an incident or travel to and from a planned event) will cease by 2200 hours (10:00 p.m.) each day. Exceptions to this policy can be approved by the Incident Commander based upon specific circumstances.

5.5.4 Length of Assignment. The provisions and guidance found in the interagency handbook regarding the length of assignments will apply to all-hazard incidents and events, including law enforcement personnel assigned to homeland security incidents or events. The Associate Director, Visitor and Resource Protection may consider exceptions on a case-by-case basis unless mandated by higher authority.

5.5.5 Programmed Salary and Backfill. The use of incident funds to pay for a permanent Government employee's programmed salary is normally not authorized. ([See RM-55](#) and the Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook).

Incident funding can be used to pay for unprogrammed salary for temporary and seasonal (including "subject-to-furlough") employees if the incident occurs at a time when the employee was not programmed to be on duty, so long as such expenditures are authorized by the funding source and approved by the Agency Administrator and the Incident Commander.

"Backfilling" involves charging overtime and premium pay to incident accounts for personnel who cover the normal duties of other personnel assigned to the incident. Backfilling for all-hazard incidents and events is allowed, provided that such expenditures are authorized by the funding source and approved by the Agency Administrator and the Incident Commander.

The authority to backfill should not be assumed, as differing circumstances and funding sources may exclude such expenditures. In general, activities that can be programmed in advance to avoid or minimize disruptions are inappropriate for backfilling.

5.5.6 Cost Accounting. National and Regional Incident Management Teams must maintain a current accounting of all costs and obligations incurred while managing incidents and events. When funding sources exist (e.g., Search and Rescue emergency account, Emergency Law and Order account or Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund) for incidents and events, the accounting system and procedures (numbers, codes, etc.) of that source will be used.

When no established funding source exists, the Incident Management Team must work with the Park, Region and WASO finance staff to establish one or more unique accounts and isolate

incident/event costs in case of later reimbursement through reprogramming or supplemental appropriation.

5.5.7 Emergencies Affecting Employees. Appropriate and sufficient assistance will be provided to employees (including the employee's family) affected by an emergency incident so that those employees may return to work.

5.6 Records Management.

5.6.1 Program Records. Incident Management Program records will be managed in accordance with law and regulation, as described in [Director's Order #19: Records Management](#), and in Appendix B (revised May 2003) of that document.

5.6.2 Incident Records. Records from or regarding any specific incident or event are generally retained by the unit that experienced the incident, although in some cases a region or WASO may retain the records of incidents managed at those levels. Records fall into one of three categories: permanent records, operational records, and unneeded records. Such records should be managed in accordance with their respective requirements. ([See Reference Manual 55.](#))

-----*End of Director's Order*-----