



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
Washington, DC 20240

## DOI WILDLAND FIRE PROGRAM POLICY MEMORANDUM No. 2024-008

To: Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs  
Director, Bureau of Land Management  
Director, National Park Service  
Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation  
Director, U.S. Geological Survey

From: Jeff Rupert, Director, Office of Wildland Fire

Subject: Wildland Fire Management Vehicle Inspections

**Purpose:** The purpose of this Policy Memorandum (PM) is to provide a standardized approach to ensure that wildland fire management vehicles are routinely inspected to guarantee their road worthiness, meet appropriate safety requirements to maintain their availability for use, and to establish regularly occurring documentation and reporting requirements.

**Scope:** This PM applies to the Department of the Interior's (Department) wildland fire management bureaus and offices and vehicles that are used for wildland fire management (wildland fire management vehicles). Wildland fire management vehicles are those that are specified in the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) Evaluation Report 2022-ER-021, *The U.S. Department of the Interior Did Not Ensure Its Wildland Firefighting Bureaus Conducted Routine Vehicle Inspections*, and include all fire engines, command and support vehicles, crew transports, bulldozers, water tenders, and excavators.

**Timeframe:** This PM is effective immediately and remains in effect until rescinded or modified.

**Background:** In March 2024, the OIG issued Evaluation Report 2022-ER-021, *The U.S. Department of the Interior Did Not Ensure Its Wildland Firefighting Bureaus Conducted Routine Vehicle Inspections*. The report found that while the Bureau of Land Management performed better, "on average, the bureaus were missing the most recent annual and daily inspections for 51 percent and 56 percent of their vehicles, respectively. In addition, 53 percent of the vehicles in [their] sample did not have evidence to support that a recent preparedness review occurred."

To address the findings, the report includes two recommendations directed to the Office of Wildland Fire (OWF):

1. Develop and ensure implementation of a Departmentwide policy to standardize inspection and preparedness review requirements for wildland fire vehicles, which should include, at a minimum, inspection intervals and documentation requirements.
2. Develop and implement a Departmentwide oversight plan, including compliance monitoring and specific corrective actions, to ensure vehicle inspections are completed in accordance with the policy created in Recommendation 1.

The report also recommends that the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service conduct inspections of all active wildland fire management vehicles and complete preparedness reviews in accordance with policy.

Firefighter and public safety are paramount in all wildland fire operations and actions. Wildland fire management vehicles are critical to ensuring that the Department has the resources that it needs for wildfire response, wildfire risk reduction efforts, and the restoration and rehabilitation of lands impacted by wildfire. Vehicle inspections are an important step in making sure that these activities are accomplished in an effective manner without jeopardizing the safety of employees and the public.

The Department has motor vehicle policies in place that govern the management, operation, maintenance, and utilization requirements for owned, leased and rented motor vehicles and related services. These policies are based on numerous Federal authorities and formal Department guidance and policies are included in the [Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations](#), commonly referred to as the “Redbook,” the [Department of the Interior Motor Vehicle Management Handbook](#) (March 2020), and [Department Manual Part 412, Chapter 1](#) (412 DM 1).

This PM provides guidance to ensure that existing policies, guidelines, and statutes are adhered to. Fire managers should coordinate with Bureau Fleet Managers, as needed, for the implementation of this PM.

**Coordination:** Wildland Fire Management bureau subject matter experts, Operations Specialists, and Fire Directors were consulted in the development of this PM.

**Policy:** The following policies to address the OIG recommendations are supported by 412 DM 1, the Department of the Interior Motor Vehicle Management Handbook, and the Redbook, and apply to all wildland fire management vehicles that are used for wildland fire management purposes, including fire preparedness, suppression, fuels, and all other operational related activities.

### ***Vehicle Inspections***

Bureaus are to coordinate with their agency Fleet Managers, as needed, to ensure that policies are in place and address the policy requirements included in 412 DM 1 and the Department of the Interior Motor Vehicle Management Handbook for wildland fire management vehicles. To support wildland fire management vehicle asset identification bureaus should establish procedures to

identify wildland fire management vehicles in the Department's Financial and Business Management System. Consistent with the guidance below, bureau policies should encompass the following types of wildland fire management vehicle inspections and reviews:

- **Routine Inspections.** Routine inspections (also referred to as “preventative maintenance”) should be performed and logged consistent with guidance included in the “Redbook” that requires operational inspections be performed either on a post-fire or daily basis. At a minimum, routine daily inspections should comply with the requirements included in Chapter 7, Section 2 of the Department of the Interior Motor Vehicle Management Handbook and any existing bureau policies and should also include routine pre-use inspections to ensure safety functionality. Bureaus should consider expanding these requirements, as necessary, to include the inspection of other critical vehicle components that are needed to safely and effectively carry out wildland fire management operations.
- **Annual Inspections.** Annual inspections (also referred to as “scheduled maintenance”) should be performed and logged at regularly scheduled intervals, but no less than on an annual basis, as required by GSA, manufacturers’ schedules, need, and existing agency policies. At a minimum, these inspections should follow the guidelines included in Chapter 7, Sections 2 and 8 of the Department of the Interior Motor Management Handbook. Bureaus should consider expanding these requirements, as necessary, to include the inspection of other critical vehicle components that are needed to safely and effectively carry out wildland fire management operations.
- **Preparedness Reviews.** Bureaus should ensure that annual fire and aviation preparedness reviews include wildland fire management vehicle inspections as a preparedness review checklist element, as appropriate, to ensure compliance with national and bureau-level inspection policies. Bureaus should also ensure that non-compliance issues are addressed.

Wildland fire management vehicles that do not sufficiently meet bureau inspection requirements to ensure employee and public safety should not be in service until all vehicle deficiencies are addressed. The above standards are an initial step to immediately address the OIG’s findings that on average bureaus are missing a significant number of daily and annual wildland fire management vehicle inspections. At a minimum this ensures alignment with existing Department vehicle inspection policies. As a subsequent step, OWF will work with bureau Wildland Fire Management program staffs and Fleet Managers to further standardize routine and annual inspection policies to ensure consistency of wildland fire management vehicle inspection policy across the bureaus.

### ***Annual Reporting Requirements***

By February 1<sup>st</sup> of each calendar year, bureaus will submit to OWF an end of fiscal year wildland fire management vehicle inspection summary report. The report should include the following information for wildland fire management vehicles for the prior fiscal year:

#### **For Routine Maintenance Inspections:**

- Number of vehicles in fleet that were used for wildland fire management and subject to routine maintenance inspections.
- Number of vehicles in compliance with routine vehicle inspection policies and

- procedures.
- Number of vehicles not in compliance with routine vehicle inspection policies and procedures.
- Were corrective actions put in place to ensure compliance with routine vehicle inspection policies and procedures (Yes/No)?

**For Annual Maintenance Inspections:**

- Number of vehicles in fleet that were used for wildland fire management and subject to annual maintenance inspections.
- Number of vehicles in compliance with annual vehicle inspection policies and procedures.
- Number of vehicles not in compliance with annual vehicle inspection policies and procedures.
- Were corrective actions put in place to ensure compliance with annual vehicle inspection policies and procedures (Yes/No/NA)?

**For Preparedness Review:**

- Number of Preparedness Reviews completed.
- Number of Preparedness Reviews that evaluated compliance with vehicle inspection policies and procedures as a part of the review.
- Number of Preparedness Reviews that did not include compliance with vehicle inspection policies and procedures as a functional review area.
- If preparedness reviews did not include a review of compliance with vehicle inspection policies and procedures as a part of the review were corrective actions put in place to ensure that future preparedness reviews do (Yes/No/NA)?

Please use the Wildland Fire Management Vehicle Inspection Reporting Template that is included in Attachment 1 to this PM to complete your end of fiscal year summaries. For bureaus that are not able to complete the annual reporting requirements above, please provide a summary of any programmatic needs and actions that are being taken to facilitate future reporting.

**Contact:** Questions can be directed to Craig Leff, Deputy Director, OWF ([craig\\_leff@ios.doi.gov](mailto:craig_leff@ios.doi.gov) or 202-606-3053); or Kim Van Hemelryck, Program Specialist, OWF ([kimberly\\_vanhemelryck@ios.doi.gov](mailto:kimberly_vanhemelryck@ios.doi.gov) or 208-272-0843).

Attachment 1. Wildland Fire Management Annual Vehicle Inspection Reporting Template