

Department of the Interior
Departmental Manual

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Series: Public Lands

Part 620: Wildland Fire Management

Chapter 2: Responsibilities and Governance

Originating Office: Office of Wildland Fire

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2.1 **Purpose.** This chapter describes the governance structure and responsibilities for implementing the Department's Wildland Fire Management program.

2.2 **Wildland Fire Management Governance.** The following groups develop and strengthen partnerships with stakeholders through shared governance whenever possible.

A. Wildland Fire Leadership Council. The Wildland Fire Leadership Council is established by Memorandum of Understanding signed the Department of the Interior (DOI), Department of Agriculture (USDA), and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to provide an intergovernmental mechanism to support development, implementation, and coordination of Federal fire management policy.

B. Federal Fire Policy Council. The Federal Fire Policy Council is chartered by DOI, USDA, and DHS, and provides a common national federal agency approach to wildland fire management, including:

(1) Ensuring that wildland fire management policies, programs, activities, and budgets are coordinated and consistent among and between the member agencies.

(2) Striving for coordinated and consistent policies and programs with non-Federal partner and cooperator agencies.

(3) Establishing strategic policy and program direction.

(4) Providing coordinated recommendations to the Secretaries for DOI, USDA, and DHS; and

(5) Resolving inconsistencies among and between Federal wildland fire programs.

C. Fire Executive Council. The Fire Executive Council is chartered by the Departments of Agriculture (USDA), Homeland Security (DHS), and DOI to provide a common,

integrated, and coordinated Federal agency approach to wildland fire policy, leadership, budget, and program oversight. It is responsible for:

- (1) Ensuring that wildland fire management policies, programs, activities, and budgets are coordinated and consistent among and between the member agencies.
- (2) Establishing policy and program direction for Federal wildland fire program implementation.
- (3) Providing coordinated recommendations to the Federal Fire Policy Council and resolving inconsistencies among and between Federal wildland fire programs; and
- (4) Ensuring policy and program coordination and integration with non-fire management programs and activities as well as non-Federal partners and cooperators.

D. Fire Management Board. The Fire Management Board is chartered by the Fire Executive Council to provide a mechanism for coordinated and integrated federal wildland fire program management and implementation. The Fire Management Board, taking strategic policy and program direction from the Fire Executive Council, directs, coordinates and oversees the development and implementation of Federal wildland fire policy and programs to provide consistent and cost-effective program management.

E. National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG). The National Wildlife Coordinating Group is chartered by the Fire Executive Council, the Chair of the National Association of State Foresters Forest Fire Protection Committee, and the President of the Intertribal Timber Council, to provide national leadership to develop, maintain, and communicate interagency standards, guidelines, qualifications, training, and other capabilities that enable synchronized operations among federal and non-federal entities. These standards, guidelines, qualifications, training, and other capabilities are adopted by individual agencies as policy or best practices. The NWCG facilitates implementation of approved standards, guidelines, qualifications, and training.

F. Fire/Resources Executive Committee (F/REC). The F/REC provides cohesion and consistency among bureaus/offices and ensures effective implementation and oversight of the Emergency Stabilization (ES) and Burned Area Rehabilitation (BAR) programs in the Department. The F/REC reviews and makes recommendations to the Director, Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) on requests for redistribution of funding authority. The F/REC is comprised of executives from bureau/office wildland fire and resource management programs along with the Director, OWF.

G. Interior Burned Area Emergency Response Coordinators (IBAER). The IBAER is chartered under the F/REC to provide integrated and consistent program coordination and implementation for ES and BAR programs and coordination with long term recovery and restoration activities of the bureaus/offices. The IBAER will provide program and policy advice and recommendations to the F/REC. The IBAER will provide advice and recommendations on ES or BAR redistribution requests and program-wide BAR expenses to the F/REC.

H. Wildland Fire Information and Technology Executive Board. The Wildland Fire Information and Technology Executive Board (Executive Board) is a partnership between DOI and the USDA, US Forest Service to lead and oversee the wildland fire information and technology program and investment portfolio. The Executive Board develops and maintains a multi-year comprehensive plan of all investments and program support, and develops strategies, policies, and investment recommendations for review and approval. The Executive Board establishes appropriate interagency mechanisms to coordinate the implementation of the wildland fire information and technology program in a manner that efficiently organizes and manages the work of information and technology personnel and other resources from multiple agencies and organizations.

I. Investment Review Boards. The DOI and USDA chief information officers are members of the Executive Board and work together to make joint decisions approving wildland fire information and technology strategies, multi-year plans, and individual investment proposals to ensure coordination of strategy and investment decisions between the mission business requirements of wildland fire management and other programs in both agencies; and to ensure coordination with the Chief Information Officer with respect to policy, infrastructure, and service delivery. Each department follows its respective information management and technology investment management process to move decisions forward as agreed upon by the Executive Board.

2.3 Responsibilities.

A. Assistant Secretary – Policy, Management and Budget.

(1) Provides leadership and oversight for the Department’s Wildland Fire Management program and ensures that DOI establishes and maintains a Wildland Fire Management Program that implements the guiding principles and policies set forth in 620 DM 1.

(2) Coordinates and consults with senior elected and appointed leadership in other federal agencies, States, Tribes, and other entities on wildland fire management programs and policies.

(3) Provides advice and assistance to the Secretary on the Wildland Fire program, policy, and performance of the responsibilities set forth in 620 DM 1.

(3) Ensures effective consultation, collaboration, communication, and coordination with the Program Assistant Secretaries.

B. Program Assistant Secretaries.

(1) Ensure that bureaus/offices under their jurisdiction establish and implement Wildland Fire Management Programs described in Part 620 DM.

(2) Participate in wildland fire governance and coordination activities to promote common, consistent, and effective Wildland Fire programs and policies.

(3) Provide advice and assistance to the Secretary and the Assistant Secretary – Policy, Management and Budget in fulfilling their responsibilities under Part 620 DM.

C. Deputy Assistant Secretary – Public Safety, Resource Protection, and Emergency Services.

(1) Ensures coordinated and consistent DOI-wide Wildland Fire Management programs, policies, and activities.

(2) Ensures that the budget for wildland fire management is formulated, allocated, and executed to implement the provisions of Part 620 DM.

(3) Provides direction and oversight for the Office of Wildland Fire.

(4) Ensures Program Assistant Secretaries are engaged in decision making with respect to wildland fire management policies, programs, and budgets.

(5) Provides advice to the Secretary, Assistant Secretary – Policy, Management, and Budget, and heads of bureaus/offices with respect to wildland fire management policies, programs, and budgets.

(6) Provides direction and oversight for wildland fire information and technology programs and portfolios; and coordinates through the Executive Board a common program and portfolio with the interagency communities.

(7) Serves as the liaison to the Office of the Chief Information Officer and other DOI entities for all wildland fire program information and technology investment plans, strategies, proposals, and related activities.

D. Office of Wildland Fire.

(1) Manages coordinated development, oversight, and evaluation of wildland fire management policies, programs, and budgets.

(2) Ensures integrated and coordinated wildland fire management programs, policies, and activities with other Federal agencies, States, Tribes, and other entities.

(3) Coordinates wildland fire management support of DOI's emergency preparedness and response responsibilities for all hazards.

(4) Provides advice to the Assistant Secretary – Policy, Management and Budget; Deputy Assistant Secretary – Public Safety, Resource Protection, and Emergency Services; and other DOI senior leadership with respect to wildland fire management policies, programs, and budgets.

E. Heads of Bureaus and Offices.

- (1) Establish and implement wildland fire management programs and activities to implement the provisions of Part 620 DM.
- (2) Issue policies and procedures necessary to implement the provisions of Part 620 DM.
- (3) Ensure coordination among the Office of Wildland Fire and other bureau/office programs and activities.
- (4) Provide advice and assistance to their respective Assistant Secretary in fulfilling their responsibilities under Part 620 DM.
- (5) Participate in wildland fire governance and coordination activities to promote common, consistent, and effective wildland fire programs and policies.
- (6) Ensure that wildland fire management program direction is clear, available, and understood by agency administrators and employees.
- (7) Ensure that employees are trained, certified, and available to participate in wildland fire management programs at local, regional, and national levels.
- (8) Improve the efficiency of wildland fire management by facilitating coordination and exchange of personnel, equipment, supplies, services, funds, and cost-sharing among the signatories to the *Cooperative Wildland Fire Management and Stafford Act Response Agreement* at the state level.

F. Director, United States Geological Survey.

- (1) Establishes and maintains science, technology, and information programs in support of DOI's Wildland Fire Management Program.
- (2) Coordinates wildland fire science, technology, and information programs with other Federal and non-Federal agencies.
- (3) Provides advice and assistance to the Secretary and the Assistant Secretary – Policy, Management and Budget in fulfilling their responsibilities under Part 620 DM.

G. Bureau Fire Executives.

(1) Provide strategic leadership within their respective bureaus to implement wildland fire management programs and activities under Part 620 DM.

(2) Provide direction and oversight necessary to implement effective, efficient, and safe wildland fire management programs and activities.

(3) Ensure coordination among wildland fire and other bureau/office programs and activities.

(4) Advise and collaborate with the Office of Wildland Fire in developing, implementing, and overseeing consistent wildland fire management policies, programs, and budgets.

(5) Participate in wildland fire governance and coordination entities to promote common, consistent, and effective wildland fire programs, policies, and activities.

I. Bureau Fire Directors.

(1) Provide management, coordination, direction, and oversight for their respective bureau's wildland fire management programs.

(2) Ensure coordination among wildland fire and other bureau programs and activities.

(3) Provide advice and assistance to respective bureau directors, fire executives, and agency administrators in fulfilling their responsibilities under Part 620 DM.

(4) Provide technical advice and expertise in the development of Departmental handbooks, manuals, and other documents necessary to implement wildland fire management programs, policies, and activities.

(5) Advise and collaborate with the OWF in developing, implementing, and overseeing consistent wildland fire management policies, programs, and budgets.

(6) Participate in wildland fire governance and coordination entities to promote common, consistent, and effective wildland fire programs, policies, and activities.