

Department of the Interior Departmental Manual

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Part 112: Policy, Management and Budget

Chapter 7: Office of Wildland Fire

Originating Office: Office of Wildland Fire

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7.1 Purpose. This chapter describes the organizational structure and functions of the Office of Wildland Fire (OWF).

7.2 Mission. The mission of the OWF is to coordinate wildland fire management programs within the Department and with other Federal and non-Federal partners. The OWF establishes legally and scientifically based Department-wide wildland fire policies and budgets, and provides strategic leadership and oversight that promotes safe, comprehensive, cohesive, efficient, and effective national wildland fire programs, consistent with each bureau's statutory authorities and constraints.

7.3 Functions. The primary functions of the OWF are to exercise programmatic oversight over the subsidiary work of the bureaus relating to wildland fire management and to serve as a central point of contact with external agencies and organizations. This includes coordinating, consulting, and collaborating with the bureaus to ensure Department-wide consistency within the wildland fire management programs, to the extent practical, given the different statutory requirements and missions of the bureaus. The primary functions of OWF include:

A. Program Oversight.

(1) Reviewing and evaluating bureau wildland fire management programs to ensure proper implementation, consistency, and compliance with regulations, Congressional and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) direction, Departmental policies and standards, and the Department's Strategic Plan.

(2) Conducting internal control reviews and audits of wildland fire management programs.

(3) Advising and consulting with bureaus and offices to resolve issues affecting wildland fire management programs.

(4) Responding to Congress, the Government Accountability Office (GAO), OMB, the Department's Office of Inspector General (OIG), and public inquiries related to wildland fire management, in collaboration with the bureaus, as appropriate.

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B. Policy and Planning.

(1) Interpreting, developing, amending, and issuing Department-wide wildland fire management policies including directives, guidance, strategies, and plans consistent with bureau statutory authorities and constraints. Topics for such policies include, but are not limited to, fire management planning and environmental compliance; fire prevention, preparedness, protection and suppression; fire management-related aviation activities; hazardous fuels reduction; ecosystem restoration and biomass utilization; smoke management and air quality; emergency stabilization and burned area rehabilitation; fire science; facilities construction and maintenance; rural fire and community assistance; outreach and educational activities; and international coordination and collaboration.

(2) Leading Department-wide wildland fire strategic program planning exercises consistent with directives from Congress, the Administration, and the Department's Strategic Plan.

C. Finance and Budget Operations.

(1) Managing the Department's budgetary and financial activities related to wildland fire management programs, including managing all aspects of the budget process for the Department's Wildland Fire Management Account. These activities include, but are not limited to, budget planning, formulation, and presentation; budget execution and allocation of funds to the bureaus; establishment of program performance metrics; tracking and evaluation of program activities to ensure proper implementation, consistency, and compliance with national policies, standards, and regulations; and coordinating budget functions and activities with the Department's Office of Budget (POB), bureaus and offices, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service, and other Federal agencies.

(2) Developing and maintaining budget protocols and procedures in consultation with bureaus and offices that are consistent with funds control and other direction from the Office of the Assistant Secretary – Policy, Management and Budget (A/S - PMB) to prioritize and allocate funds within the Department's Wildland Fire Management Account for wildland fire management planning and environmental compliance; fire prevention, preparedness, protection, and suppression; wildland fire management-related aviation activities; hazardous fuels reduction; ecosystem restoration and biomass utilization; smoke management and air quality; emergency stabilization and burned area rehabilitation; fire science; facilities construction and maintenance; rural fire and community assistance; outreach and educational activities, training and workforce development; and international coordination and collaboration.

(3) Establishing and enforcing effective financial stewardship practices, including sound Departmental internal control systems; monitoring and evaluating bureau wildland fire program budget execution to improve accountability, effectiveness, and efficiency in achieving program goals and objectives; preventing fraud, waste, and mismanagement; conducting internal control reviews, and providing assurance statements and risk analyses to monitor and assess program compliance with the Office of Financial Management (PFM), OIG, OMB, and the GAO recommendations and instructions.

(4) Preparing and submitting wildland fire management-related input to Departmental strategic plans, annual performance plans, annual program performance assessments and reports, and materials related to wildland fire issues as required in collaboration with the Office of Planning and Performance Management (PPP).

D. Information Technology Enterprise Services.

(1) Providing leadership and expertise in developing information technology (IT) services and solutions for the Department's wildland fire management program. This includes collaborating with the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO), bureaus and offices, and external organizations in developing common intra-agency and interagency strategies, governance and business management practices; creating seamless information sharing environments; ensuring implementation and use of consistent technology infrastructure and configuration standards; integrating authoritative data sources; and fostering innovation that encourages development of solutions that increase efficiencies, reduce costs, and eliminate redundancies within the wildland fire program.

(2) Managing IT investments by coordinating and collaborating with the OCIO, bureaus and offices, the USDA Forest Service, and other Federal and non-Federal agencies in developing business cases for investment, adherence to the Clinger-Cohen Act, E-Gov Act, Government Paperwork Elimination Act, and the Department's modernization efforts; providing overall project (investment) management, (such as scope, schedule, and cost management); participating in Departmental investment reviews; making recommendations for approval and deployment of wildland fire information technology enterprise systems and decision support tools during development, modernization, enhancement; and providing operations and maintenance support.

(3) Ensuring implementation of the Wildland Fire Segment Roadmap in coordination with the OCIO, bureaus and offices, and the USDA Forest Service; and as needed, participating in development, management, and implementation of Departmental IT projects and programs; providing for systems development, modernization, enhancement; and providing operations and maintenance support.

E. Coordination and Collaboration.

(1) Coordinating the Department's wildland fire management programs with bureaus and offices, other federal agencies; national level partners for states, local governments, tribes, and non-governmental organizations; and international government agencies and organizations.

(2) Supporting and coordinating with senior executive level organizations within the interagency/intradepartmental wildland fire governance structure approved by the Assistant Secretary – Policy, Management and Budget (A/S - PMB), including the Wildland Fire Leadership Council and the Federal Fire Policy Council, in partnership with the USDA Forest

Service; and providing leadership to the Wildland Fire Executive Council and other wildland fire management governance organizations.

(3) Representing the Department on internal and external interagency committees, working groups, task forces, and other federal and non-federal agencies as appropriate.

(4) Developing, implementing, and managing the Department's international wildland fire program activities. Coordinating the Department's international wildfire management activities with the Department's Office of International Affairs and bureaus; the USDA Forest Service, the Department of State, and other Federal and non-Federal agencies. (Under bureau-specific arrangements with foreign partners, bureaus may also be responsible for conducting international relationships regarding wildland fire management and/or emergency response activities.)

(5) Coordinating wildland fire aviation management with the Department's bureaus and offices, including the Office of Aviation Services, other organizational groups, including other Federal agencies and non-Federal partners, stakeholders (including states, tribes, local governments, and non-governmental organizations), and international government agencies and organizations, to ensure that the bureaus are provided with appropriate policy, guidance, and resources for safe, effective, and efficient fire management aviation operations and activities.

(6) Coordinating wildland fire safety and accident management with bureaus and offices, the Department's Designated Agency Safety and Health Official, the National Wildfire Coordinating Group, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, other Federal agencies and non-Federal partners, tribes, and stakeholders (including states, counties, cities, and non-government organizations), and international government agencies and organizations.

(7) Coordinating multi-agency and partnership planning efforts extending beyond the Department to ensure that bureau and office missions and legal requirements are observed and protected.

(8) Providing for Department-wide wildland fire workforce and organizational development consistent with Financial Business Management System requirements, communications, and administrative support activities, to the extent practical and consistent with bureau priorities, missions, authorities, funding, and policies.

F. All-Hazard Response.

(1) Serving as the Department's lead for Emergency Support Function #4 of the National Response Framework and providing support for other Emergency Support Functions in coordination with the Office of Emergency Management (OEM). Coordinating and integrating all-hazard response requirements with bureau fire programs.

(2) Coordinating with the OEM and interagency partners for Continuity of Operations Plan planning, management, and implementation; execution of mission essential functions, and the integration of all-hazard response with bureau fire programs.

(3) Assessing the capacity of the Department's wildland fire management program in cooperation with the National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group to address all-hazard operational requirements while meeting critical fire suppression activities.

(4) Planning, managing and implementing all-hazard responses in accordance with Part 900 of the Departmental Manual.

7.4 Organization. The office is headed by a Director, who reports to the Deputy Assistant Secretary - Public Safety, Resource Protection, and Emergency Services. The Director is assisted by a Deputy Director and staff in the following divisions:

A. Budget and Performance Management Division. The Budget and Performance Management Division is responsible for the overall management of the Department's Wildland Fire Management Account in collaboration with the POB, and other bureaus and offices. The division provides requisite direction to and oversight over the bureaus. Additionally, in collaboration with bureaus and offices, the division leads all financial and budget operations at the Departmental level, including establishing protocols and procedures for the development, formulation, and internal controls assurance statements; and risk analysis of the wildland fire management budget and its justification, allocation, maintenance, monitoring, and evaluation. The division is also responsible for performance management and responding to the PPP, OIG, OMB, GAO, and congressional and public inquiries. (Bureaus are responsible for establishing their internal controls, assurance statements, and risk analysis.)

B. Policy Division. The Policy Division is responsible for developing, disseminating, and ensuring appropriate implementation of wildland fire management policy, doctrine, standards, strategies, plans, and guidance where Department-wide overarching policy elements are appropriate and necessary. These documents are developed using the best available science and emerging technologies, direction, and guidance found in statutes and Federal regulations, congressional and administrative documents; and Departmental plans, policies, and statements. They are developed in collaboration with the bureaus, tribes, other Federal agencies and non-Federal partners and stakeholders (including states, tribes, local, and non-governmental organizations). The division also reviews policies developed by the bureaus, where bureau-specific policy is required to reflect a unique statutory mission.

C. Enterprise Systems and Decision Support Division. The Enterprise Systems and Decision Support Division is a multi-disciplinary group that provides technical and program/project leadership for the Department's wildland fire information and technology applications and systems. The division works with the OCIO, Federal and non-Federal partners on the development, modernization, enhancement; and operations, and maintenance of federal/non-federal IT systems that support wildland fire business management, operations, and other program management activities. The division works with the OCIO and other Federal partners in the continuing development and implementation of the Wildland Fire Segment Roadmap.