

National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group

3833 South Development Avenue; Boise, ID 83705

NMAC/CGAC NOTES

January 21-22, 2026

January 21

| Topic | Presenter(s) | Purpose |
|---|----------------------|-------------|
| Introductions | All | Information |
| Leaders Intent Organizational Updates Governance Composition NMAC Role | Wilcox Gamboa | Information |
| GA Border Work Group Update | Jay Lusher/Beebe | Information |
| 2026 CIMT Process Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none">RotationRoster SizeRoster CallRequest FormEvaluations | NMAC Representatives | Discussion |
| Surge Packages | NICC / NMAC | Information |
| Day 1 Closeout | NMAC | Discussion |

Attendees:

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chair: Shane McDonald | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Co-Chair: Chuck Russell | <input type="checkbox"/> MAC Coordinator: |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FWS/AK/SA: Shane McDonald | <input type="checkbox"/> USFS/EA/SW: Jon Teutrine | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> USFA/FEMA/NR: Aitor Bidaburu |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BLM/GB: Brian Achziger | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NASF/RM: Greg Smith | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NPS/CA: Jesse Bender |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BIA/NW: Josh Simmons | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NICC: Sean Peterson | <input type="checkbox"/> OWF: Annie Benoit |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Note-taker: Nicki Johnston | | |

Additional Attendees: Chris Wilcox, Jaime Gamboa, Shane Santos, Ryan Aeby, JoeSean Kennedy, Maegan Maughan, Megan Kephart, Nancy Ellsworth, Laurie Forni, Shawn Compton, Jennifer Parrish, Kate Holsapple, Andrea Lannen-Littlefield, Kenan Jaycox, Jay Lusher, Jay Kurth, Ryan Sundberg, Travis Hartsburg, Ted Pierce, Ray Crowe, Kara Stringer, John Cervantes, John Goss, David Raphael, Steve Goldman, Jennifer Humphrey, Dennis Strange, Jason Demas, Craig Daugherty, Matt Rau, Juan Ortiz, Tyler Anderson, Karis Berrian, Mike Rubenstein

Organizational Updates

January 12, SO 3448 established USWFS, appointing Chief Brian Fennessy as the first Fire Director.

4 SES Deputy Directors have been identified as Grant Beebe (Policy), Chris Wilcox (Operations), Suzie Bates (Aviation), and one for Budget Management and Administration (120-detail).

Assistant Chiefs and Division Chiefs have yet to be selected.

Moving to GA model, Bureau fire programs will be reorganized with all DOI fire and aviation personnel being realigned on February 8.

Fire will work for and within fire with all personnel being stove piped into one USWFS chain of command.



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FS moving into interim operations following the SO, working on reorganization.
All programs will report to a Program Manager at the WO, consolidated under one Deputy Chief.
FS will realign regional office staff to work directly for the WO staff, no longer for a Regional Forester.
Interim operations will be implemented by February 1.
National forest FS structures will not change.
Interim operations will occur until full implementation and reorganization plan is approved.
Once approved by the Secretary, the FS plan will go to Congress for approval.
Reorganization will have 4 Regional Foresters across the nation supporting combined regions.
Executive group is reviewing GA proposal.
Will continue to meet the mission of resource support and aggressive IA.
Every fire will see some version of suppression, regardless of ignition.
Balancing suppression, fuels loading crisis on the landscape, political, partner and public views, etc.
States must be aligned with terminology to avoid political consternation.
Anticipate joint language document regarding suppression from DOI and FS.
Tribal consultations must also be aligned for appropriate solutions.
DOI employees will continue to report to current supervisors until realignment is complete
A hire to retire fire specific organization has been created in DOI consolidated units to service the USWFS.
Emergency management for DOI remains under the same Secretary.
Capacity for responding to all-hazard incidents will remain with the respective DOI agencies.
States must continue to work to create a conduit for agreements between local agencies and cooperators and the USWFS.
Expect the new USDA Undersecretary Michael Boren and Chief Shultz to be engaged in some of the FS consolidation implementation study.
Proposal of GA boundary working group has the potential encourage realignment of FS regions after consolidation.
Recommendations continue to be reviewed and updated as the USWFS continues to be built out and positions are filled from the top.
Generic supervisory template will be the similarity among all GAs that will be built out with specifics based on the nuances and uniqueness of each area.
Existing processes will become more efficient and aim to limit barriers and the need for workarounds.
Not all policy documents will be updated immediately, documents like the Red Book referencing agency policies will take more time to be reviewed.
Continue to maximize collaboration efforts and funding to make the operation work more efficiently as consolidation occurs.
Budgets for all USWFS will likely be increased and workload inconsistencies will be addressed.
Reviewing technological needs for both DOI and FS.
Many wildland fire applications and IT are funded by the FS but utilized by all agencies, Congress will appropriate funding more realistically in addition to DOI and FS working together to allocate funds.
Many IT programs have been outsourced to private vendors on platforms with dependencies reliant on contractual agreements.



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Governance Composition

DOI and FS are streamlining from 4-tiered governance structure to a 2-tiered structure.

At the top will be a Federal Fire Executive Council with Chief Fennessy and Sarah Fisher followed by NWCG.

There will no longer be state or regional area structures.

Each GA will have one DOI representative.

Creating Senior Advisor roles that will directly collaborate with Chief Fennessy regarding intergovernmental issues.

Regional Fire Chiefs are frontline Line Officer for the USWFS and any issues will be brought to GA Director.

DOI working on interest, job and reassignment announcements for Fire Chiefs, Deputy Fire Chiefs, and Senior Advisors.

NMAC Role

Consider alternative methods of smoothing out friction points.

Understand variance of scope and priorities.

Guiding the coordination system at higher PL levels.

Desire to monitor the national perspective and allocate resources mindfully.

NMAC's composition will change.

GA Border Work Group Update

Recommendations were delivered to fire leadership 1/9 for evaluation.

GA leadership will be briefed upon final decision.

Original 120-day completion mandate executed in 8 weeks.

Objectives for evaluation included addressing legacy inconsistencies and considering interagency implications.

Included DOI, USDA, and state representation.

Focused on problem-first thinking, established criteria and gathered diverse perspectives.

Identified coordination problems, avoided boundary assumptions, collected systematic stakeholder input, and captured 5 distinct coordination problems.

Avoided oversimplification and distinguished structural vs policy issues.

Established decision framework before examining specific proposals.

Created evaluation standards independent of specific options and achieved team consensus on evaluation approach.

Results included a reusable framework of 6 criteria.

Prioritized themes over anecdotes or preferences.

Coordination challenges are multi-dimensional with no single solution solving all problems, boundary changes alone are insufficient.

Recommendations will be worked through fire leadership with any accepted portions discussed with states, tribes, etc.

Concern with state Fire Directors not being included in recommendation conversations.

The correct Fire Directors will be included in discussions regarding the impacted states at the appropriate time.

Process was driven heavily by the condensed timeline, synthesizing much of the interviews with AI to find commonalities and outliers.



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Correlation between GA Fire Chief positions and GA boundary decision is not definitive, existing GAs were utilized for GA Fire Chief job announcements.

Modifications to SW/SA boundaries several years ago required a robust team and nearly a year for implementation.

On a national scale, updating GA boundaries may occur quickly with more momentum and support.

Considered operational and efficiency ramifications of changing specific units.

GA Fire Chiefs will have much stewardship and decision space for management structure within GA.

Decision has not yet been made regarding GA boundaries.

Standardization across GA boundaries continues to pose issues.

2026 CIMT Process Updates

- Rotation
 - Maintain national capability year-round.
 - All 9 GAs will appear in the national rotation every week of the year in alphabetical order.
 - When a GA fills a national order, that GA immediately moves to the bottom of the list.
 - A GA filling an internal order will still maintain the GA position in the national rotation.
 - GAs that are unavailable are skipped for filling orders but retain their relative order in the list.
 - After every CIMT within a GA has received one assignment in a CY, replacement CIMT orders will follow a 3 internally filled to 1 filled by national rotation ratio.
 - Once a CIMT has received 2 assignments in a CY it becomes ineligible for national rotation assignments until every CIMT has received 2 assignments.
 - NICC-prepositioned teams are utilized first nationally.
 - Prepositioning of 4 days or more counts as an assignment, longer than 7 days requires NMAC coordination.
 - International assignments do not count against the national assignment numbers as the IMTs are ad hoc.
- Roster Size
 - Minimum mobilization configuration is 24 positions.
 - Requires 2 OSCC and 1 additional OSCC or OPBD.
 - One AOBD or ASGS must be filled at mobilization.
 - COML or COMT must be filled at mobilization.
 - Upper level of roster size is between the IC and AA based on the complexity of the incident.
 - Encourage responsible resource stewardship in ramping up and down appropriately.
- Roster Call
 - Signature lines will be removed from pre-mobilization IMT call form approving roster.
- Request Form
 - Required during national PL4 and 5 or when directed by NMAC.
 - Goal for NMAC to utilize to prioritize CIMTs to GAs when resources are limited.
 - Recommend not tying the form to a PL.
 - Consider what the right measurable triggers and criteria are.



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- NMAC and CIMT Coordinator retain the flexibility to utilize the form when they agree it is necessary.
- NMAC will review the content of the form and the potential for updating.
- Intent for GA Coordinating Group to complete the form.
- NMAC liaison should call the local unit and utilize the 209s to prioritize resources.
- GAs dislike duplicating work, filling out the form in addition to speaking to their NMAC liaisons.
- Evaluations
 - IC evaluations are required.
 - AA evaluations are recommended.
 - NMAC will review the IMT evaluation form for updates.

Surge Packages

National ready reserve is included in the NISRM.

Desire to maintain one section of surge package language in the NISRM.

12 surge task forces mobilized in 2025.

Average daily cost ranged from \$21,000-45,000 depending on the size of the task force.

Items that worked well include RIST for finance support, support from local dispatch centers and GACCs for logistical needs, and NERV.

There were many training opportunities for TFLD, DIVS, and ICT3s and collaboration for interagency crews.

Configurations increased local IA strength and successfully caught fires.

Multiple GACCs voiced concern about being micromanaged.

Need for a clearly defined communication chain and crew swap chain.

Need for standard configuration, naming convention, POC, clear usage expectations, etc.

Radio cloning issues between interagency resources must be addressed.

Issues with multiple surge groups being split between night and day shifts, losing work time when the resource needed a day off to transition.

Reported chain of command issues between ICT3 and TFLD as well as issues with incident's designated ICT4 and/or DIV in control of incident.

Recommend NMAC issuing a memo requiring GA support for National Surge Packages, then allow the national coordination system to work and have GAs find and use their own resources.

NICC recommends CODs to fill Surge Coordinator role and report to NMAC Operations.

Recommend one GACC hosting the task force from start to finish, rather than risking it being reassigned by NMAC.

The task force was built from resources NMAC liaisons found in GAs and through agency channels that were listed in the coordination system as unavailable for various reasons.

Future expectation is that Regional Fire Directors manage resource utilization.

GAs prefer support orders get filled through the system rather than NMAC interfere and create surge packages.

Many GAs reported not receiving what they wanted in the surge package.

Crews from the EA appreciated participating in the surge packages, mobilizing to other areas and working on many incidents.



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Current system is not set up for tactical staging.

Action Items

Distribute national rotation and roster memos.

Update pre-mobilization form to remove signature lines.

Review IMT request form.

Review IMT evaluation form.



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| Topic | Presenter(s) | Purpose |
|--|---------------------------|-------------|
| Follow-up from Day 1 | Jay Kurth | Discussion |
| GA Round Robin | Coordinating Group/GA Rep | Information |
| ICAP Update CIMT Recruitment Variations | NMAC | Information |
| NASA INSPYRE Project | Neil Lareau | Information |
| PSOG Update | Brian Achziger | Information |
| CIM AAR Follow-Up IWDG Update | NMAC | Information |
| CIMT Critical Position Gaps | CGAC / NMAC | Discussion |
| Close Out <ul style="list-style-type: none">Bin ItemsChair TransitionSelect Vice Chair | CGAC / NMAC | Discussion |

Follow-up from Day 1

T3 IMT roster configuration for teams crossing GA boundaries

No maximum on CIMT rosters should be added to memo and request form.

GA Coordinating Groups must ensure CIMTs are staffed appropriately.

Negotiation between IC and AA must occur and decide what the team requirements are based on the complexity and needs of the incident.

Teams should be ramping down their rosters with integrity and demobilizing personnel that aren't needed at the incident.

Need for designated Airspace Coordinators at all GAs.

Reminder - there are several steps for approval prior to utilizing DoD assets, including Title 10 aircraft.

GA Round Robin

NR – Dennis Strange

4 CIMTs for 2026, increase in number of member applications, odd pinch point with leadership. Hosting 2 T3 IMTs. Training Officer retired, working on replacement. NRCC filled FS Assistant Aircraft Coordinator, 3 remaining vacancies. Continued IT issues in dispatch centers.

RM – Travis Hartsburg, John Cervantes

3 CIMTs for 2026, team meetings scheduled for March. State of CO created and utilized T3 IMT in 2025.

Growing pains with consolidation of local dispatch centers in CO. Issues with radios and communications.

Working to consolidate Grand Junction dispatch center with 2 others in SW CO. Busier fire season in CO than past years, did not activate MAC group. 2 vacancies at RMCC. Heavily invested in the unification process.

SW – John Cervantes, Kenan Jaycox

4 CIMTs for 2026, each with 85-90 personnel rostered. 1 BUYT. In-person IMT meeting scheduled for February. Focus on DOI unification. SWCC looking at upcoming facility issues and considering options. 2



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crews ready for evaluation in the spring, hoping to have 21 IHC for the summer. Need for an Airspace Coordinator. Annual report in process, average season in 2025 with several large fires. T3 IMTs were extremely busy. Need for better interagency IT in dispatch. GB supported SW with Meteorologists throughout 2025 and utilized IMets. Selected vice-Chuck Maxwell, hoping for March placement.

GB – Dennis Strange

Kara Stringer detailing as GBCC Center Manager. 6 CIMTs for 2026 with a qualified IC, Deputy and trainee. GB will be honoring their own CIMT internal rotation based on the calendar so may run into national rotation issues and declined assignments. GB IMTs have been given blanket authorization to take as many trainees as they want. Narrowing scope of Priority Trainee Program, criteria to get into the program will be more strict. NV has 5 T3 IMTs, ID has 1 T3 IMT, WY has 1-3 T3 IMTs depending on where each team rosters.

CA – Jay Kurth, Andrea Lannen-Littlefield, Laurie Forni

Hosting 8 CIMTs for 2026, looking to build out additional T3 IMTs. CIMT AAR concluded last week in Sacramento. Regional preparedness plan spread out availability of IHCs well. CIMT activation call was adapted, will refine for 2026. Governor's EO working group comprised of Cal Fire and Cal OES to streamline and improve resource ordering, packaging single resource engines and put on ordering workshops. Phase 2 will work on the one ordering system in CA rather than 2 and consider a separate ordering system for state resources. Interagency EO working group tasked with defining response matrices. CWCG task group looking at updating charter, looking at one GA with 2 coordination centers, communication avenues, etc. Providing trainings for NOPS staff, working on filling vacancies through Fire Hire. Utilizing statistical basis to create standardized matrices across CA. Success with Title 10 hoist aircraft activated in CA.

NW – John Goss, Ted Pierce

IC selections finalized, 7 CIMTs for 2026. Discussing reliance on ADs and local government contingent filling holes on teams. Virtual team trainings planned for March. Concern with lack of snowpack throughout the GA. Mobilized CIMT with only DNR and local personnel. Continued COML and AOB shortages and IT network issues. Continued successes and fixes with combined expanded dispatches. One vacancy at NWCC. Explaining why large fire criteria was a gauge for IA success.

SA – Jason Demas, Nancy Ellsworth

Fire season has started for 2026, importing resources for suppression and RX. Monitoring fuel loading in OK and TX. TX developing aviation program. Sustaining 3 CIMTs, 2 T3 IMTs with 4 T3 ICs. Anticipate EOC activations with the incoming weather. Monitoring impacts following one AD pay plan for FS and DOI, and all-hazard response impacts. Coordinating Group is weekly. Swamp levels are extremely low, formulating incident response plan. SACC building must be vacated by May 31, working through long-term lease plan with USDA and GSA. Working with GSA on short-term leasing plan. All vacant positions except for one filled at SACC. FAA has approved TFRs for RX, highlighting the need for an Airspace Coordinator.

EA – Jennifer Parrish, Steve Goldman



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Spent 2025 working to get EACC staff into appropriate work locations across the country, working together as a virtual team. Hired Roman Watson as Logistics Coordinator, Cheryl Bright back as Fire Analyst, Meteorologist remains vacant. 1 CIMT roster has been approved. 2025 ensured there were specific relationships with state aviation leadership for better mobilization. Spring fire season in MN was a challenge with purchase cards being shut off. ICBS system moving to new system caused issue. National surge task group was beneficial for the crews, engines and MODs being able to travel to other GAs on incident, concerns with some mobilization pieces. Radio issues and Lumen connectivity continue to be a critical pinch point for all partners. Working to create a prioritization process for T3 IMTs and ensure all teams have a quality roster. FDNY will work to produce a CIMT as needed, but requires a 15-person booster to create a fully functioning CIMT.

AK – Ray Crowe

AWFCG Spring Ops planned for March 16, master agreement extended through 2026. FDOP updated and completed.

CGAC Charter and Meeting Intent

Intent for Coordinating Group Chairs or representative (Fire Manager) from each GA be present for collaboration.

Center Managers are welcome to attend.

Desire for CIMTs to see equitable assignments while being efficient.

Communicate national incident response expectations, concerns, and upcoming changes.

ICAP Update

Working with FireNet personnel to build a better, easier process that doesn't require as much coding or specialized support.

Backend portions will be on SharePoint.

Allows an individual to apply to multiple teams or for multiple positions on a team in one applications.

An individual may have to fill out multiple applications if they are applying to teams in multiple GAs.

Not collecting much PII, but FireNet has security protections for everything collected.

The form is not role-based except for background admin access.

BUYT should be included.

BAER teams are not ready to be included until the base CIMT and BUYT are built out.

Potential for adding T3 IMT applications.

Intent is for all GAs to utilize the same product for IMT applications.

There is sortability on the back end to review all applications, similar to an excel.

Emails do not get sent to supervisors, this is on the honor system.

Consider adding a check box with yes/no options for supervisor approval.

Consider adding a block for supervisor name and email address.

Allow GACCs to pull systematic reports to send to supervisors and Coordinating Groups for review.

Form will show which GA the applicant resides within and which GA they are applying to.

Add unit identifier and dispatch center dropdowns.

There is no additional FireNet Helpdesk, it resides with Tara Taylor and her small team.



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The form is open for anyone to apply, a FireNet account is not required.

Clearly defined intent will include the requirement that all GAs utilize the form.

When a person is selected for an IMT in one GA, the system will eliminate them as an option for other CIMTs.

The application allows for better data collection and analysis.

Each GA has the ability to utilize the system at any point during the year, it will be a year-long running list.

CIMT Recruitment Variations

Consider how to make it easier for personnel to locate the team application portals for each GA.

Develop best practices for recruitment.

Recommend creating task group to refine and potentially standardize recruitment across GAs.

Potential for NICC Overhead to include a link for the application form.

NASA INSPYRE Project

Summer 2026 and 2027, personnel and assets will be out in the field monitoring incidents and fire activity.

Main goals are to characterize physical links between pyroCb development and extreme wildfire behavior, as well as to constrain the role of pyroCb activity in the Earth system.

Exploring the full spectrum of pyroconvection and their fire-scale impacts.

Primarily focused on the western US with the option to fly aircraft into Canada as well.

ER2 will fly above 8,000 feet measuring updrafts and cloud properties, Gulfstream will fly lower through the updraft and trucks will monitor ground level.

Truck-based instruments working to link plume dynamics to fire behavior, based out of Reno.

Tiered observational approach requires incident access for plume-base sampling.

Request to place an instrument near the active fire front when safe and approved and working with the IMets to launch weather balloons when feasible.

Operating almost exclusively outside of the designated TFRs.

Participating in safety trainings.

Huge focus of the project includes modeling and forecasting for predicting fire blow ups.

Facilitating a link to download some of the IR data for operational use.

Consider how the ICs and GAs can communicate and partner with the NASA project personnel for safe incident access.

Airspace Coordinators could provide additional support and a bridge between the incident and INSPYRE.

Recruiting a safety and incident coordinator to act as the primary POC for IMTs.

Have historically reached out to IMets for conversation facilitation with the ICs.

Neil will work with Shane to create links with POCs for the targeted GAs.

Recommend presenting to ICAC for awareness for all ICs.

PSOG Update

PS will be a national program under USWFS.

PS is currently understaffed, with the unification no one will be asked to move or lose their jobs.

The organization structure will report directly to the WO and have its own budget.

Some of PSOG's role may shift to the new program's executive board.



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The customers of the PS program will not change.

PS will be part of the Intelligence Branch and include JFSP and a heavy IT and research branch.

Opportunity for PS to have meaningful change and more robust support.

Gina Palma received the 2025 Chuck Maxwell Excellence in Predictive Services Award.

Desire for each GA to nominate a recipient.

PS groups presented staffing requests.

Finalizing MOU and working with NASF prior to Intelligence Branch being stood up.

Program will be stood up from the top down, starting at the national office then to the GAs.

Difficult to leverage technology and products at the local and regional levels when there is no staffing.

GAs concerned that PS staff will no longer support GA needs once stove piped.

GA leadership must recognize the need for strong relationships with local agencies and state partners.

Marco Perea is the new Chair.

Sean Peterson is the new vice Chair.

Working to clean up the membership and contact list.

PS should continue working on current products.

Any GACCs having issue filling any PS positions, send the openings to Brian Achziger.

CIM AAR Follow-up

Updated national rotation and roster size.

Committed to maintaining 7 days of unavailability, early upping can be requested by GACCs or NMAC.

CIM standardization was an identified need, focus in 2027.

Recognition of prior learning has not met its intent and could be updated.

NMAC will send a shortened letter to NWCG with support for current and ongoing RPL efforts.

Language surrounding the appropriate utilization of CIMTs on incidents has been added to the Red Book.

IBC is involved in the utilization of CIMTs regarding suppression funds and appropriation laws that will be reviewed for 2027 inclusion.

Suppression repair is more adjacent to fuels work and logging rather than suppression. Consider the outlined duties of BAER teams.

International IMT engagement considerations are being currently reviewed and ordering processes are clearly outlined in the NISRM.

Fatigue management task team will formulate a response to FEC and close out the tasking.

IWDG Update

Co-chairs have paused current work and meetings until the future of IWDG has been decided in the current environment.

Continued need to identify ways to improve and foster workforce development.

Consider whether the group should be focused on workforce development or have a wider scope.

A replacement CGAC representative to IWDG has not been identified post Chuck Russell.

CIMT Critical Position Gaps

CGAC can work with GAs to identify 3-5 key positions that have gaps.



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Potential to create a national priority trainee list for the identified key positions for better successional planning. IWDG looked at critical shortage positions not related to day jobs, based on top 10 UTFs.

COML, COMT, and AOBD, are continued shortages.

Align data with the number of positions and the root cause of the UTFs.

Consider how to incentivize personnel to join teams.

Intentionally put people into specific positions for successional planning, some positions are key to system success.

Focus on quality over quantity.

Identify what criteria should be considered for priority trainee list inclusion.

T3 IMT Configuration Standard

10 minimum personnel (2 discretionary), 25 additional discretionary positions.

Consider when it is appropriate to order a T3 IMT based on the capabilities.

Clearly define operating space prior to discussing the organization needed.

Gap between the CIMTs and T3 IMTs and the incident level of complexity they are able to manage successfully.

Review definition and characteristics of Type 3.

T3 IMTs are not nearly as regulated as CIMTs and easy to mobilize.

GAs should build standards for T3 IMTs.

Bin Items

Transfer Chair to: Chris Delaney

Selected Vice-Chair: Mike Spilde

