

# APPENDIX C

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

This glossary contains definitions of terms frequently used in ICS documentation which are for the most part not defined elsewhere in this guide.

**Abandon.** Drop everything (keep hoseline only if necessary for protection) and get out of the hazardous area or structure as fast and safely as possible. Teams should exit together and maintain team integrity.

**Accountability (of personnel).** The tracking of personnel on an emergency incident to ensure knowledge of their location, assignment and status. Various systems are used including passports, tactical worksheets, ICS 201 and “T-Cards”.

**Aerial Ignition Device (AID).** Inclusive term applied to equipment designed to ignite wildland fuels from an aircraft.

**Agency Dispatcher.** A person working within a agency organization who processes resources to and from incidents.

**Agency Executive or Administrator.** Chief executive officer (or designee) of the agency or jurisdiction that has responsibility for the incident.

**Agency Representative.** An individual assigned to an incident from an assisting or cooperating agency who has been delegated authority to make decisions on matters affecting that agency’s participation at the incident. Agency Representatives report to the incident Liaison Officer.

**Air Tanker.** Fixed-wing aircraft certified by FAA as being capable of transport and delivery of fire retardant solutions.

**Air Transportable Mobile Weather Unit (ATMWU).** A weather data collection and forecasting facility consisting of seven modules, weighing a total of 355 pounds and occupying 34.2 cubic feet of space when transported. Used by a National Weather Service Fire Weather Forecaster.

**Allocated Resources.** Resources dispatched to an incident that have not yet checked-in with the Incident Communications Center.

**Area Command.** An organization established to: (1) oversee the management of multiple incidents that are each being handled by an incident management team (IMT) organization; or (2) to oversee the management of a very large incident that has multiple IMTs assigned to it. Area Command has the responsibility to set overall strategy and priorities, allocate critical resources based on priorities, ensure that incidents are properly managed and that objectives are met and strategies followed.

**Assigned Resources.** Resources checked-in and assigned work tasks on an incident.

**Assistant.** Title for subordinates of the Command Staff positions. The title indicates a level of technical capability, qualifications and responsibility subordinate to the primary positions. Assistants may also be used to supervise unit activities at camps.

**Assisting Agency.** An agency directly contributing suppression, rescue, support or service resources to another agency.

**Attack Time.** The starting date, hour and minute of the first suppression work on a fire.

**Available Fuel.** (1) The portion of the total fuel that would actually burn under various environmental conditions. (2) Fuel available for use in a motor vehicle, aircraft or other motorized equipment.

**Available Resources.** Resources assigned to an incident and available for an assignment.

**Backfire.** A fire set along the inner edge of a fireline to consume the fuel in the path of a wildfire and/or change the direction of force of the fire's convection column.

**Barrier.** Any obstruction to the spread of fire. Typically an area or strip devoid of combustible fuel.

**Base.** That location at which the primary logistics functions are coordinated and administered. (Incident name or other designator will be added to the term "Base.") The Incident Command Post may be co-located with the base. There is only one base per incident.

**Berm.** A ridge of soil and debris along the outside edge of a fireline resulting from line construction.

**Blind Area.** An area in which neither the ground nor its vegetation can be seen from a given observation point.

**Blowup.** Sudden increase in fireline intensity or rate of spread of a fire sufficient to preclude direct control or to upset existing suppression plans. Often accompanied by violent convection and may have other characteristics of a firestorm.

**Branch.** The organizational level having functional or geographical responsibility for major parts of incident operations. The Branch level is organizationally between Section and Division/Group in the Operations Section and between Section and Units in the Logistics Section. Branches are identified by the use of Roman Numerals or by functional name (e.g., medical, security).

**Breakover.** A fire edge that crosses a control line or natural barrier intended to confine the fire.

**Broadcast Burning.** Intentional burning within well defined boundaries for reduction of fuel hazards as a resource management treatment or both.

**Buddy System.** The concept of personnel always working in teams of no fewer than two when assigned within a hazardous area.

**Buildup.** (1) The cumulative effects of long-term drying on current fire danger. (2) The increase in strength of a fire management organization. (3) The accelerated spreading of a fire with time. (4) Towering cumulus clouds which may lead to thunderstorms later in the day.

**Burning Conditions.** The state of the combined factors of the environment that affect fire behavior in a specified fuel type.

**Burn Out.** Setting fire inside a control line to consume fuel between the edge of the fire and the control line.

**Burning Index.** An estimate of the potential difficulty of fire containment as it relates to the flame length at the head of the fire. A relative number related to the contribution that fire behavior makes to the amount or effort needed to contain a fire in a specified fuel type. Doubling the burning index indicates that twice the effort will be required to contain a fire in that fuel type as was previously required, providing all other parameters are held constant.

**Burning Period.** The part of each 24-hour period when fires spread most rapidly; typically from 10:00 a.m. to sundown.

**Burning-Index Meter.** A device used to determine the burning index for different combinations of burning-index factors.

**Calculation Of Probabilities.** Evaluation of all factors pertinent to probable future behavior of a going fire and of the potential ability of available forces to perform fire suppression operations on a specified time schedule.

**Camp.** A geographical site, within the general incident area, separate from the base, equipped and staffed to provide food, water and sanitary services to incident personnel.

**Check-in.** The process whereby responders first report to an incident. Check-in locations include: incident command post (resource unit), incident base, camps, staging area, helibases, or helispots.

**Check Line.** A temporary fireline constructed at right angles to the control line and used to hold a backfire in check as a means of regulating the heat or intensity of the backfire.

**Clear Text.** The use of plain English in radio communication transmissions. No 10 Codes or agency specific codes are used when using Clear Text.

**Closed Area.** An area in which specified activities or entry are temporarily restricted to reduce risk of human-caused fires.

**Closure.** A legal restriction, but not necessarily elimination, of specified activities such as smoking, camping or entry that might cause fires in a given area.

**Cold Trailing.** A method of controlling a partly dead fire edge by carefully inspecting and feeling with the hand for heat to detect any fire, digging out every live spot and trenching any live edge.

**Command.** The act of directing, ordering and/or controlling resources by virtue of explicit legal, agency or delegated authority.

**Command Staff.** The Command Staff consists of the Information Officer, Safety Officer and Liaison Officer who report directly to the Incident Commander. They may have assistants.

**Compacts.** Formal working agreements among agencies to obtain mutual aid.

**Company.** Any piece of equipment having a full complement of personnel.

**Complex.** A complex is two or more individual incidents located in the same general proximity which are assigned to a single Incident Commander or Unified Command to facilitate management.

**Condition of Vegetation.** Stage of growth or degree of flammability of vegetation that forms part of a fuel complex. Herbaceous stage is at times used when referring to herbaceous vegetation alone. In grass areas minimum qualitative distinctions for stages of annual growth are usually green, curing and dry or cured.

**Confine A Fire.** The least aggressive wildfire suppression strategy, typically allowing the wildland fire to burn itself out within determined natural or existing boundaries such as rocky ridges, streams and possibly roads.

**Contain A Fire.** A moderately aggressive wildfire suppression strategy which can be expected to keep the fire within established boundaries of constructed firelines under prevailing conditions.

**Control Force.** Personnel and equipment used to control a fire.

**Control Line.** An inclusive term for all constructed or natural barriers and treated fire edges used to control a fire.

**Control Time.** The time a fire is declared controlled.

**Cooperating Agency.** An agency supplying assistance including but not limited to direct tactical or support functions or resources to the incident control effort or service functions to the incident control effort (e.g. Red Cross, law enforcement agency, telephone company).

**Coordination.** The process of systematically analyzing a situation, developing relevant information and informing appropriate *command* authority (for its decision) of viable alternatives for selection of the most effective combination of available resources to meet specific objectives. The coordination process (which can be either intra- or interagency) does not in and of itself involve command dispatch actions. However, personnel responsible for coordination *may* perform command or dispatch functions within limits as established by specific agency delegations, procedures, legal authority, etc.

**Coordination Center.** Term used to describe any facility that is used for the coordination of agency or jurisdictional resources in support of one or more incidents.

**Cost Sharing Agreements.** Agreements between agencies or jurisdictions to share designated costs related to incidents. Cost sharing agreements are normally written but may also be verbal between authorized agency and jurisdictional representatives at the incident.

**Coyote Tactics.** A progressive line construction duty involving self-sufficient crews which build fireline until the end of the operational period, remain at or near the point while off duty and begin building fireline again the next operational period where they left off.

**Creeping Fire.** Fire burning with a low flame and spreading slowly.

**Crown Fire.** A fire that advances from top to top of trees or shrubs more or less independent of a surface fire. Crown fires are sometimes classed as running or dependent to distinguish the degree of independence from the surface fire.

**Crown Out.** A fire that rises from ground into the tree crowns and advances from tree top to tree top. To intermittently ignite tree crowns as a surface fire advances.

**Deputy.** A fully qualified individual who, in the absence of a superior, could be delegated the authority to manage a functional operation or perform a specific task. In some cases a Deputy could act as relief for a superior and therefore must be fully qualified in the position. Deputies can be assigned to the Incident Commander, General Staff and Branch Directors.

**Detection.** The act or system of discovering and locating fires.

**Direct Attack.** Any treatment applied directly to burning fuel such as wetting, smothering or chemically quenching the fire or by physically separating the burning from unburned fuel.

**Discovery.** Determination that a fire exists. In contrast to detection, location and reporting of a fire is not required.

**Dispatcher.** A person who receives reports of discovery and status of fires, confirms their locations, takes action promptly to provide people and equipment likely to be needed for control efforts.

**Dispatch.** The implementation of a *command* decision to move a resource or resources from one place to another.

**Dispatch Center.** A facility from which resources are directly assigned to an incident.

**Division.** Divisions are used to divide an incident into geographical areas of operation. Divisions are established when the number of resources exceeds the span-of-control of the operations chief. A division is located within the ICS organization between the branch and the task force/strike team.

**Dozer.** Any tracked vehicle with a front mounted blade used for exposing mineral soil.

**Dozer Line.** Fireline constructed by the front blade of a dozer.

**Drought Index.** A number representing the net effect of evaporation, transpiration and precipitation in producing cumulative moisture depletion in deep duff or upper soil layers.

**Duff.** The layer of decomposing organic materials lying below the litter layer of freshly fallen twigs, needles and leaves and immediately above the mineral soil.

**Elapsed Time Standards.** Maximum amounts of time allowed by administrative rule for given steps of fire suppression.

**Emergency Medical Technician (EMT).** A health-care specialist with particular skills and knowledge in pre-hospital emergency medicine.

**Engine.** Any ground vehicle providing specified levels of pumping, water and hose capacity but with less than the specified level of personnel.

**“Emergency Traffic”.** A term used to clear designated channels used at an incident to make way for important radio traffic for a firefighter emergency situation or an immediate change in tactical operations.

**“Emergency Traffic” Radio Tone.** A distinctive tone used on designated channel(s) identified in a standard operating guideline.

**Escaped Fire.** Fire which has exceeded or is expected to exceed initial attack capabilities or prescription.

**Evacuate.** The removal of civilians from an area of danger or imminent danger.

**Extended Attack.** Situation in which a fire cannot be controlled by initial attack resources within a reasonable period of time. The fire usually can be controlled by additional resources within 24 hours after commencing suppression action.

**False Alarm.** A reported smoke or fire requiring no suppression; for example, brush burning under control, mill smoke, false smoke, etc.

**Fine Fuel Moisture.** The probable moisture content of fast-drying fuels which have a timelag constant of 1 hour or less; such as, grass, leaves, ferns, tree moss, pine needles and small twigs (0-1/4”).

**Fingers of a Fire.** The long narrow extensions of a fire projecting from the main body.

**Fire Analysis.** Review of fire management actions taken on a specific fire, group of fires or fire season in order to identify reasons for both effective and ineffective actions and to recommend or prescribe ways and means of doing a more efficient job. Also called hot line review.

**Fire Behavior.** The manner in which a fire reacts to the influences of fuel, weather and topography (or structural contents and features).

**Firebreak.** A natural or constructed barrier used to stop or check fires that may occur or to provide a control line from which to work.

**Fire Danger.** Sum of constant danger and variable danger factors affecting the inception, spread and resistance to control and subsequent fire damage; often expressed as an index.

**Fire Danger Rating.** A fire management system that integrates the effects of selected fire danger factors into one or more qualitative or numerical indices of current protection needs.

**Fire Edge.** The boundary of a fire at a given moment.

**Fire Effects.** The physical, biological and ecological impacts of fire on the environment.

**Fireline.** The part of a control line that is scraped or dug to mineral soil. Also called fire trail.

**Fire Management.** Activities required for the protection of burnable wildland values from fire and the use of prescribed fire to meet land management objectives.

**Fire Plow.** A heavy duty plowshare or disc plow usually pulled by a tractor to construct a fireline.

**Fire-Progress Map.** A map maintained on a large fire to show at given times the location of the fire, deployment of suppression forces and progress of suppression.

**Fire Retardant.** Any substance except plain water that by chemical or physical action reduces flammability of fuels or slows their rate of combustion.

**Fire Shelter.** An aluminized tent offering protection by means of reflecting radiant heat and providing a volume of breathable air in a fire entrapment situation. Fire shelters should only be used in life threatening situations as a last resort.

**Fire Tool Cache.** A supply of fire tools and equipment assembled in planned quantities or standard units at a strategic point for exclusive use in wildland operations.

**Fire Weather Forecast.** A weather prediction specially prepared for use in wildland fire operations and prescribed fire.

**Fire Weather Station.** A meteorological station specially equipped to measure weather elements that have an important effect on fire behavior.

**Flammability.** The relative ease with which fuels ignite and burn regardless of the quantity of the fuels. Preferred to “inflammability.”

**Flanking Fire Suppression.** Attacking a fire by working along the flanks either simultaneously or successively from a less active or anchor point and endeavoring to connect two lines at the head.

**Flanks of a Fire.** The parts of a fire’s perimeter that are roughly parallel to the main direction of spread.

**Flare-Up.** Any sudden acceleration in rate of spread or intensification of the fire. Unlike blowup a flare-up is of relatively short duration and does not radically change existing control plans.

**Flashfuels or Flashy Fuels.** Fuels such as grass, leaves, draped pine needles, fern, tree moss and some kinds of slash which ignite readily and are consumed rapidly when dry.

**Flashover.** (1) Rapid combustion and/or explosion of unburned gases trapped at some distance from the main fire front. Usually occurs only in poorly ventilated topography. (2) Stage of a fire at which all surfaces and objects within a space have been heated to their ignition temperature and flame breaks out almost at once over the surface of all objects within the space.

**Foam.** The aerated solution created by forcing air into or entraining air in water containing a foam concentrate by means of suitably designed equipment or by cascading it through the air at a high velocity. Foam reduces combustion by cooling, moistening and excluding oxygen.

**Follow-up.** The act of the first people who go to a fire by sending additional people or equipment to facilitate suppression. Also called reinforcement.

**Free Burning.** The condition of a fire or part of a fire that has not been slowed by natural barriers or by control measures.

**Friction Loss.** Pressure loss caused by the turbulent movement of water or solution against the interior surface of fire hose, pipe or fittings; normally measured in pressure loss per length of hose or pipe.

**Fuel Break.** A natural or manmade change in fuel characteristics which affects fire behavior so that fires burning into them can be more readily controlled.

**Fuel Moisture Content.** The quantity of moisture in fuel expressed as a percentage of the weight when thoroughly dried at 212 degrees F.

**Fuel Moisture Indicator Stick.** A specially prepared stick or set of sticks of known dry weight continuously exposed to the weather and periodically weighed to determine changes in moisture content as an indication of moisture changes in wildland fuels.

**Fuel Tender.** Any vehicle capable of supplying engine fuel to ground or airborne equipment.

**Fuel Type.** An identifiable association of fuel elements of distinctive species, form, size, arrangement or other characteristics that will cause a predictable rate of spread or resistance to control under specified weather conditions.

**Fuel Type Classification.** Division of wildland areas into fire hazard classes.

**Fuelbreak System.** A series of modified strips or blocks tied together to form continuous strategically located fuel breaks around land units.



**General Staff.** The group of incident management personnel reporting to the Incident Commander. They may each have a deputy as needed. The General Staff consists of:

- Incident Commander
- Operations Section Chief
- Planning Section Chief
- Logistics Section Chief
- Finance/Administration Section Chief

**Going Fire.** Any wildfire on which suppression action has not reached an extensive mop-up stage.

**Ground Fire.** Fire that consumes the organic material beneath the surface litter ground, such as peat fire.

**Group.** Groups are established to divide the incident into functional areas of operation. Groups are composed of resources assembled to perform a special function not necessarily within a single geographic division (See Division). Groups are located between Branches (when activated) and Resources in the Operations Section.

**Hand Crew.** A number of individuals that have been organized and trained and are supervised principally for operational assignments on an incident.

**Hazard.** A fuel complex defined by kind, arrangement, volume, condition and location that forms a special threat of ignition and resistance to control.

**Hazard Reduction.** Any treatment of living and dead fuels that reduces the threat of ignition and spread of fire.

**Head.** Pressure due to elevation of water. Equals 0.433 pounds per square inch (PSI) per foot of elevation. Back pressure. (Approximately 0.5 PSI is required to lift water 1 foot in elevation.)

**Head Fire.** A fire spreading or set to spread with the wind.

**Head of a Fire.** The most rapidly spreading portion of a fire's perimeter, usually to the leeward or up slope.

**Heavy Equipment Transport.** Any ground vehicle capable of transporting a dozer, tractor or other heavy piece of equipment. Also called lowboy.

**Heavy Fuels.** Fuels of large diameter such as snags, logs or large limbwood which ignite and are consumed more slowly than flash fuels. Also called coarse fuels.

**Held Line.** All control line that still contains the fire when mop-up is completed. Excludes lost line, natural barriers not backfired and unused secondary lines.

**Helibase.** The main location within the general incident area for parking, fueling, maintenance and loading of helicopters. It is usually located at or near the incident base.

**Helibase Crew.** A crew of individuals who may be assigned to support helicopter operations.

**Helicopter Tender.** A ground service vehicle capable of supplying fuel and support equipment to helicopters.

**Helispot.** A natural or improved location intended for temporary use where a helicopter can take off and land. Some helispots may be used for temporary retardant loading.

**Helitack.** The utilization of helicopters to transport crews, equipment and fire retardants or suppressants to the fireline during the initial stages of a fire. The term also refers to the crew that performs helicopter management and attack activities.

**Helitack Foreman.** A supervisory firefighter trained in the tactical use of helicopters for fire suppression.

**Helitanker.** A helicopter equipped with a fixed tank or a suspended bucket-type container, Air Tanker Board Certified, capable of aerial delivery of a minimum of 1,100 gallons of water, retardant or foam.

**Holdover Fire.** A fire that remains dormant for a considerable time. Also called sleeper fire.

**Hose Lay.** Arrangement of connected lengths of fire hose and accessories on the ground, beginning at the first pumping unit and ending at the point of water delivery.

**Hot Spot.** A particularly active part of a fire.

**Hot-Spotting.** Checking the spread of fire at points of more rapid spread or special threat. Is usually the initial step in prompt control, with emphasis on first priorities.

**Hotshot Crew.** Intensively trained fire crew used primarily in hand line construction (Type 1).

**Incendiary Fire.** A wildfire willfully ignited by anyone to burn, or spread to, vegetation or property without consent of the owner or his/her agent.

**Incident.** An occurrence, either human-caused or natural phenomena, that requires action or support by emergency service personnel to prevent or minimize loss of life or damage to property and/or natural resources.

**Incident Action Plan (IAP).** Contains objectives reflecting the overall incident strategy and specific tactical actions and supporting information for the next operational period. The plan may be oral or written. When written, the Plan may have a number of attachments including: incident objectives, organization assignment list, division assignment, incident radio communication plan, medical plan, traffic plan, safety plan and incident map. Formerly called shift plan.

**Incident Base.** Location at the incident where the primary logistics functions are coordinated and administered. (Incident name or other designator will be added to the term "Base.") The Incident Command Post may be co-located with the Base. There is only one Base per incident.

**Incident Command Post (ICP).** That location at which the primary command functions are executed and usually co-located with the incident base or other incident facilities.

**Incident Command System (ICS).** The combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures and communications operating within a common organizational structure with responsibility for the management of assigned resources to effectively accomplish stated objectives pertaining to an incident. It is specifically designed to allow its user(s) to adopt an integrated organizational structure equal to the complexity and demands of single or multiple incidents without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries.

**Incident Objectives.** Statements of guidance and direction necessary for the selection of appropriate strategy(s) and the tactical direction of resources. Incident objectives are based on realistic expectations of what can be accomplished when all allocated resources have been effectively deployed. Incident objectives must be achievable and measurable yet flexible enough to allow for strategic and tactical alternatives.

**Indirect Attack.** A method of suppression in which the control line is located some considerable distance away from the fire's active edge. Generally done in the case of a fast-spreading or high-intensity fire and to utilize natural or constructed firebreaks or fuelbreaks and favorable breaks in the topography. The intervening fuel is usually backfired but occasionally the main fire is allowed to burn to the line, depending on conditions.

**Infrared (IR).** A heat detection system used for fire detection, mapping and hot spot identification.

**Infrared (IR) Groundlink.** A capability through the use of a special mobile ground station to receive air to ground infrared imagery for interpretation.

**Initial Attack.** The actions taken by the first resources to arrive at a wildfire or other incident to protect lives and property and prevent further extension of the Incident.

**Intelligence Officer.** Responsible for managing internal information, intelligence and operational security requirements supporting incident management activities. These may include information security and operational security activities as well as the complex task of ensuring that sensitive information of all types (e.g., classified information, law enforcement sensitive information, proprietary information or export-controlled information) is handled in a way that not only safeguards the information, but also ensures that it gets to those who need access to it to perform their missions effectively and safely.

**Jump Spot.** Selected landing area for smokejumpers.

**Jurisdictional Agency.** The agency having land and resource management responsibility for a specific geographical or functional area as provided by federal, state or local law.

**Knock Down.** To reduce the flame or heat on the more vigorously burning parts of a fire edge.

**Lead Plane.** Aircraft with pilot used to make trial runs over the target area to check wind, smoke conditions, topography and to lead air tankers to targets and supervise their drops.

**Leapfrog Method.** A system of organizing workers in fire suppression in which each crew member is assigned a specific task such as clearing or digging fireline on a specific section of control line and when that task is completed passes other workers in moving to a new assignment.

**Litter.** The top layer of forest floor composed of loose debris of dead sticks, branches, twigs and recently fallen leaves or needles; little altered in structure by decomposition.

**Lookout.** (1) A person designated to detect and report fires from a vantage point. (2) A location from which fires can be detected and reported. (3) A fire crew member assigned to observe the fire and warn the crew when there is danger of becoming trapped.

**LCES Checklist.** In the wildland fire environment, Lookouts, Communications, Escape Routes, Safety Zones (LCES) is key to safe procedures for firefighters. The elements of LCES form a safety system used by firefighters to protect themselves. This system is put in place before fighting the fire: select a lookout or lookouts, set up a communication system, choose escape routes and select a safety zone or zones.

**Mayday.** (1) An international distress signal for aeronautical and nautical emergencies. (2) An announcement that an emergency now exists followed by a description of the situation, location and needs.

**Message Center.** The Message Center is part of the Communications Center and is collocated or placed adjacent to it. It receives, records and routes information about resources reporting to the incident, resource status and administration and tactical traffic.

**Mobilization Center.** An off incident location at which emergency service personnel and equipment are temporarily located pending assignment, release or reassignment.

**Modular Airborne Firefighting System (MAFFS).** A manufactured unit consisting of five interconnecting tanks, a control pallet and a nozzle pallet with a capacity of 3,000 gallons designed to be rapidly mounted inside an unmodified C-130 (Hercules) cargo aircraft for use in cascading retardant chemicals on wildfires.

**Mop-Up.** Extinguishing or removing burning material near control lines, felling snags and trenching logs to prevent rolling after an area has burned to make a fire safe or to reduce residual smoke.

**Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC).** A generalized term which describes the functions and activities of representatives of involved agencies and/or jurisdictions who come together to make decisions regarding the prioritizing of incidents and the sharing and use of critical resources. The MAC organization is not a part of the on-scene ICS and is not involved in developing incident strategy or tactics.

**National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG).** A group formed under the direction of the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture to improve the coordination and effectiveness of wildland fire activities and provide a forum to discuss, recommend appropriate action or resolve issues and problems of substantive nature.

**Net Value Change (NVC).** The sum of the changes in the value of natural resources affected by a fire. The basis for computing NVC is each resource's fire-induced value change (pluses and minuses) as computed and expressed on a per unit basis.

**NOAA Weather Station.** A mobile weather data collection and forecasting facility (including personnel) provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration which can be utilized within the incident area.

**Normal Fire Season.** (1) A season when weather, fire danger and number and distribution of fires are about average. (2) Period of the year that normally comprises the fire season.

**Operational Period.** The period of time scheduled for execution of a given set of operation actions as specified in the Incident Action Plan. Operational Periods can be of various lengths although usually not over 24 hours.

**Operations Coordination Center (OCC).** The primary facility of the Multi-Agency Coordination System. It houses the staff and equipment necessary to perform the MACS functions.

**Orthophoto Maps.** Aerial photographs corrected to scale so that geographic measurements may be taken directly from the prints. They may contain graphically emphasized geographic features and may be provided with overlays of such features as: water systems, important facility locations, etc.

**Out-of-Service Resources.** Resources assigned to an incident but unable to respond for mechanical, rest or personnel reasons.

**Overhead Personnel.** Personnel who are assigned to supervisory positions which include Incident Commander, Command Staff, General Staff, Directors, Supervisors and Unit Leaders.

**Paracargo.** Anything intentionally dropped, or intended for dropping, from any aircraft by parachute, by retarding devices or by free fall.

**Patrol.** (1) To travel over a given route to prevent, detect and suppress fires. (2) To go back and forth vigilantly over a length of control line during and/or after construction to prevent breakovers, suppress spot fires and extinguish overlooked hot spots. (3) A person or group of persons who carry out patrol actions.

**Patrol Unit.** Any light, mobile unit with limited pumping and water capacity.

**Personnel Accountability.** The ability to account for the whereabouts and welfare of personnel. It is accomplished when supervisors ensure that ICS principles and processes are functional and personnel are working within these guidelines.

**Personnel Accountability Report (PAR).** A report up the chain of command to confirm personnel accountability and location of all members of a work group.

**Planning Meeting.** A meeting held as needed throughout the duration of an incident to select specific strategies and tactics for incident control operations and for service and support planning. On larger incidents the planning meeting is a major element in the development of the Incident Action Plan.

**Plow Line.** Fireline constructed by a fire plow usually drawn by a tractor or other motorized equipment.

**Prescribed Burning.** Controlled application of fire to wildland fuels in either their natural or modified state under specified environmental conditions which allows the fire to be confined to a predetermined area and produce the fire behavior and fire characteristics required to attain planned fire treatment and resource management objectives.

**Presuppression.** Activities in advance of fire occurrence to ensure effective suppression action. Includes planning the organization, recruiting and training, procuring equipment and supplies, maintaining fire equipment and fire control improvements and negotiating cooperative and/or mutual aid agreements.

**Progressive Hose Lay.** A hose lay in which double shutoff wye (Y) valves or “Tee inline valves (water thief)” are inserted in the main line at intervals and lateral lines are run from the wye (tees) to the fire edge, thus permitting continuous application of water during extension of the lay.

**Progressive Method of Line Construction.** A system of organizing workers to build fireline in which they advance without changing relative positions in line.

**Protection Boundary.** The exterior perimeter of an area within which a specified fire agency has assumed a degree of responsibility for wildland fire control. It may include land in addition to that for which the agency has jurisdiction or contractual responsibility.

**Radio Cache.** A cache may consist of a number of portable radios, a base station and in some cases a repeater stored in a predetermined location for dispatch to incidents.

**Rapid Intervention Team (RIT).** A crew or company designated to standby in a state of readiness to perform a rescue effort of firefighters.

**Rate of Spread.** The relative activity of a fire in extending its horizontal dimensions. It is expressed as rate of increase of the total perimeter of the fire, as rate of forward spread of the fire front or as rate of increase in area depending on the intended use of the information. Usually it is expressed in chains or acres per hour for a specific period in the fire's history.

**Reburn.** (1) Repeat burning of an area over which a fire has previously passed but left fuel that later ignites when burning conditions are more favorable; (2) An area that has reburned.

**Recorder.** Person assigned to record information. May be utilized by any ICS position having need.

**Reinforced Response.** Those resources requested in addition to the initial response.

**Relative Humidity (RH).** The ratio of the amount of moisture in the air to the maximum amount of moisture that air would contain if it were saturated. The ratio of the actual vapor pressure to the saturated vapor pressure.

**Reporting Locations.** Any one of six facilities/locations where incident assigned resources may check-in. The locations are: Incident Command Post - Resources Unit, Base, Camp, Staging Area, Helibase or Division/Group Supervisor for direct line assignments. (Check-in at one location only.)

**Rescue Medical.** Any staffed ground vehicle capable of providing medical services.

**Resistance to Control.** The relative difficulty of constructing and holding a control line as affected by resistance to line construction and by fire behavior. Also called difficulty of control.

**Resistance to Line Construction.** The relative difficulty of constructing control line as determined by the fuel, topography and soil.

**Resources.** (1) Personnel, equipment, services and supplies available, or potentially available, for assignment to incidents. Personnel and equipment are described by kind and type, e.g., ground, water, air and may be used in tactical, support or overhead capacities at an incident. (2) The natural resources of an area such as timber, grass, watershed values, recreation values and wildlife habitat.

**Responder Rehabilitation.** Also known as “rehab”; resting and treatment of incident personnel who are suffering from the effects of strenuous work and/or extreme conditions.

**Risk.** (1) The chance of fire starting as determined by the presence and activity of causative agents. (2) A causative agent. (3) A number related to the potential number of firebrands to which a given area will be exposed during the rating day.

**Rough.** The accumulation of living and dead ground and understory vegetation, especially grasses, forest litter and draped dead needles sometimes with addition of underbrush such as palmetto, gallberry and wax myrtle. Most often used for southern pine types.

**Running Fire.** Behavior of a fire spreading rapidly with a well-defined head.

**Safety Zone.** An area cleared of flammable materials used for escape in the event the line is outflanked or in case a spot fire causes fuels outside the control line to render the line unsafe. In firing operations, crews progress so as to maintain a safety zone close at hand allowing the fuels inside the control line to be consumed before going ahead. Safety zones may also be constructed as integral parts of fuel breaks; they are greatly enlarged areas which can be used with relative safety by firefighters and their equipment in the event of blowup in the vicinity.

**Scorch Height.** Average heights of foliage browning or bole blackening caused by a fire.

**Scratch Line.** An unfinished preliminary control line hastily established or constructed as an emergency measure to check the spread of fire.

**Secondary Line.** Any fireline constructed at a distance from the fire perimeter concurrently with or after a line already constructed on or near to the perimeter of the fire. Generally constructed as an insurance measure in case the fire escapes control by the primary line.

**Section.** That organization level having functional responsibility for primary segments of incident operations such as: Operations, Planning, Logistics and Finance/Administration. The Section level is organizationally between Branch and Incident Commander.

**Segment.** A geographical area in which a task force/strike team leader or supervisor of a single resource is assigned authority and responsibility for the coordination of resources and implementation of planned tactics. A segment may be a portion of a division or an area inside or outside the perimeter of an incident. Segments are identified with Arabic numbers, i.e., A-1 and are not to be used as radio designators.

**Simple Hose Lay.** A hoselay consisting of consecutively coupled lengths of hose without laterals. The lay is extended by inserting additional lengths of hose in the line between pumps and nozzle. Also called single hose lay.

**Single Resource.** An individual, a piece of equipment and its personnel complement or a crew or team of individuals with an identified work supervisor that can be used on an incident.

**Slash.** Debris resulting from such natural events as wind, fire or snow breakage; or such human activities as road construction, logging, pruning, thinning or brush cutting. It includes logs, chunks, bark, branches, stumps and broken understory trees or brush.

**Slash Disposal.** Treatment of slash to reduce fire hazard or for other purposes. (Preferred to Brush Disposal.)

**Smokejumper.** A specifically trained and certified firefighter who travels to wildland fires by aircraft and parachutes to the fire.

**Smoldering.** A fire burning without flame and barely spreading.

**Snag.** A standing dead tree or part of a dead tree from which at least the leaves and smaller branches have fallen. Often called a stub if less than 20 feet tall.

**Span of Control.** The supervisory ratio of from three-to-seven individuals with five-to-one being established as optimum.

**Speed of Attack.** Elapsed time from origin of fire to arrival of the first suppression force.

**Spot Burning.** A modified form of broadcast slash burning in which the greater accumulations of slash are fired and the fire is confined to these spots. Sometimes called "Jackpot Burning" or "Jackpotting."

**Spot Fires.** Fire ignited outside the perimeter of the main fire by a firebrand.

**Spotting.** Behavior of a fire producing sparks or embers that are carried by the wind and which start new fires beyond the zone of direct ignition by the main fire.



**Spread Component.** Part of the National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS). A rating of the forward rate of spread of a head fire.

**Staging Area.** Locations set up at an incident where resources can be placed while awaiting a tactical assignment on a three (3) minute available basis. Staging Areas are managed by the Operations Section.

**Standby Members.** Two members/personnel who remain outside the hazard area during the “initial stages” of an incident. The standby members shall be responsible for maintaining a constant awareness of the number and identity of members operating in the hazardous area, their location and function and time of entry. The standby members shall remain in radio, visual, voice or signal line communications with the team (NFPA 1500 6-4.4).

**Strategy.** The general plan or direction selected to accomplish incident objectives.

**Strike Team.** Specified combinations of the same kind and type of resources, with common communications and a leader.

**Strip Burning.** (1) Burning by means of strip firing. (2) In hazard reduction, burning narrow strips of fuel and leaving the rest of the area untreated by fire.

**Strip Firing.** Setting fire to more than one strip of fuel and providing for the strips to burn together. Frequently done in burning out against a wind where inner strips are fired first to create drafts which pull flames and sparks away from the control line.

**Suppressant.** An agent that extinguishes the flaming and glowing phases of combustion by direct application to the burning fuel.

**Suppression.** All the work of extinguishing or confining a fire beginning with its discovery.

**Suppression Crew.** Two or more firefighters stationed at a strategic location for initial action on fires. Duties are essentially the same as those of individual firefighters.

**Surface Fire.** Fire that burns loose debris on the surface which include dead branches, leaves and low vegetation.

**Tactics.** Deploying and directing resources on an incident to accomplish the objectives designated by strategy.

**Task Force.** A group of resources with common communications and a leader that may be pre-established and sent to an incident or formed at an incident.

**Technical Specialists.** Personnel with special skills who are activated only when needed. Technical Specialists may be needed in the areas of fire behavior, water resources, environmental concerns, resource use and training areas.

**Test Fire.** A prescribed fire set to evaluate such things as fire behavior, detection performance and control measures.

**Tractor Plow.** Any tractor with a plow for constructing fireline by exposing mineral soil. Also as a resource for typing purposes a tractor plow includes the transportation and personnel for its operation.

**Trench.** A small ditch often constructed below a fire on sloping ground (undercut or underslung line) to catch rolling material.

**Type.** Refers to resource capability. A Type 1 resource provides a greater overall capability due to power, size, capacity, etc., than would be found in a Type 2 resource. Resource typing provides managers with additional information in selecting the best resource for the task.

**Undercut Line.** A fireline below a fire on a slope. Should be trenched to catch rolling material. Also called underslung line.

**Unified Command.** In ICS, Unified Command is a unified team effort which allows all agencies with responsibility for the incident, either geographical or functional, to manage an incident by establishing a common set of incident objectives and strategies. This is accomplished without losing or abdicating agency authority, responsibility or accountability.

**Unit.** That organization element having functional responsibility for a specific incident planning, logistic or finance activity.

**Watershed Rehabilitation.** Also known as “rehab”; restoration of watershed to as near as possible its pre-incident condition or to a condition where it can recover on its own.

**Water Tender.** Any ground vehicle capable of transporting specified quantities of water.

**Wet Water.** Water with added chemicals called wetting agents that increase water's spreading and penetrating properties due to a reduction in surface tension.

**Wetting Agent.** A chemical that when added to water reduces the surface tension of the solution and causes it to spread and penetrate exposed objects more effectively than the untreated water.

**Wildfire.** A fire occurring on wildland that is not meeting management objectives and thus requires a suppression response.

**Wildland.** An area in which development is essentially nonexistent except for roads, railroads, power lines and similar transportation facilities. Structures, if any, are widely scattered.

**Withdraw.** The orderly retreat from a hazardous area or structure with all hose, tools and equipment.