

A publication of the
National Wildfire
Coordinating Group



NWCG Position-Specific Standards for Operations Section Chiefs

PMS 350-08

AUGUST 2022

NWCG Position-Specific Standards for Operations Section Chiefs

August 2022
PMS 350-08

The *NWCG Position-Specific Standards for Operations Section Chiefs* establish national interagency standards for operations on wildland fires. The standards are meant to ensure safe, efficient, and effective operations in support of agency goals and objectives and should serve as a guide to promote effective and consistent on-incident training. NWCG standards encompass guidelines, procedures, processes, best practices, specifications, techniques, and methods.

The Operations Section Chief Complex (OSCC) Position Page, <https://www.nwcg.gov/positions/oscc>, in the NWCG Position Catalog includes the Incident Position Description (IPD) and Position Qualifications, as well as links to standards and references needed to perform the duties of Operations Section Chief (OSC).

The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) provides national leadership to enable interoperable wildland fire operations among federal, state, tribal, territorial, and local partners. NWCG operations standards are interagency by design; they are developed with the intent of universal adoption by the member agencies. However, the decision to adopt and utilize them is made independently by the individual member agencies and communicated through their respective directives systems.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1 – Pre-Season.	1
Training.....	1
Equipment.....	1
Communication.....	1
Leadership duties.	2
Chapter 2 – Mobilization/Demobilization.	2
Mobilization.....	2
Ensure individual readiness.....	2
Gather critical information pertinent to the assignment.....	2
Confirm mobilization status of the Operations Section.....	2
Facilitate and coordinate the ordering of operational resources.	3
Assemble appropriate operational team members and receive a team in-brief of the current incident status.....	3
Demobilization.....	4
Contribute to and execute the implementation of the Incident Demobilization Plan. Coordinate with Demobilization Unit/Planning Section Chief (IPS).	4
Plan for demobilization. Brief the assigned resources on demobilization procedures and responsibilities. Ensure incident and agency demobilization procedures are followed.....	5
Assemble and submit relevant operations documents for the final incident package.	5
Prepare the operations portion of the transition plan.	6
Participate in agency administrator closeout/After Action Review (AAR).....	6
Complete the Operations Section AAR prior to closeout. Follow-up on AAR identified action items and make changes as necessary.....	6
Coordinate an efficient transfer of position duties.....	6
Be present when providing information to incoming IMT or agency. Allow incoming team ability to formalize a plan while continuing to run the operation until time of transition.	6
Chapter 3 – Communication.	7
Follow established processes and chain of command for collecting, producing, and distributing information.....	7
Ensure a clear understanding of expectations and timely communication within and across Incident Command System (ICS) functional areas and chain of command.	7
Chapter 4 – Operations.	7
Establish a common operating picture with C&G, IC, and assigned personnel.	7
Model leadership values and principles. Provide a positive influence. Emphasize teamwork.....	8
Develop and maintain good relationships with all other functions in the incident organization and provide a positive influence that fosters teamwork.....	8
Be prepared to take on a deputy role when assigned to an incident. (Such as, Line, Planning, Strategic, or Night Operations, etc.).....	8
Ensure interoperability with Deputy Operation Section Chiefs when identified as the lead.....	8
Ensure incident objectives and leader's performance standards are met.....	9
Supervise branch/division/group supervisors, the air operations organization, staging areas, and trainees.	9
Evaluate large scale burnouts or backfire operations in collaboration with appropriate personnel.....	9

Evaluate the progress of operations based on situation reports and evaluations from operations personnel.	10
Update priorities and make timely changes to current operations based on changing complexity or magnitude of the incident. Report those changes to the IC and all appropriate team functions.....	10
Coordinate current operations and adjust through effective communication with appropriate supervisors to prepare tactics for the next operational period planning meeting.....	10
With appropriate personnel (liaison, safety, IC, etc.), coordinate WUI operations with local law enforcement, local fire departments, and other agencies authorized to implement public evacuation, perform structure protection, and control traffic, and road closures.....	11
Validate assigned personnel receive communication of Fire Weather Watches/Warnings, Spot Weather Forecasts, and Fire Weather Forecasts.	11
Work with responsible land Agency Administrator and/or assigned Resource Advisor (READ) to protect natural, cultural, social, and other resources. Notify IC when such resources are discovered and document suppression impacts.....	11
Evaluate resource status and tactical needs to determine if resource assignments are appropriate.	12
Complete the identified Operations sections of the Incident Status Summary (ICS 209).	12
Participate in the preparation of the IAP or other relevant plans.	12
Complete operational portion of IAP as part of Operational Planning Worksheet (ICS 215).....	13
Identify the kind, type, and the number of resources required to achieve incident objectives.	13
Validate assigned contracted resources meet contract specifications, safely implement work assignments, and address situations as they may arise.	14
Coordinate with line supervisors and provide the appropriate sections a list of needed or excess personnel and other resources.	14
Obtain regular updates from appropriate personnel.....	14
Report special occurrences (e.g., structure/improved property loss or damage, accidents, IWI, political contacts) to supervisor.	14
Coordinate with the Finance/Administration Section to identify and request land use agreements, as necessary.	14
Coordinate with Situation Unit to approve or provide updates to incident objective accomplishments.	14
Supervise the Air Operations Branch. Have working knowledge of air operations.	15
Work with air operations staff to define air priorities and strategies. Coordinate and prioritize activities with aviation operations.....	15
IAP and map distribution:	15
Chapter 5 – Strategic Operations (Including Strategic Risk Assessment, Planning, and Implementation).....	15
Background.	15
Determine incident status.....	16
Identify, collect, analyze, and use relevant situational information to formulate informed decisions and take appropriate actions.....	16
Ensure awareness of pertinent parts of Delegation of Authority, Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS), or incident decision documents.	17
Draft end state.	17
Develop Strategies to evaluate critical tasks, values at risk, and to set priorities.....	18
Use short-term and long-term fire behavior prediction/analysis products to plan and develop the strategy.	20
Analyze strategic risk.....	20
Strategic assessment:.....	20

Seek buy in.....	21
Strategies:.....	21
Communicate and implement strategy.....	22
Establish and communicate objectives, priorities, work assignments, and performance expectations.	22
Monitor implementation of the strategy.....	22
Monitor and adjust strategy and tactics when air quality impacts personnel and the public. Consider the potential for smoke impacts to roads, communities, and incident facilities. Use air resource advisor products to inform actions.....	22
Adjust actions based on changing information and evolving situation awareness. Develop and implement contingency plans. Communicate changing conditions to assigned resources.....	22
Continually evaluate the current and anticipated situation to determine if the present plan of action will meet incident objectives and adjust as needed (48 hrs., 72 hrs., etc.). Advise IC and other appropriate IMT/section personnel.	23
Evaluate the effectiveness of IAP or relevant plan and adjust, as necessary.....	23
Chapter 6 – Organizational Management.....	24
Establish organization structure, reporting procedures, and chain of command of assigned resources.	24
Following ICS principles, a primary OSC will be identified and any other OSCs will be deputies. Deputies could be Line, Planning, Strategic, Night, or other.	24
Identify and establish branches, divisions/groups, and/or staging areas as appropriate.....	24
Monitor performance and provide immediate and regular feedback to assigned personnel.....	25
Interact, coordinate, and establish cohesiveness with all C&G personnel.....	25
Share pertinent operations information that may affect the team’s management of the incident.....	25
Set priorities and communicate to assigned resources.....	25
Establish and manage an appropriate span of control based on number of available personnel and complexity of the situation.....	25
Evaluate and reallocate resources during operational period as priorities change.....	25
Be prepared to work with and order Heavy Equipment Technical Specialists (THSP) as necessary.	25
Inform IC regularly or as needed: Status updates, evolving conditions, or hazards that may require action, emerging and anticipated problems or unresolved issues, and accomplishments.....	25
Chapter 7 – Risk Management – Safety.....	26
Ensure the Risk Management Process is established and maintained throughout the Operations Section.....	26
Chapter 8 – Documentation.....	27
Complete, authorize and ensure timeliness of incident documents specific to the Operations Section, and route as required.....	27

Chapter 1 – Pre-Season.

To effectively prepare for the fire season, complete the following pre-season standards:

Training.

Schedule and participate in pre-season proficiency training to prepare for rare events and Incident within an Incident (IWI) events.

Review the NWCG Leadership Committee’s Wildland Fire Leadership Level 4 – Leader of Leaders, for useful information regarding the behaviors and knowledge expected of this position. Additionally, you will find actionable items in the form of development goals that will help you succeed in this position.

Individual-led continuing education:

A successful OSC requires maintaining proficiency with foundational firefighting tasks and continued improvement in the following skills:

- Analytical skills: The ability to evaluate information effectively and solve problems.
- Coordination skills: The ability to organize one's own work, coordinate that work with others and attend to several activities simultaneously, prioritizing, and switching priorities, as necessary.
- Communication skills: The ability to express ideas and recommendations clearly as well as listen and correctly understand messages that other people are communicating. Being able to establish and maintain positive working relationships.
- Critical thinking skills: The ability to gather, assess, and interpret relevant information; frame and effectively communicate issues and problems; and be open to creative and alternative solutions to complex problems.
- Strategic thinking skills: The ability to look at the incident from a broader, longer-term perspective to problem solve and assist with decision making. Strategic thinking is very different from tactical thinking. Strategic thinking focuses on what should we be doing and why, whereas tactical thinking focuses on the hands-on part of the OSC’s responsibilities.

Equipment.

- Prepare OSC kit and ensure personnel have the appropriate equipment to perform their duties promptly and efficiently.
- Review team pre-order with Logistics to ensure the appropriate number of resources and equipment.

Communication.

- Update and incorporate team protocols into Incident Management Team (IMT) standard operating procedures (SOPs) to communicate expectations for Operations Section personnel responsibilities and processes.
- Maintain communication with Command and General Staff (C&G) and Operations Section to communicate information and prepare for assignments.

Leadership duties.

- Manage status and develop Operations Section staffing to assemble appropriate personnel for availability periods.
- Participate/contribute and lead operations team building efforts during spring team meeting.
- Provide mentorship and leadership to rostered operations personnel. Recruiting and retaining operations personnel is a continuous responsibility.

Chapter 2 – Mobilization/Demobilization.

Mobilization.

Ensure individual readiness.

Individual readiness is a personal responsibility. An OSC needs to ensure they are in good physical shape and in a healthy mental state.

Ensure individual readiness by displaying and adhering to the following:

- Demonstrate self-awareness.
- Maintain physical and mental wellbeing, which includes getting rest when needed.
- Eliminate personal distractions that could affect your ability to perform the job adequately.
- Have peers check your wellbeing.
 - Peers know you best. If someone recognizes atypical behavior, reevaluate your performance, and consider relief.

Gather critical information pertinent to the assignment.

Gather critical information pertinent to the assignment as soon as possible upon assignment.

Gather the following critical information:

- Obtain incident status from available information.
- Gather dispatch information—maps, current Incident Action Plans (IAP), geography, extended fuel and weather updates, phone a friend, etc.
- Stay alert for any updates or changes from the assignment’s Incident Commander (IC).
- Attend the IMT C&G call to obtain critical information and to understand the coordination instructions for mobilization of the team.

Confirm mobilization status of the Operations Section.

- Establish communication procedures with the Operations Section.
- Manage the operations roster and mobilization add on orders.
- Ensure all operations resources are notified and have appropriate travel information.
- Monitor and communicate the travel status within the Operations Section.

- Hold a conference call, typically after the C&G call and at the initial order, to brief the Operations Section on information received during the C&G call.
- Obtain incident update from current OSC regarding status of incident situation.

Transition and obtain incident updates from the current OSC during mobilization.

- Attend the Agency Administrator's briefing in conjunction with the Air Operations Branch Director (AOBD), Operations Branch Directors (OPBDs) and Division/Group Supervisor (DIVS).
 - Note: If possible; assign DIVS to gather situational awareness of incident operation.
- Collect information from outgoing OSC, initial attack IC, or other personnel responsible for incident prior to your arrival.
- Verify the OSCs have established a time for a proper briefing and formal transfer of command if a time has not already been established by the outgoing team's respective OSCs or preceding IC (if Type 3).
 - Ensure all parties are aware of the established time.
- Prepare for and participate in strategy meetings.
- Identifying kind, type, and number of resources required to achieve control objectives, based on calculation of control forces.
- Evaluate Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) needs and any other special protection considerations.
- Evaluate and monitor current situation.
- Observe and review current operations, personally, to prepare tactics for the next operational period planning meeting.
- Use fire behavior prediction information to plan/organize tactical operations.

Facilitate and coordinate the ordering of operational resources.

- Coordinate with the C&G and other personnel to ensure resources are ordered and directed to the correct location, at the right time, in a safe, and cost-effective manner.
- Ensure geographic and national mobilization procedures are adhered to. Coordination with a Multi-Agency Coordinating (MAC) group/Area Command Team, if in place, and the outgoing team are necessary.

Assemble appropriate operational team members and receive a team in-brief of the current incident status.

- The OSC is responsible for assembling the appropriate team members and ensuring the team members are in-briefed on the current incident status.
- Assembly and receiving the in-brief include the following:
 - Receiving IC's incident briefing, usually provided during a team's C&G meeting prior to mobilization.
 - Pass on relevant information to the OSC's operations personnel, usually provided during a section staff meeting prior to mobilization.

Demobilization.

Contribute to and execute the implementation of the Incident Demobilization Plan. Coordinate with Demobilization Unit/Planning Section Chief (IPS).

- The OSC is responsible for ensuring turn back standards are completed to the extent possible once the fire status is in a position where work can transition to such work. Sometimes the OSC may need to take proactive steps to ensure the turn back standards are provided in a timely manner.
- Prior to demobilization, the OSC needs to know whether the IMT will be handing back to the local unit, or another IMT, and what the turn back standards will be so the OSC can plan accordingly.
- Advanced planning should project ahead beyond the next operational period. A common practice is to look forward 48 to 96 hours, but the incident may dictate other advanced planning timeframes. Anticipate the future demobilization timeline and plan.
- The OSC will provide input into the Demobilization/Deactivation Plan.
- Consider demobilization early during the incident so an adequate demobilization plan is in place prior to the actual need.
- Identify excess section resources.
- Coordinate with personnel and provide Planning Section Chief (PSC) a list of excess resources.
- Assist in development, approval, and implementation of incident demobilization plan.
- OSC must plan for demobilization. This allows the rest of the team adequate notice and ensures an orderly, efficient demobilization.
- Read and understand demobilization plan. Most dispatch centers request 48-hours' notice for demobilization. This should not restrict OSC from making tentative demobilization plans further out than 48 hours.
- Identify resources available for release.
 - Name/type.
 - Quantity.
 - Time/date available for release.
 - Update your projected releases daily.
 - Review plans section demobilization list for accuracy, daily.
 - The demobilization schedule can be adjusted if the incident situation changes.
 - Ensure personnel are informed of and follow demobilization procedures.
 - Ensure that all administrative requirements (evaluations, PTBs, accident reports, personnel, and equipment time records) are complete and accurate prior to personnel being released from the fire.
 - The OSC must have an efficient process worked out with the resource unit leader(s) to facilitate the demobilization process. Regular communication will be necessary.

Summary of the OSC responsibilities for demobilization:

- Plan early.
- Ensure that you meet the local agency turn back expectations.
- Prepare for and implement an orderly transition.
- Read and implement the demobilization plan.
- Identify resources available for release.
- Review and adjust your demobilization plan daily.
- Be cost effective and efficient in releases.
- Ensure subordinates understand and follow demobilization procedures.
- Remember, demobilization is not an emergency. Demobilization is the last contact by the team with the local agency. Leave them with a favorable impression.

Plan for demobilization. Brief the assigned resources on demobilization procedures and responsibilities. Ensure incident and agency demobilization procedures are followed.

- Ensure demobilization plans are well coordinated.
- Demobilization planning should begin at the incident level based on priorities and procedures established with Area Command.
- Ensure the orderly, safe, and efficient demobilization of operational resources. Once those resources are no longer needed on an incident, the OSC will need to demobilize them.
- Coordinate a demobilization plan with the Planning, Logistics, and Finance functions. Planning and preparing ahead for the demobilization process is an ongoing effort throughout assignments.
- The OSC needs to be aware of demobilization policies and procedures depend on size of incident which may involve:
 - Geographic demobilization procedures.
 - Fiscal/legal policies and procedures.
 - Work rules.
 - Special license requirements.
 - Other requirements.
- Pay special attention to contract resources, work rest requirements, and driving limitations. In some cases, the OSC will need to coordinate demobilization of assigned resources with the local unit, incoming team, and/or area command.

Assemble and submit relevant operations documents for the final incident package.

- Provide input for the transition plan including a narrative of past activities, current conditions and anticipated resource needs, and projected incident activities.
- Maintain the unit Activity Log (ICS 214) each operational period. This aids in the preparation of the Operations Section transition plan and narrative needed at team closeout.

- Ensure all paperwork is completed including:
 - Contractor evaluations.
 - Activity Logs (ICS 214).
 - Trainee paperwork.
 - Finance documents, etc.

Prepare the operations portion of the transition plan.

- Develop the appropriate material for Transfer of Command Plan, as required. Include the following information:
 - Completion/containment status as it relates to incident objectives.
 - Specific information for each branch, division, and group.
 - Location of special equipment (pumps, UTV's, etc.).
 - Summary of resources left on incident.
 - Successes, challenges, issues, and other relevant lessons learned.

Participate in agency administrator closeout/After Action Review (AAR).

- Participate in all transition meetings and brief incoming IMT.

Complete the Operations Section AAR prior to closeout. Follow-up on AAR identified action items and make changes, as necessary.

- Share important lessons learned with peers.

Coordinate an efficient transfer of position duties.

- Ensure continuity of operations.
- Exchange critical safety information.
- Communicate transfer of authority through an established chain of command.
- Ensure continuity of authority and knowledge when transferring position duties.
- Complete transition of functional duties in a timely, smooth, and efficient manner.
- Ensure no adverse impact on safety or productivity.
- Communicate the transfer of command expectations through a briefing and the IAP. This will be shared widely to ensure clear awareness of the chain of command and associated expectations.

Be present when providing information to incoming IMT or agency. Allow incoming team ability to formalize a plan while continuing to run the operation until time of transition.

- Ensure a seamless transition with incoming OSC. This is a critical task. Take the time to share all pertinent information.
- Pertinent information includes:
 - Accurate assessment of the situation.

- Established management action points (trigger points).
- Successes and challenges.
- Pertinent lessons learned.
- Safety information.

Chapter 3 – Communication.

Effective communication is critical to the success of the OSC.

Responsible to deliver intent and instructions:

- Verbally during briefings and IMT meetings.
- In writing in the IAP.
- Spatially on maps.

Follow established processes and chain of command for collecting, producing, and distributing information.

- Follow leadership principles, communicate with operational personnel to lead and inspire the section, as well as gather and pass important information.
- Communicate the plan by displaying on a map and keeping it updated with new information.
- At all times, listen for critical incident information and validate it is passed to the appropriate personnel.

Ensure a clear understanding of expectations and timely communication within and across Incident Command System (ICS) functional areas and chain of command.

- Establish and communicate objectives, priorities, work assignments, and performance expectations.
- Foster and build relationships with C&G and Operations Section personnel to build a climate where information can flow freely in all directions.
- Using Leader’s Intent, communicate with personnel using scheduled and impromptu briefings to ensure the operational objectives are being met. Update status of objectives with Operational personnel as appropriate.

Chapter 4 – Operations.

Establish a common operating picture with C&G, IC, and assigned personnel.

- Establish a common operating picture, incident structure, and convey the operational strategy and plan.
- Model leadership values and principles while emphasizing teamwork.

Model leadership values and principles. Provide a positive influence. Emphasize teamwork.

The OSC is accountable for providing an operational environment that adheres to the values of a mission-driven culture. These values are the foundation for the behavior and actions of the members of incident organizations. The following mission-driven values provide for an operational culture that is cohesive, adaptive, and resilient:

- Service for the common good.
- High trust state.
- Pursuit of truth.
- Form and function defined by the end state.
- Individual initiative.
- Continuous improvement.

Develop and maintain good relationships with all other functions in the incident organization and provide a positive influence that fosters teamwork.

- An OSC should be aware of when and where to apply differing decision-making styles. Knowledge of the four decision-making environments (programmatic, strategic, operational, and real-time) commonly used in incident management for a wildfire.
 - Programmatic decision.
 - Strategic decision.
 - Operational decision.
 - Real-time decision.
- All the different styles should be utilized as appropriate when making a decision. Additionally, the sound risk management practices need to apply to all decisions.

Be prepared to take on a deputy role when assigned to an incident. (Such as, Line, Planning, Strategic, or Night Operations, etc.)

- One OSC is designated as the primary or lead.
- A trainee OSC may be assigned.

Ensure interoperability with Deputy Operation Section Chiefs when identified as the lead.

- Ensure continuity of operations during shift changes.
- OSC must demonstrate effective supervision, delegation, time management, and effective communication to succeed.
- Communicate instructions, expectations, and ensure leader's intent is delivered and understood.

- The OSC must remain agile enough to make timely, effective adjustments to manage operational periods in order to react to work efficiencies, changes in situation, changes of resource status, or events that may alter risk to public or personnel safety.
- Positioning should always be undertaken with speed and focus in mind and with sufficient time for positioning to occur before operations begin. Positioning using strategic and opportunistic movement increases the effectiveness of fire suppression resources.
 - Consider resource availability and priorities when positioning resources. Communicate early and often with logistic personnel well ahead of time to ensure requirements are met.
 - Establish and communicate objectives, priorities, work assignments, and performance expectations.

Ensure incident objectives and leader's performance standards are met.

- Effectively convey the operational strategy, tactics, assignments, and intent.
- Maintain awareness of work status through communication with pertinent line personnel and through personal observation to ensure performance standards are met.

Supervise branch/division/group supervisors, the air operations organization, staging areas, and trainees.

- Explain to personnel what you want and expect. Allow them the latitude to establish priorities and manage their responsibilities. Hold subordinates accountable to assigned duties and responsibilities.
- Listen to and utilize input from personnel. Use active listening.
- Assign resources effectively. Utilize personnel according to their knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- Manage the span of control within the Operations Section.
- Work with assigned personnel that are having difficulties meeting incident position standards.
- Follow-up by clarifying instructions where problems exist and then with honest performance evaluations throughout the assignment.
- Complete debriefings with assigned personnel.

Evaluate large scale burnouts or backfire operations in collaboration with appropriate personnel.

- The OSC must have thorough knowledge of the development of the incident and how the implementation of the proposed burnout or backfire will move the team towards accomplishing the desired strategy. This, combined with the knowledge of fuel conditions and predicted weather, will facilitate the Operations Section to anticipate the probability of success and potential future developments of the incident.
- The OSC will consult with the OPBD/DIVS to establish their resource and logistical needs for the proposed implementation and probability of success.
- OSC will personally observe areas of concern on the incident (aviation operations, WUI, burnouts, etc.).

- Once a major burnout is under way, it generally becomes impractical to stop the operation. The collective decision to implement the burn needs be made before the burnout starts.

Evaluate the progress of operations based on situation reports and evaluations from operations personnel.

- Feedback should be solicited from line personnel regarding the current plan, ability to meet objectives with current assigned resources and recommendations for following operational periods.
- Provide opportunities for one-on-one discussions with branches, divisions, or other appropriate assigned personnel during the operational shift.
- Provide for and complete debriefings at the conclusion of the operational period.

Update priorities and make timely changes to current operations based on changing complexity or magnitude of the incident. Report those changes to the IC and all appropriate team functions.

- It is the OSC's responsibility to recognize and respond to changing conditions. They will either get this information through personal observation or input through other team members.
- Involve your staff in decisions if feasible.
- Clear significant changes with IC. Always inform the IC of tactical changes at the earliest opportunity.
- Ensure positive communication response with all affected personnel.
- Notify the other affected section chiefs and safety officer of the tactical change.
- Monitor and evaluate tactical changes.
- Document the conditions that led to the need for tactical change, the decision reached, and that it was communicated.

Coordinate current operations and adjust through effective communication with appropriate supervisors to prepare tactics for the next operational period planning meeting.

- Respond to changing conditions with a tactical plan at the appropriate time is critical.
- Ensure pre-established contingency plans provide the means for responding to changing conditions or events.
- Maintain initiative by demonstrating a bias for action.
- Recognize changing conditions and respond appropriately, if change is necessary, the OSC will have to overcome this resistance to change (in themselves as well as others).
- Recognize opportunities to maintain tactical advantage.

With appropriate personnel (liaison, safety, IC, etc.), coordinate WUI operations with local law enforcement, local fire departments, and other agencies authorized to implement public evacuation, perform structure protection, and control traffic, and road closures.

- Identify local interested parties that can provide useful information (government agencies, landowners, and protection districts) early in the incident.
- Use their local knowledge of the area for information on fuel types, access, public use, water sources, structures, and other useful information.
- Liaison relationships with external government entities may be established to support incident activities.
- Coordinate with members of local law enforcement, transportation departments, health services, Red Cross, Salvation Army, local emergency services and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).
- Locate all structures that are, or may be, threatened by the incident.
- Generally, the Public Information Officer (PIO)/Liaison Officer (LOFR) leads in the contact of residents to inform them of the strategy and tactics used for this incident.
- Evacuation plans are usually implemented by local law enforcement, but the OSC often identifies the trigger to activate the plan.

Validate assigned personnel receive communication of Fire Weather Watches/Warnings, Spot Weather Forecasts, and Fire Weather Forecasts.

- All operations resources must have up-to-date weather/behavior information.
- Validate that all operational resources are aware of current and expected fire weather, expected fire behavior, and all critical updates that may occur during the operational period.

Work with responsible land Agency Administrator and/or assigned Resource Advisor (READ) to protect natural, cultural, social, and other resources. Notify IC when such resources are discovered and document suppression impacts.

- Coordinate with representatives assigned by the agency administrator to successfully manage the incident.
- READs can provide useful information about water sources, safety considerations, existing and potential helispots, previous fire activity, access, cultural resources, weather and local concerns, and political climate.
- Resource specialists, fisheries biologists, soil scientists, and hydrologists can be helpful in determining the effects of operations in sensitive areas.
- Coordinate with the fire rehabilitation team and your staff to determine incident rehabilitation needs.

Evaluate resource status and tactical needs to determine if resource assignments are appropriate.

- Determine both current resource needs and estimated long-range needs based on incident objectives and strategic operational planning.
- Communicate with the Logistics Section, as well as other team sections, to ensure all aspects of logistical support can be met to request, facilitate, and engage these resources.

Complete the identified Operations sections of the Incident Status Summary (ICS 209).

- Clearly articulate the incident strategies, critical needs, projections, and values at risk. MAC groups, GACCs, etc.
- Utilize this information when setting resource priorities.
- Ensure the duration needed for critical resources such as Interagency Hotshot Crews (IHC).
 - Do not elaborate or underestimate your needs.
- Ensure the ICS 209 is written accurately.
 - Update daily or twice daily as needed.
- During times of high fire activity this is crucial to ensure fair sharing of resources.

Participate in the preparation of the IAP or other relevant plans.

The IAP defines the tactics for the operational period. It must have the full attention of the OSC.

A complete and accurate IAP is critical to a smooth operation. The planning meeting defines the incident objectives, strategy, and tactics for the operational period. The OSC will effectively convey the operational strategy, plan, and assignments through a written IAP.

- The OSC must gather information from line overhead to prepare for the next operational period IAP. Additional information to support tactics will be provided by C&G.
 - Current location/status of resources.
 - Accomplishments.
 - Additional accomplishments anticipated prior to operational period change.
 - Observed fire behavior.
 - Identify new helispots, drop points, line location.
 - Safety concerns.
 - Logistical support.
 - Recommended needs for next operational period:
 - Numbers and types of resources.
 - Work instructions.
 - Amount of work to be completed.

- Values at risk.

Complete operational portion of IAP as part of Operational Planning Worksheet (ICS 215).

Operations Section Chief will work with the Planning Section prior to the planning meeting to complete the Operational Planning Worksheet (ICS 215).

There are four major elements of the ICS 215 that the OSC is responsible for:

- Resource needs.
 - Specify kind: engines, dozers, crews, etc.
 - Specify type: Type 1, Type 2, etc.
 - Specify resource numbers by division or group.
 - Overhead needs.
- Transportation needs (drop off points and pick up times).
 - Identify transportation needs and type.
 - Designate drop off/pickup points and times.
- Designation of control operations (tactics). Pay attention to cost effectiveness, safety, and environmental impacts when making assignments.
 - Specific work assignments. These are transferred to the Assignment list (ICS 204) for each division and should articulate task, purpose, and end state.
 - Standards.
 - Specialty tools/equipment needed.
- List of special instructions. These should be specific to the division/group or task.
- Specific safety and aviation instructions can be placed here.
 - Keep assignments clear and concise.
 - The OSC will consult with the OPBD/DIVS to establish their resource and logistical needs for the next operational period.
 - To prepare for the planning meeting, the OSC works with PSC or Resources Unit Leader (RESL) to transfer notes gathered during the operational period (on mini Operational Planning Worksheet [ICS 215] or current IAP) to the wall size ICS 215.

Identify the kind, type, and the number of resources required to achieve incident objectives.

- Remember to cover multiple operational periods when ordering resources or logistical support.
- Work with the resource unit leader to identify needed resources. Use the Incident Check-In List (ICS-211) or computer-generated resource lists to identify unassigned or on-order resources.
- Only assign resources if qualified overhead are available to supervise them.
- Maintain span of control.

Validate assigned contracted resources meet contract specifications, safely implement work assignments, and address situations as they may arise.

- Ensure inspection and contract compliance for local Emergency Equipment Rental Agreement (EERA) resources, national crew, and engine contracts are met.
- Coordinate with the Finance Section on procedures to ensure that all required paperwork is complete and submitted in a timely manner.
- Ensure contract personnel have the ability and equipment to safely fulfill their responsibility to complete the assignment.

Coordinate with line supervisors and provide the appropriate sections a list of needed or excess personnel and other resources.

- Ensure appropriate resources are available to meet incident objectives.
- Provide for support to facilitate operations, coordinate with line supervisors, and provide the appropriate sections with a list of needed or excess personnel and other resources.

Obtain regular updates from appropriate personnel.

- Ensure regular communications with operational resources are maintained to facilitate an acute level of situation awareness of current incident operations.
- Provide critical updates to other team positions including, but not limited to, logistics, situation unit, ordering, resource unit, weather, etc.

Report special occurrences (e.g., structure/improved property loss or damage, accidents, IWI, political contacts) to supervisor.

- Keep the IC informed of any changes or special occurrences.
- Provide quality and timely information to the IC to maintain communication with the agency, cooperators, external partners, the local community.

Coordinate with the Finance/Administration Section to identify and request land use agreements, as necessary.

Be able to recognize when use agreements would be applicable. Working with the Finance Section, be proactive to effectively implement the use agreement. Situations may also include involvement with Logistics or Liaison Officer.

Coordinate with Situation Unit to approve or provide updates to incident objective accomplishments.

- As an OSC, successful performance depends upon developing and maintaining good relationships with all other functions in the incident organization.
- The OSC is responsible for ensuring that their staff interacts effectively with other section's staffs. In conjunction with providing and approving incident objective accomplishments, the OSC needs to ensure the DIVS are debriefing with the Situation Unit Leader (SITL) at the end of the operational period.

Supervise the Air Operations Branch. Have working knowledge of air operations.

- To meet the incident strategies and objectives, solicit input from the Air Operations Branch to determine the most efficient use of assigned aircraft. Use active listening.
- Work with air operations if there are difficulties meeting expectations.
- Follow-up by clarifying instructions where problems exist and then with honest performance evaluations throughout the assignment.
- Be present for morning briefings and debriefings with the Air Operations Branch.
- Operations Section Chief is responsible for ensuring completion of Air Operations Summary Worksheet, ICS 220. This is usually done by the AOBD or the air support group supervisor.
- The OSC must continually strive to develop a working knowledge of air operations and aircraft capabilities.

Work with air operations staff to define air priorities and strategies. Coordinate and prioritize activities with aviation operations.

- OSC will ensure strategies, objectives, and overall incident priorities are communicated and understood.
- Allow the air operations staff the latitude to establish air priorities and manage their responsibilities to meet the desired end state of the incident.
- Ensure daily one-on-one briefings and debriefings with assigned Air Tactical Group Supervisor (ATGS) to provide for continuity of operations and common operating picture.
- Coordination with operations, air operations and the Logistics Section is critical to both the tactical mission and the support/supply success of remote camps.

IAP and map distribution:

At the briefing, spike, or remote camps, available electronically, shared via email. The OSC must work with Logistics and Plans to ensure there is a plan in place for these to be delivered timely to all resources on the fire.

Chapter 5 – Strategic Operations (Including Strategic Risk Assessment, Planning, and Implementation).

Background.

Strategic operations are an active process including all aspects of strategic thinking, planning, assessing risk, etc. This is a critical comprehensive skillset for the Operations Section Chief. Good planning is necessary for successful team performance. An OSC must be constantly planning during the incident. Many incident management teams have added multiple OSC positions to better facilitate incident planning (Planning, Strategic, and/or other deputy operations positions).

Strategic planning is a critical component of the OSC position. The Strategic Risk Assessment, strategic planning, and the management and implementation of the plan needs to be part of the overall Incident Management Process and the OSC plays an essential role in this process. Although an incident has a linear and sequential beginning and end, there are cyclical stages or phases that occur within that chronological timeline that, based on complexity, make the incident management process dynamic.

The fundamental premise of succeeding within this dynamic process is to obtain and maintain situational awareness—a shared idea of what is going on—and then determine priorities that will serve as the basis for a strategic assessment. The strategic assessment of priorities results in an incident planning process and rhythm that achieves objectives by implementing strategies and tactics—response actions that have a high probability of success.

Maintaining the incident rhythm is key to the OSC and team’s success. No matter the change in complexity, staying on track with the “process within the process” ensures those you are working with and working for have a plan.

Determine incident status.

Identify, collect, analyze, and use relevant situational information to formulate informed decisions and take appropriate actions.

- An OSC must conduct real-time risk management, quickly identifying what new hazards or influences on complexity are occurring, as well as establishing primary, alternate, contingency, and emergency (PACE) plans, making timely adjustments, as necessary.
- An OSC must be aware of influences such as operational effectiveness, environmental changes, Agency Administrator concerns, stakeholder/cooperator issues, public opinion/media interest, and resource status (fatigue, morale, availability, effectiveness), as well as issues and priorities of external organizations—Geographic Area Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (GMAC), National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC), Area Command.
- Gather the following information:
 - A summary of the current situation to the team gathered from personal observation, DIVS, Fire Behavior Analyst (FBAN)/Long Term Fire Analyst (LTAN) and other staff.
 - Observed fire behavior.
 - Status of containment effort (line construction, mop up). For all risk, this may be portion of roads cleared, change in flood water, or establishment of a receiving and distribution center.
 - Significant accomplishments.
 - Problems observed in meeting objectives.
 - Significant events.
 - A plan for the course of the operational period in general terms. Note: The OSC will present this plan.
 - Expected fire behavior and weather (utilize the FBAN/LTAN).
 - Expected control lines (utilize the FBAN/LTAN).
 - Expected size (utilize the FBAN/ LTAN).
 - Description of planned tactics.

- Resource needs.
- Crews.
- Engines, tenders.
- Dozers.
- Aircraft.
- Saws/water handling equipment.
- Firing equipment.
- Operations overhead.
- Specialized equipment.
- Camps or staging areas.
- Anticipated problems.
- Risk management issues coordinated with Safety Officer (SOF).
- Expected duration of the incident. Many of these items such as duration, final size, etc., will be educated guesses based on the information on hand at the time.

Ensure awareness of pertinent parts of Delegation of Authority, Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS), or incident decision documents.

- An OSC should be able to identify the role the local agency's land management planning documents (the land/resource management plan and the fire management plan) play in fire management decisions.
- All operational strategies and tactics being performed need to be within the identified Planning Area in WFDSS. If this is not the case, the planning area should be redrawn or consult the IC/Agency Administrator (AA) to ensure all actions are covered within the Delegation of Authority (DOA)/WFDSS.
- The OSC should have knowledge of:
 - Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Implementation.
 - Local Agency Land Management Planning 2009 Guidance for Implementation.
- Incorporate agencies' administrator's direction and unit policies into the strategy and tactics. Coordinate with lead READs and cultural specialists.

Draft end state.

- Understand the big picture in the development of the strategy. Draft end state should address protection considerations for all critical values at risk.
- Alternative is selected that provides the most acceptable balance of risk to critical values and Firefighters.

Develop Strategies to evaluate critical tasks, values at risk, and to set priorities.

When evaluating critical tasks, performing your assessment, and setting priorities consider the following:

- Who is responsible and when does it need to be done?
- What tasks will affect other C&G and require coordination or consensus?
- Can the tasks be accomplished in the allotted time (implementation by next operational period)?
- What key information gained through your assessment needs to be considered when setting priorities.
- The OSC must consider all the factors gathered through their assessment. Based on their assessment, the OSC will make calculated decisions based on the probability of success and the risk versus benefit when setting priorities. Life and property will drive priorities typically.
- OSCs will face hard decisions where at times sacrifices may have to be made to ensure the higher priorities are addressed successfully. Consult the IC and cooperators as necessary to help work through these decisions.
- Identify jurisdictional boundaries and which authorities/agencies should be involved.
- Work closely with affected authorities and agencies to ensure positive outcomes. One OSC should be identified to maintain regular communication with those affected jurisdictions.
- The OSC should:
 - Gather, analyze, and validate information pertinent to the incident or event and make recommendations for setting priorities.
 - Develop and implement plans and gain concurrence of affected agencies and/or the public.
 - Develop the strategy for the incident.
 - Review WFDSS, DOA, Risk Management Assistance (RMA) products and info gained through briefings prior to developing a strategy.
 - Utilize Potential Operational Delineations (PODs) to inform strategy.
 - Evaluate identified threats to life, property, and other values at risk in terms of recommended management actions, resources needed, production rates, placement requirements, contingency actions, emergency stabilization, and rehabilitation needs to ensure the strategy adequately addresses concerns and any necessary mitigation is feasible.
 - Obtain long-term assessments of weather and fire behavior to develop strategy and tactics. Consider impacts of smoke.
 - Apply agency policy, contracts, and agreements through the strategy.

The OSC should coordinate with the following when finalizing critical tasks, values at risk, and priorities:

- Discuss and establish recommended management actions with IC, AA, and designated READs.
- Consult IC(s), AA(s) and C&G to ensure operations strategy is known and supported. Reconsult as changes occur or as foreseen.

- Coordinate with local READ or other designated agency representative and identify issues regarding regulatory environmental compliance and mitigation to ensure concerns are adequately addressed in the strategy.
 - Smoke
 - Threatened and endangered species
 - Heritage resources
 - Wilderness plans
 - Wetland
 - Watershed

Evaluating the Strategy:

- Evaluate existing strategy to determine if identified resource and protection objectives can be met through plan implementation.
- Identify potential changes over time for long duration events that could affect successful implementation of strategic directions and management action points.
- Evaluate potential changes in fuels which could affect fire behavior and future management actions.
- Ensure operations consider socio-economic, political, and cultural aspects.
- Identify special areas of concern and incorporate mitigations into strategy to address concerns.
- Socio-economic impacts.
- Public safety.
- Local special events.
- Develop recommended management actions consistent with the wilderness, natural, and cultural resource values in the agency policy and local Land Management Plan(s).
- Additionally, the OSC needs to be aware of other applicable State and local government policies. These should be obtained through local connections made during transition.

Utilize risk assessment information in developing strategy:

- Consider critical factors when performing this assessment such as:
 - Values to be protected.
 - Fire spread projections.
 - Pertinent information on current size, observed fire behavior, fire effects, and forecasted weather elements.
 - Fuel characteristics likely to affect fire behavior and fire effects.
 - Impacts resulting from projected smoke production.
 - Resource availability.

Follow the Risk Management Process in the development of the strategy.

- Base proposed actions on appropriate risk analysis.
- Plan appropriate tactics.
- Assess public safety issues.
- Modify approach based on evaluation of incident situation.
- Ensure the strategy is consistent with the risk assessment and addresses safety concerns.
- Work with the safety officer to ensure elements are addressed in the 215A.
- Develop actions that adequately address safety concerns.

Use short-term and long-term fire behavior prediction/analysis products to plan and develop the strategy.

- Utilize decision support tools to reduce the amount of uncertainty surrounding the fire, understand the amount of difficulty that could be encountered during the management process based on possible outcomes. Develop management strategies and operational tactics and provide a common understanding and clear explanation of the situation.
- Your understanding of and input to the decision analysis can be key in the success of managing an incident and providing for firefighter safety.

WFDSS Support Tools, RMA Products and Other Resources:

- Basic knowledge of the tools available in WFDSS and the RMA Dashboard is necessary. Prediction/Analysis considerations for the strategy:
 - Evaluate short- and long-term fire behavior predictions, fire weather, fire behavior assessments, and interpret results to support decision making.
 - Estimate immediate and long-range operational resource needs and logistical requirements. Coordinate with appropriate functional areas. Think strategically.
 - Coordinate with MAC Groups and/or Area if activated.
- Develop Management Action Points.

Analyze strategic risk.

Strategic assessment:

Identify the common operating picture through a Strategic Risk Assessment and PACE plans (or utilize other contingency planning processes).

- Like situational awareness, a Strategic Assessment must be maintained throughout the incident, including the crucial transition periods involving mobilization, inbriefing/shadow periods, transitions, and transfer of command.

Seek out Strategic Risk Assessment information through the following:

- AA's initial call to IC/C&G conference call/inbriefing.
- Outgoing incident organization/incoming IMT briefing packet/incident complexity analysis.

- Transition/Incident Transfer of Command Plan.
- RMA products—Suppression Difficulty Index (SDI), Potential Control Locations (PCL), Snag Hazard, etc.—and/or other similar product.
- WFDSS/Decision Document, Delegation of Authority, Leader’s Intent Letter.
- Incident Status Summary (ICS 209), IAP.
- Recon, personal discussions.
- InciWeb.

An OSC should consider the following during the Strategic Risk Assessment:

- Status of the incident? Locally, regionally, nationally? Area command? Planning level?
- What are the values at risk? What is the probability of those values being impacted and what are the consequences if they are impacted?
- What is the low probability/high consequence event?
- What contingency or emergency plan needs to be developed? Unified Command? Medical Plan?
- What are the current incident objectives? What kinds of strategies have they resulted in?
- Has the tactical implementation of the strategies been successful?
- What is the probability of success?
- What alternatives are being considered?
- Are they viable from both a socio/political and operational perspective?
- Input from host unit to help determine/compare to WFDSS and delegation.
- Who are the externals (cooperators, stakeholders) potentially impacted by this incident?
- What are their issues?
- How might externals affect incident objectives and strategies?
- What will success look like to these externals?
- What internal issues are identified or predicted?

Seek buy in.

Strategies:

- Should include both internal IMT members and external cooperator/stakeholder socio/political perspectives.
- Identify areas of incomplete information that require immediate resolution.
- Ensure that C&G has input into the development of the initial strategies and subsequent revisions.
- Ensure that the Agency Administrator/Agency Representative supports the strategies.
- Strategies must be directly linked to incident objectives.

When seeking AA/IC support for a change in strategy and/or keeping support for the current strategy, the OSC will need to clearly articulate the purpose and the why. Tight coordination with the FBAN, LTAN, Incident Meteorologist (IMET) and Strategic Operational Planner (SOPL) should occur to present the strategy based on current and expected fire behavior to allow for informed decision making. All strategies need to be in good alignment with the incident objectives. Sometimes incident objectives may also need to be adjusted to align with changed conditions. If the OSC sees a need for this, direct communication with the IC should occur.

Communicate and implement strategy.

Establish and communicate objectives, priorities, work assignments, and performance expectations.

Communication

- Clearly communicate priorities and objectives, support unity of effort among incident personnel and enable the development of appropriate strategies and tactics.
- Provide clear leader's intent and ensure it has been understood.
- Develop the strategy and articulate this into work assignments on the Assignment Lists (ICS 204) with task, purpose, and end state.
- The OSC will work with the LTAN, SOPL, and/or SITL to build maps that effectively communicate the strategy. The maps should tell the story. What, when, where, and why.

Monitor implementation of the strategy.

Monitor and adjust strategy and tactics when air quality impacts personnel and the public. Consider the potential for smoke impacts to roads, communities, and incident facilities. Use air resource advisor products to inform actions.

- When planning large firing operations, the OSC will coordinate with the FBAN, IMET, and Air Resource Advisor to ensure smoke impacts are addressed through the planning and implementation stages.

Adjust actions based on changing information and evolving situation awareness. Develop and implement contingency plans. Communicate changing conditions to assigned resources.

- Present alternative(s). Identify contingency plans.
- Ensure other section chiefs and their staff have input on whether they can support the strategy.
- Consider resource availability and arrival time.
- Adjust actions based on changing information and evolving situation awareness. Develop and implement contingency plans. Communicate changing conditions to assigned resources and supervisor.
- The OSC may have to adjust incident strategies, tactical objectives, and resource assignments due to the lack of critical resources during a given operational period.

Recommend modifications to strategy:

- Evaluate success in meeting incident objectives and requirements.
- Utilize field observations in addition to model projections and current and expected fire behavior to recommend modifications to strategy. Advise IC, and/or AA of findings and recommendations.
- Evaluate the impacts of additional wildfire starts in adjacent areas.
- Evaluate impact of extreme weather events.
- Display strategic alternatives on a map to communicate strategy options.
- Communicate with cooperators, AA, IC, as well as safety and operations personnel to discuss strategy options.
- Adjust strategy as determined by IC.

Continually evaluate the current and anticipated situation to determine if the present plan of action will meet incident objectives and adjust as needed (48 hrs., 72 hrs., etc.). Advise IC and other appropriate IMT/section personnel.

- Advanced planning should project ahead beyond the next operational period. A common practice is to look forward 36 to 72 hours, but the incident may dictate other advanced planning timeframes.
- Advanced planning should consider:
 - The probable course of the incident. (Is it getting bigger/smaller, more/less complex?)
 - Incident overall goal and objectives.
 - Adequacy of previous and present plans.
 - Future resource requirements and availability.
 - Strategy assessment and alternatives.
 - Environmental factors.
 - Assessment of the effectiveness of the organizational structure and development of alternatives.
 - Political and economic issues.
 - Future demobilization timeline and plan.
 - Transition to long-term recovery need.

Ensure that incident objectives and strategies are met and do not conflict with each other or agency policy.

Evaluate the effectiveness of IAP or relevant plan and adjust, as necessary.

Operational (Strategic) Planning Summary:

- Develop incident strategy and daily plan for each division to meet incident objectives (Operational Planning Worksheet [ICS 215] or other planning document, such as Assignment List (ICS 204) or Communication List, [ICS 215A]).

- Recognize and implement when there is a need to do a tactical pause or adjust strategy.
- Keep rest of IMT informed with overall strategy, planned course of action, and daily situational updates.
- Able to project out 24-48-72-96-120 hours so rest of IMT can support the strategy and direction Operations is headed in.
- Provide leadership to all assigned tactical resources and subordinate line supervisors.
- Identify and display strategic lines on the map, apply PACE modeling, or other strategic alternatives, display critical values at risk given from AAs, or documents to drive strategies and tactics.
- Develop the strategy and be able to articulate that into tactical work assignments on the ICS 204s with task, purpose, and end state.

Chapter 6 – Organizational Management.

Establish organization structure, reporting procedures, and chain of command of assigned resources.

Following ICS principles, a primary OSC will be identified and any other OSCs will be deputies. Deputies could be Line, Planning, Strategic, Night, or other.

- Understanding the strategy, complexities, and challenges required to organize the Operations Section.
- Matching the right person to the task provides for maximum efficiency.
- Closely monitor and mentor those situations where resources are working beyond their normal operational tempo.
- The OSC is responsible for providing two-way communication to line personnel.

Ensure all resources understand task, purpose, and end state of work assignment. Think strategically when:

- Establishing division and branch boundaries.
- Identifying staging area locations (identify spot or need for).
- Identifying resource needs.
- Identifying transportation needs, drop off/pickup points and time.
- Establishing work assignments.
- Developing special instructions.

Identify and establish branches, divisions/groups, and/or staging areas as appropriate.

- Identify branch/division/group boundaries.
- Order resources required for section operation.
- Establish an operational period.

- Establish protocol for providing Operations Section daily incident accomplishments to the Situation Unit.
- Establish a daily briefing/debriefing schedule with branch directors and DIVSs.
- Establish a process for resource requests/releases for operational planning purposes.

Monitor performance and provide immediate and regular feedback to assigned personnel.

- Coach or mentor assigned personnel and create opportunities for their career/positional growth.
- An OSC must have an acute awareness (aka situational awareness) of all aspects of the Operations Section to quickly identify any discrepancy that may disrupt operations.

Interact, coordinate, and establish cohesiveness with all C&G personnel.

- Establishing positive relationships within the IMT.
- Sharing information, whether relevant or not, allows other section leads to feel included and increases their own understanding of the incident.
- Problems and issues should be seen as an opportunity to further strengthen relationships within the IMT while working towards mitigations or solutions.
- Healthy conflict with other C&G members is expected to create a shared understanding of issues or concerns.

Share pertinent operations information that may affect the team's management of the incident.

- The OSC should schedule regular opportunities within the Operations Section for divisions, branches, air operations, etc., to provide for a common operating picture.
- Establish protocols and deadlines for briefings and/or updates in the Operations Section and the appropriate IMT members.

Set priorities and communicate to assigned resources.

Establish and manage an appropriate span of control based on number of available personnel and complexity of the situation.

Evaluate and reallocate resources during operational period as priorities change.

Be prepared to work with and order Heavy Equipment Technical Specialists (THSP) as necessary.

Utilize appropriate subject matter expert technical specialists and adhere to their recommendations to remove uncertainties. Examples include: Oil and Gas, Hydrogen Sulfide operations (H₂S), wild horse and burro, Unexploded Explosive Ordnance (UXO).

Inform IC regularly or as needed: Status updates, evolving conditions, or hazards that may require action, emerging and anticipated problems or unresolved issues, and accomplishments.

- Routinely share pertinent information, updates, or accomplishments with C&G.
- Maintain a common operating picture to be shared by the entire team.

Chapter 7 – Risk Management – Safety.

Ensure the Risk Management Process is established and maintained throughout the Operations Section.

- Apply the Risk Management Process as stated in the *NWCG Incident Response Pocket Guide (IRPG)*, PMS 461:
 - Identify hazards.
 - Assess hazards.
 - Develop controls and make risk decisions.
 - Implement controls.
 - Supervise and evaluate.
- Ensure Lookouts, Communications, Escape Routes, and Safety Zones (LCES) are established and known to all firefighters before they are needed. Refer to the guidelines stated in the *IRPG*.
- Use Look Up, Down, and Around in the *IRPG* to maintain situational awareness. Adjust actions accordingly. Develop and communicate contingency plans and trigger points.
- Coordinate with Safety Officers to assist with the risk management process and provide input into the safety of operations.
- Ensure the assigned resources follow safety guidelines appropriately.
- Develop IAP Safety Analysis (ICS 215A) with Safety Officer.
- Plan for medical emergencies. Ensure assigned resources are prepared to execute the Medical Plan (ICS 206 WF). Ensure familiarity with medical responders, communication procedures, and transportation plan. Manage the medical emergency based on procedures stated in the IAP, the Medical Incident Report, or other relevant guidelines.
- Monitor for signs and symptoms of fatigue, illness, or injury. Mitigate appropriately.
- Account for location, health, safety, and welfare of assigned personnel.
- Submit accident/incident reports with pertinent forms (SAFECOM, SAFENET, agency-specific forms) through the established chain of command.

Chapter 8 – Documentation.

Complete, authorize and ensure timeliness of incident documents specific to the Operations Section, and route as required.

- Work with the Finance Section on procedures to ensure that all required paperwork is complete and submitted in a timely manner, such as:
 - Emergency Equipment Shift Ticket (OF-297).
 - Personnel time.
 - Comp/injury paperwork.
 - Accident reports.
 - Inspection of contract resources.
 - Establishing contracts and agreements.
- Transition packages.
- Demobilization documents.
- IAP document responsibilities.
- Logistics documentation requirements.
- General messages.
- Resource evaluations.

The *NWCG Position-Specific Standards for Operations Section Chiefs* is developed and maintained by the Incident Operations Subcommittee (IOSC), under the direction of the Incident and Positions Standards Committee (IPSC), an entity of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG).

Previous editions: First.

While they may still contain current or useful information, previous editions are obsolete. The user of this information is responsible for confirming that they have the most up-to-date version. NWCG is the sole source for the publication.

This publication is available electronically at <https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/350-08>.

Submit comments, questions, and recommendations to the appropriate agency program manager assigned to the IOSC using the NWCG Publication Review Form, <https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/publication-review-form>. View the complete roster at <https://www.nwcg.gov/committees/incident-operations-subcommittee/roster>.

Publications and training materials produced by NWCG are in the public domain. Use of public domain information, including copying, is permitted. Use of NWCG information within another document is permitted if NWCG information is accurately credited to NWCG. The NWCG logo may not be used except on NWCG authorized information. “National Wildfire Coordinating Group,” “NWCG,” and the NWCG logo are trademarks of NWCG.

The use of trade, firm, or corporation names or trademarks in NWCG products is solely for the information and convenience of the reader and does not constitute endorsement by NWCG or its member agencies of any product or service to the exclusion of others that may be suitable.

This NWCG publication may contain links to information created and maintained by other non-federal public and/or private organizations. These organizations may have different policies from those of NWCG. Please note that NWCG does not control and cannot guarantee the relevance, timeliness, or accuracy of these outside materials.