



# TIP SHEET

## IROC/ICBS INTERFACE TIPS & FAQs For the IROC User

This is a combination of Frequently Ask Questions (FAQS) and tips for dispatchers on using the IROC/ICBS interface.

### What is ICBS?

The Interagency Cache Business System (ICBS) is a warehouse management and inventory system designed to support the unique requirements of the National Interagency Support Cache (NISC) system. The NISC manages all items that comprise the National Fire Equipment System (NFES) for fire/all hazards incident use. This inventory includes firefighting tools, personal protective clothing and equipment, fire shelters, pumps, hose, specialized incident communications equipment, forms, and training materials. ICBS is used at fifteen interagency incident support caches hosted by the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and state agencies.

ICBS is used primarily for inventory control; cost and price management; receiving; issuing; receiving and transfer; returns; refurbishment; kitting/dekitting; transaction management; sales and reporting. ICBS is also used to optimize internal cache warehouse processes such as: location management; picking; put away; physical inventory counts and disposal.

ICBS was chartered by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) and was developed in a partnership between the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and the NISC Managers. ICBS has been in production use since 2008.

### How do I as a dispatcher use the ICBS System?

Dispatch offices create supply orders using IROC that are then sent to a designated Cache. Once there, the request gets input into the ICBS system and gets an issue number. All requests sent together that follow the same protocol will get the same issue number which includes Financial Code, Shipping Address, and information about each of the requested items. The ICBS system will fill the request in IROC or UTF back to the dispatch office, depending on the status of the supplies available. The group of supplies then get sent to the address stated on the Resource Order.



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Incident management teams may be allowed to order directly from the Cache, by-passing the need to go through the local dispatch office. These orders will utilize supply request numbers (S#) between S-100,000 and S-199,999. This block of numbers is assigned within IROC for use by cache personnel only within ICBS. In order to avoid duplicate issuing of S numbers, **The numbers in this block are unavailable to the local dispatcher.** Once a request has been filled by the cache, the associated request number and fill information transmits from ICBS back to IROC.

## What are some requirements needed for creating a Cache request?

**Host Information** - Before ICBS can accept a request from IROC, the incident host and unit ID must be entered in ICBS. Most hosts ID's have been entered, but occasionally one is missing. This causes a failure in ICBS when an incident is submitted, and the billing organization isn't a valid agency. When this happens, the ICBS database administrator must enter the organization before ICBS will see the request. Incidents won't import correctly when a dispatch center is set up as the billing organization. The billing organization needs to be an agency. The information can be found on the Organization Address.

**Financial codes** - Before ICBS can accept a request from IROC the incident must have a default financial code. There could be a code in your incident, but unless it's marked as the default, ICBS will not recognize it.

**Multi Place cache supply orders** - Please Multi place as many supply requests as possible to the cache. This allows the cache to process the requests faster and to associate one issue number to multiple requests. If ten requests (S1 - S10) are placed to the cache at one time, they will all get one issue number. If each of those requests is placed separately, each request gets a separate issue number resulting in a new set of paperwork for each request. An analogy here is grocery shopping - you want all your goods in your shopping cart processed in a single transaction, not in 10 separate transactions.

There are several reasons **multiple issue numbers** are created in ICBS even though you are highlighting all the requests at once and placing them to the cache at one time. Some instances are:

- Difference in field entry values - Any difference in these values will result in multiple requests or bundles being sent to ICBS as separate cache issues
- Smokejumper Loft vs. Smoke Jumper Loft vs. SMOKEJUMPER LOFT PARACARGO vs. PARA CARGO vs. paracargo JOHN Q. SMITH vs. John Q. Smith vs. John Smith vs. J. Smith
- Date/Time Needed - If the date/time needed is different on requests, this will split requests in ICBS.



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- Shipping phone number – Requests will be split in ICBS if the contact number is different or if it is the same but the format is different such as ( ) vs. dashes.
  - Examples: 208-387-5124 vs. (208)387-5124 vs. 208.387.5124 o 208-387-5124 Ext. 121 vs. 208-387-5124 Ext 121 vs. 208-387-5124 #121
- Shipping method - Shipping address, shipping instructions or pickup are your options. Any format, upper/lower case, abbreviation differences will cause the requests to be split.
  - Examples: ELKO DISTRICT OFFICE vs. Elko District Office vs. Elko DO vs. Elko D.O.
  - 740 Simms Street vs. 740 Simms St.
  - SUITE A vs. Suite A vs. Ste. A vs. Ste A
  - 32459 vs. 32459-1590
  - DROP POINT 6 ON WARM LAKE ROAD vs. Drop Point 6 on Warm Lake Road vs. DP 6 on Warm Lake Road vs. DP6 on Warm Lake Road.

## How to order a NFES item in IROC.

There are two terms in use when ordering an item from a Supply Cache. First is **The Standard Pack** - this is how things are packaged. Think of this as how you would see things packaged on your local grocery store shelf. This is the Cache “Shelf”. For instance, BATTERY – SIZE AA, 1.5 VOLT, PENLIGHT come 24 in a package. This would be the Standard Pack for this item.

The next term is **The Unit of Issue** - this refers to how the Cache will ship the item to you. Possible ways to order are each, pair, package, etc. In this case, the BATTERY – SIZE AA, 1.5 VOLT, PENLIGHT is issued by the package. Since the Unit of Issue is PG (Package), you would request the number of packages needed to make up the number of batteries needed. If you want 48 AA batteries, you would order two packages because the batteries come 24 in a package.

If you were to order shovels, you could order the unit issue of each - 1 shovel. The Standard Pack for shovels is 20 – that is so you could order a pack for a crew. The benefit of ordering using the standard pack quantity is just for packing/shipping; instead of having several loose shovels at the cache that need to be bundled and packaged separately, they can just put a whole box on the truck.



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## How do my requests get filled?

A cache may fill a request in several ways:

- “UTF” all or a portion of a request if they don’t have the items available.
- “Forward” all or a portion of a request to another cache to fill.

Once an ICBS issue happens, it’s complete and the cache can’t edit quantity filled, so whatever quantity is sent in the fill information is all you’re going to get. If someone ordered 50 lengths of hose and they only issued 24 lengths on that S number, then if the fire wants more, they need to create another S number and try again. If an item was forwarded... it can be filled by some other cache down the road. If that S number is still pending, then IROC can receive the fill information when that happens.

To easily see NFES requests you have sent to the cache, look in request status. For numbers filled from the cache (requests sent from IMT) look for the 100,000+ numbers in the request status for the incident. They will show up as any Request in IROC does.

## Rules for cancelling and retrieving a NFES request in IROC:

Once the request is sent to the cache the order can be retrieved up to the point that the cache has confirmed and released it to the floor. After this point, ICBS has operational control of the request. To get the request back to IROC, the cache will need to UTF the request. “Included in Shipment” is the last point where the cache itself can cancel the order – once the shipment gets confirmed the fill information goes to IROC and no changes are possible in either program.

## Why can’t I reassign an NFES resource?

Per Incident Business rules, NFES items cannot be re-assigned.

## Why can’t I edit multiple supply/cache requests?

The group of requests to edit cannot be a mix of NFES and non-NFES requests because of the NFES shipping and financial number requirements. Only documentation can be made on NFES request already placed to a cache. All other changes (quantity ordered, shipping instructions, etc.) must be made by the cache.

## Why can’t I release the NFES request back to its preposition order?

NFES resources cannot be released back to preposition. The request must be released to ‘home’ (cache).



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## **I've entered Special Needs in IROC, but the cache doesn't see them.**

If an IROC user places a special character in the Special Needs field (for instance an upside-down question mark), this could cause a problem with ICBS processing the order. You are always better off just typing it in or using notepad or some other text doc first to copy the info to and then recopying/pasting into IROC.

## **I've entered shipping instructions and a shipping address, but the cache only sees the shipping address.**

Only one type of shipping address can be entered (Pick Up, Shipping Address or Shipping Instructions). If you select any of the fields, the others are hidden. If you enter a Shipping Address it shows in the field, but if you then enter Shipping Instructions, the Shipping Address is replaced with See Shipping Instructions. You can enter Shipping Instructions that include an address and directions if you like.

## **Why can't I create or place a subordinate request to the cache?**

ICBS does not allow the IROC user to create subordinate requests or to be placed to a cache for a NFES Supply. ICBS does use subordinates for Telecommunication orders e.g. NFES 4390.

## **Why can't the cache see my IROC incident in ICBS?**

When the cache initiates an order in ICBS, they enter the incident order number and year. If the incident isn't defined in ICBS yet, a message will display asking them if they want to query IROC for the incident. If they say yes, ICBS looks in IROC for the incident (must be an active, open incident) and the incident details will display in the ICBS incident details. The ICBS user will populate the appropriate account code fields and activate the incident by clicking in the active flag box and saving it.

## **Can I make my cache show up at the top of the dropdown list on the Place to External Cache options?**

Yes. The cache options in the Place to and External Cache drop down list will show your default cache. You can set the default cache for your dispatch under the dispatch center in the DMT. If for some reason the cache you will be using for your incident is different, you can change the default cache in DMT under the ICBS tab in your incident.