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|  | {Type the fire danger planning area title here} |  |
|  | **Staffing Plan** |  |
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[Fire Danger Planning Area Title]

**Staffing Plan**

# Introduction

## Purpose

This Staffing Plan is intended to provide day-to-day guidance for decisions regarding the “degree of readiness” of initial attack (IA) resources. The Staffing Level (SL) is used as a basis to make daily internal fire operations decisions affecting our agency personnel. At each SL, this plan identifies:

* *Daily staffing*
* *Draw-down levels*
* *Step-up actions*

This Plan will function most effectively when decisions are made in preparation for escalating fire danger and potential fire activity. Waiting until the day of a critical event during extreme fire danger will prove this plan ineffective.

***“You need a fire danger system that will help you make a judgment decision today on what kind and number of fires you can expect tomorrow.” (Lancaster, 2004)***

## Terminology

1. Staffing Index

The Staffing Index is the selection of an NFDRS output (ERC, BI, IC, SC) to provide the basis to calculate the Staffing Level.

1. Staffing Level

Staffing Level is the bottom line of fire-danger rating and can be thought of as a “readiness” level. Staffing Levels are expressed as numeric values where 1 represents the low end of the fire danger continuum and 5 at the high end.

Staffing Level is intended to provide fire managers with day-to-day (short-term) decision support regarding staffing of suppression resources. Staffing Level can be used to determine when additional workforce and resources may be necessary to ensure appropriate staffing in response to escalating fire danger.

1. Preparedness Level

Preparedness Levels often get confused with Staffing Levels. Staffing Levels only consider fire danger, while Preparedness Levels incorporate additional items, such as number of fires, live fuel moisture, and resources committed. Additionally, Staffing Levels are intended to help with short-term decisions, while Preparedness Levels incorporate stable variables to help with long-term decisions, such as the need to request severity funding or activation of public-use restrictions.

1. Step-up Plan

A Step-up Plan includes supplemental preparedness actions designed to enhance the unit’s fire management capability during short periods (usually one burn period in anticipation of wind events, dry cold fronts, and lightning events) where normal staffing cannot foreseeably meet initial attack, prevention, or detection needs.

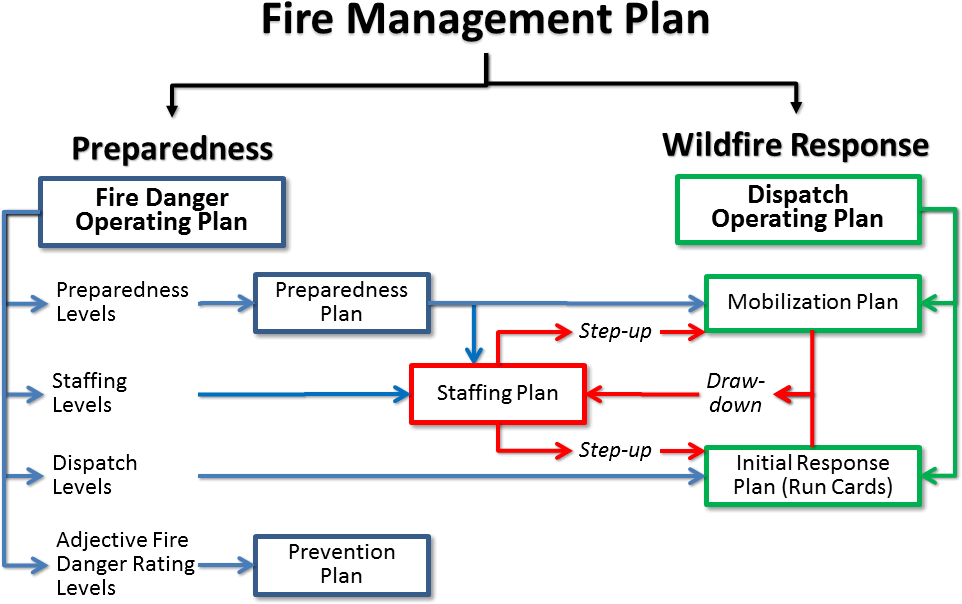
1. Draw-Down Level

“Draw-Down” is the degree of response capabilities of an agency due to the impact of emergency activity within their home jurisdiction and/or their commitment of resources to the mutual aid system for incident response outside of their jurisdiction. Draw-down is expressed as either (1) the predetermined number/type of suppression resources, or (2) the percentage of remaining capacity of suppression resources that are required to maintain viable initial attack (IA) capability.

## Policy and Guidance

Policy and guidance regarding the development of Staffing Plans can be found in chapter 10 of the [Interagency Standards for Fire & Aviation Operations](https://www.nifc.gov/PUBLICATIONS/redbook/2018/RedBookAll.pdf) (Red Book).

Agency directives and interagency guidance may require numerous unit plans and guides to meet fire preparedness and wildfire response objectives. Some of these plans and guides are inter-related; one or more plans/guides provide the basis for other plans/guides. The Staffing Plan is an operational plan tiered from the Fire Danger Operating Plan as shown below:



# Staffing Levels

Staffing Levels can be derived directly from the Weather Management Information System (WIMS), or preferably, from an analysis of historical weather observations and fire occurrence data using the FireFamilyPlus software to determine fire business thresholds.

## Staffing Index

This plan is based upon the following Staffing Index: Choose an item.

## Determination of Staffing Levels

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***EXAMPLE*** | | **Staffing Level Worksheet** | | | | | | |
| **Dispatch Level** | | **LOW** | | **MODERATE** | | **HIGH** | |
| **Fire Activity?**  **(Y/N)** | **N** | **1** | **2** | **2** | **3** | **3** | **4** |
| **Y** | **2** | **3** | **3** | **4** | **4** | **5** |
|  | | **N** | **Y** | **N** | **Y** | **N** | **Y** |
|  | | **Significant Fire Potential?**  **Forecasted High Risk Day/Event (Y/N)** | | | | | |

# Draw-Down

Draw-down is the predetermined number and type of suppression resources that are required to maintain viable initial attack (IA) capability at either the local or geographic area. The probability of initial attack success is contingent upon the availability of suppression resources during periods of high fire danger. Drawdown resources are considered unavailable outside the local or geographic area for which they have been identified. Drawdown is intended to:

* *Ensure adequate fire suppression capability for local and/or geographic area managers; and*
* *Enable sound planning and preparedness at all management levels.*

## Factors Affecting Draw-Down

Draw-down levels can change dramatically in a short period of time. A few factors which can affect staffing and resource commitment/availability include the following:

1. Response (or Dispatch) Level

Staffing Levels have a direct effect on the ability to send pre-determined suppression resources to wildland fires, depending upon the Response Level (and vice versa). Even under normal threat levels, a routine call for service can deplete the availability of a unit’s resources and result in a degree of drawdown. If an incident becomes prolonged or requires the commitment of resources beyond the initial response, the agencies capabilities can be affected.

1. Unit Size

The size of an agency has a direct impact on its ability to manage its drawdown status. The deeper resource pool allows more flexibility for maintaining adequate coverage within the home jurisdiction. Agencies of medium to smaller size can be challenged to maintain geographical coverage at times of increased emergency activity. In the case of some smaller agencies, a single resource committed to an incident can result in extreme drawdown and challenge their ability to meet their basic jurisdictional coverage responsibilities.

1. 5-day Versus 7-day Resource Staffing

When considering the full capacity of a unit, we include all personnel and resources. For ground resources (engines, dozers, watertenders) and overhead (FOS, ICs, Dispatchers, FMOs, AFMOs, Duty Officers, Resources Advisors, etc.), the daily operating capacity is typically a fraction of the full capacity due to staffing limitations and scheduling days off. Therefore, the “daily” capacity is used as the benchmark for draw-down levels unless a unit has sufficient personnel to keep a resource operational 7 days per week. The 5-day staffing is usually 65% to 75% of the full 7-day staffing (at 100%). For purposes of this plan, a base-line of 70% will be used for daily staffing of ground resources and overhead.

Aviation resources are typically under contract during the fire season to be available 7-days per week. Aviation resources are highly mobile and will respond to fire activity with the greatest need; often, outside the local jurisdiction. Therefore, aviation resources are not included in the determination of staffing levels in this plan.

1. Geographic Prioritization and Political Influences

A larger jurisdictional footprint can allow for an internal ability to reassign resources from geographical areas that may not be affected by immediate threat or demand to others that may be in critical need of resources to address increased threat or activity levels. With calculated pre-planning and policy decisions, these agencies may opt to allow one area or region to operate in a low level of drawdown while it reinforces the available resource pool in another area where an increased level of activity is anticipated. These agencies typically employ a predetermined matrix of acceptable resource adjustments to balance real or anticipated response requirements. The complexities of political interaction between jurisdictions need to be managed in a manner that is beneficial to all agencies.

1. Interagency Cooperation & Commitment

Most wildland fire emergency communication centers provide dispatch services to multiple agencies. When multiple agencies respond to incidents on each other’s jurisdiction – usually based on the closest available resource(s) –coordination amongst the affected agencies is essential to maintain interagency relationships and provide effective and efficient response to incidents.

1. Multiple Fires

Maintaining capacity to respond to a reported incident is the intended outcome of a Staffing Plan. However, when more than one incident occurs concurrently within the respective unit’s response area, a unit’s capacity is certainly diminished or exhausted.

## Determination of Draw-down Levels

Local drawdown is established by the local unit and implemented by the local interagency dispatch office. The local dispatch office will notify the Geographic Area Coordination Center (GACC) of local drawdown decisions and actions.

1. Draw-down Resources

* Applicable to all draw-down resources

1. Available to respond to any wildland fire within the local Dispatch Area
2. Enroute within 30-minutes from base location

* Engines - Definition of a Draw-down Resource

1. Type-3, Type-4 or Type-6 Wildland Fire Engines
2. NWCG Engine Standards

* Squads – Definition of Draw-down Resource

1. Squad – Minimum of 5 including one FFT1

## Draw-down Actions

In the fire service, the term draw-down is generally used to describe the level of commitment of an agency’s resources at a certain point in time. Most importantly, it defines the agency’s ability to perform its basic service levels. Once a level has been reached where basic service levels cannot be provided, actions should be taken to “step up” the capacity to a level sufficient to provide anticipated services. The following table of supplemental preparedness actions and authorized funding provides this unit direction to make decisions in response to fluctuating draw-down levels.

# TABLE 1: Draw-Down Levels

[Document Title] has established resource drawdown levels as a tool to assist with strategic level decision making. Resource drawdown levels can be used to summarize resource availability, allocate resources in the Region, or statewide, and provide guidance to Duty Officers when considering Cover Behind, Move Up, or Preposition of resources, and/or Staffing Patterns.

Only [Document Title] resources shall be considered for drawdown levels. The levels indicated in the following chart reflect the availability of a resource (engine, dozer, crew) for the [Document Title]. Resources are considered to be at normal operating levels when the number of available resources is between seventy-five and one-hundred percent.

**EXAMPLE**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| TABLE 2: Step-Up Actions | | | | | |
| **Staffing Level** | **Minimum Staffing Levels** | | | **Authorized Actions** | **Funding** |
|  | **Engines** | **Crews / Squads** | **Dozers** |  |  |
| **1** |  |  |  | 1. **Manage daily staffing to ensure resources are available within 10% of *TARGET CAPACITY*** 2. **Unit fire manager notifies state/regional manager:**  * **If unable to staff resources as per 1-a (above)** * **Prior to making a ground resource available out-of-state**  1. **Extended Staffing Not Authorized** 2. **AD Hiring Not Authorized for local needs** 3. **No Detection authorized** 4. **Normal tour of duty, no extended hours** 5. **Routine readiness standards apply to all personal and equipment** 6. **Preposition of Resources Not Authorized** | **Preparedness Budget**  **Best practices tend to be funding staffing for levels 1-3 out of base level preparedness funding** |
| **2** |  |  |  | 1. **Manage daily staffing to ensure resources are available within 10% of TARGET CAPACITY** 2. **Unit fire manager notifies state/regional manager:**  * **If unable to staff resources as per 2-a (above)** * **Prior to making a ground resource available out-of-state**  1. **Extended Staffing Authorized** 2. **AD Hiring Not Authorized** 3. **Detection:**  * **Ground Resources Authorized** * **Fixed-wing Not Authorized** * **Rotor-wing Not Authorized**  1. **Preposition of Resources Not Authorized** 2. **Field going personal may need to alter activities during the afternoon hours to increase readiness** | **Preparedness Budget**  **Best practices tend to be funding staffing for levels 1-3 out of base level preparedness funding** |
| **3** |  |  |  | 1. **Manage daily staffing to ensure resources are available within 10% of TARGET CAPACITY** 2. **Unit fire manager notifies state/regional manager:**  * **If unable to staff resources as per 3-a (above)** * **Prior to making a ground resource available out-of-state**  1. **Extended staffing Authorized** 2. **Field going personal and project activities may be limited to increase readiness** 3. **AD Hiring Not Authorized for local needs** 4. **Detection:**  * **Ground Resources are Authorized** * **Fixed-wing Resources are recommended** * **Rotor-wind Resources are Authorized**  1. **Preposition Resources Authorized (for 1 operational period when Local Preparedness Level is 4 or 5):**  * **To areas of Critical Habitat / FIAT** | **Preparedness Budget**  **Best practices tend to be funding staffing for levels 1-3 out of base level preparedness funding** |
| **4** |  |  |  | 1. **Manage daily staffing to ensure resources are available within 10% of TARGET CAPACITY** 2. **Unit fire manager notifies state/regional manager:**  * **If unable to staff resources as per 4-a (above)** * **Prior to making a ground resource available off-unit (at Local Preparedness Level 4 or 5)**  1. **Extended staffing authorized** 2. **AD Hiring Authorized for short-term assignments (to boost capacity and mitigate draw-down levels)** 3. **Field going personal and project activities should be limited to insure readiness** 4. **Personal should be ready for extended staffing** 5. **Detection:**  * **Ground Resources - Authorized** * **Fixed-wing Resources – recommended** * **Rotor-wind Resources – recommended**  1. **Preposition Resources Authorized (for up to 2 operational periods when Local Preparedness Level is 3 or higher):**  * **To areas of Critical Habitat / FIAT** * **To areas likely to have ignitions / lightning** | **Funding for extended staff or boosting capacity may come from local support codes (FS), state director (BLM) severity funds or other regional DOI discretionary funds.**  **If extended time occurs in SL 4 or 5, long term severity funds should be requested.** |
| **5** |  |  |  | 1. **Manage daily staffing to ensure resources are available within 10% of TARGET CAPACITY** 2. **Unit fire manager notifies state/regional manager:**  * **If unable to staff resources as per 5-a (above)** * **Prior to making a ground resource available off-unit (at Local Preparedness Level 4 or 5)**  1. **Extended staffing authorized if Local Preparedness Level is 3 or higher** 2. **AD Hiring Authorized for short-term assignments (to boost draw-down levels)** 3. **Field going personal and project activities should be limited to insure readiness** 4. **Personal should be ready for extended staffing and IA activity** 5. **All qualified personal should be available to support wildfire activity.** 6. **Detection:**  * **Ground Resources - recommended** * **Fixed-wing Resources – recommended** * **Rotor-wing Resources - recommended**  1. **Preposition Resources Authorized:**  * **To areas of Critical Habitat / FIAT** * **To areas likely to have ignitions / lightning** | **Funding for extended staff or boosting capacity may come from local support codes (FS), state director (BLM) severity funds or other regional DOI discretionary funds.**  **If extended time occurs in SL 4 or 5, long term severity funds should be requested.** |