

Glossary of Terms

Multiple use, **Medical**, **Wildland Fire**, **Structural Fire**

A

- Advanced Directives** : Written documentation that specifies medical treatment for a competent patient should the patient become unable to make decisions; also called a Do Not Resuscitate (DRN) order.
- Agonal Respirations** : Slow, gasping respiration, sometimes seen in dying patients.
- Air Tanker** : A fixed-wing aircraft equipped to drop fire retardants or suppressants.
- Alarm** : A standardized response to notification of an emergency incident. Alarms are further designated as "first alarm" which is dispatched automatically, and "second and greater alarms" which are dispatched in response to the request of the Incident Commander (IC) on the incident.
- ALS – Advanced Life Support** : Paramedic level service.
- Anchor Point** : An advantageous location, usually a barrier to fire spread, from which to start building a fire line. An anchor point is used to reduce the chance of firefighters being flanked by fire.
- Aspect** : Direction toward which a slope faces.
- Automatic Aid** : Any resources from another agency which are dispatched as part of the "first alarm" assignment.

B

- Blow-up** : A sudden increase in fire intensity or rate of spread strong enough to prevent direct control or to upset control plans. Blow-ups are often accompanied by violent convection and may have other characteristics of a fire storm.
- BLS** : Basic Life Support – EMT-Basic level service.
- Brush Fire** : A fire burning in vegetation that is predominantly shrubs, brush and scrub growth.
- Bucket Drops** : The dropping of fire retardants or suppressants from specially designed buckets slung below a helicopter.
- Burn Period** : That part of each 24-hour period when fires spread most rapidly, typically from 10:00 a.m. to sundown.

C

- Cardiac Arrest** : A state in which the heart fails to generate an effective and detectable blood flow; pulses are not felt in cardiac arrest.
- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)** : The combination of rescue breathing and chest compressions used to establish adequate ventilation and circulation in a patient who is not breathing and has no pulse.
- Cerebrovascular Accident (CVA)** : An interruption of blood flow to the brain that results in the loss of brain function. Also known as a Stroke.
- Chain** : A unit of linear measurement equal to 66 feet.
- Chief Complaint C/C** : The main reason a patient called for help; also, the patient's response to general questions such as "What's Wrong?" or "What Happened?"
- Chief Officer** :
- Company** : A resource that includes personnel and equipment, and a vehicle to transport them.
- Control a Fire** : The complete extinguishment of a fire, including spot fires. Fireline has been strengthened so that flare-ups from within the perimeter of the fire will not break through this line.

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- Control Line** : All built or natural fire barriers and treated fire edge used to control a fire.
- Convection** : Convection involves the transfer of heat energy by means of vertical mass motions through a medium.
- Creeping Fire** : Fire burning with a low flame and spreading slowly.
- Crew Transport Vehicle** : Any vehicle capable of transporting a specified number of crew personnel in a specific manner.
- Crown Fire** : The movement of fire through the crowns of trees or shrubs more or less independently of the surface fire.

D

- Decontamination** : The physical or chemical process of reducing and preventing the spread of contaminants from persons and equipment used at a hazardous materials (HazMat) incident.
- Defensive Attack** : Deployment of resources to limit the growth of an emergency incident rather than mitigating it.
- Defibrillate** : To shock a fibrillating (chaotically beating) heart with specialized electrical current in an attempt to restore a normal rhythmic beat.
- Delirium Tremens (DT's)** : A severe withdrawal syndrome seen in alcoholics who are deprived of ethyl alcohol; characterized by restlessness, fever, sweating, disorientation, agitation, and convulsions; can be fatal in untreated.
- Direct Attack** : Any treatment of burning fuel, such as by wetting, smothering, or chemically quenching the fire or by physically separating burning from unburned fuel.
- Division** : Divisions are used to divide an incident into geographical areas of operation. Divisions are established when the number of resources exceeds the span-of-control of the operations chief. A division is located with the Incident Command System organization between the branch and the task force/strike team.
- Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT)** : Made up of a group of individuals that pool their efforts to save lives during a disaster situation. People come from all walks of life to assist in providing life saving care to the sick and injured.

E

- Egress** : Place or means of exiting an area.
- EMS Move up and Cover** : This is a temporary redeployment of EMS resources in order to provide continued coverage in areas experiencing unusually heavy call volume to a multi-patient event.
- Engine** : Any ground vehicle providing specified levels of pumping, water and hose capacity.
- Engine Company (structural)** : (pumper, fire engine) standard term to describe a truck with firefighters, a pump and equipment to fight fire with water.
- Engine Crew (wildland)** : Firefighters assigned to an engine.
- Escaped Fire** : A fire which has exceeded or is expected to exceed initial attack capabilities.
- Escape Route** : A route of travel known to all that leads away from a point of danger, generally to a safety zone. It should be preplanned.
- Exposure** : (1) Adjacent structure or separate part of the fire ground to which a fire could spread. (2) People, property, systems, or natural features that are or may be exposed to the harmful effects of a hazardous materials release.
- Extinguish** : To put out a fire completely.

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F

- Faller** : A person who fells trees. Also called a sawyer or cutter.
- Fire Behavior** : The manner in which a fire reacts to the influences of fuel, weather and topography.
- Fire Crew** : An organized group of firefighters under the leadership of a crew leader or other designated official.
- Fire Line** : A linear fire barrier that is scraped or dug to mineral soil.
- Fire Perimeter** : The entire outer edge or boundary of a fire.
- Fire Retardant** : Any substance except plain water that by chemical or physical action reduces flammability of fuels or slows their rate of combustion.
- Fire Running** : A rapidly spreading surface fire with a well-defined head.
- Fire Shelter** : An aluminized, heat reflective, personal, protective pup tent. Required to be worn by all wildland agencies.
- First Alarm** : A standardized response to notification of an emergency incident. Alarms are further designated as "first alarm" which is dispatched automatically, and "second and greater alarms" which are dispatched in response to the request of the Incident Commander (IC) on the incident.
- First Responder (medical)** : A medically trained provider who can rapidly get to patients to provide life saving procedures if needed and relay information to transport ambulance.
- Flanking Action** : Attacking a fire by working along the flanks either simultaneously or successively from a less active or anchor point and trying to connect the two lines at the head.
- Fuel** : Combustible material. Includes, vegetation, such as grass, leaves, ground litter, plants, shrubs and trees, structures that feed a fire.

G

- Global positional System (GPS)** : System for determining position on the earth's surface by calculating the difference in time for the signal from a number of satellites to reach a GPS receiver on the ground.
- Ground Fire** : Fire that consumes the organic material beneath the surface ground litter.

H

- Hand Crew** : A number of individuals that have been organized and trained and are supervised principally for operational assignments on an incident.
- Hand Line** : A fireline built with hand tools.
- Hazardous Materials (HazMat)** : Hazardous Materials (HazMat) – any material that is explosive, flammable, poisonous, corrosive, reactive, or radioactive, or any combination thereof, and requires special care in handling because of the hazards it poses to public health, safety, and/or the environment.
- Hazardous Materials Incident** : Uncontrolled, Unlicensed release of HazMat during storage or use from a fixed facility or during transport outside a fixed facility that may impact public health, safety, and/or the environment.
- Head of the Fire** : A "running edge" of the fire, usually spreading with the greatest speed. It is driven by the wind or topography. It is not uncommon to have two or more heads on a fire.
- Heavy Rescue** : A truck equipped with heavy hydraulic extrication tools, airbags, and personnel trained in extrication and technical rescue.

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- Helispot** : A temporary landing spot for helicopters. Same as a landing zone (LZ)
- Helitack Crew** : A crew of firefighters specially trained and certified in the tactical and logistical use of helicopters for fire suppression.
- Hose lay** : Arrangement of connected lengths of fire hose and accessories on the ground, beginning at the first pumping unit and ending at the point of water delivery.
- Hotshot Crew** : A highly trained firefighting crew used primarily in hand line construction.

I

- Incident Command System (ICS)** : Incident Command System; a standard system for managing incidents and events. ICS facilitates efficient management and the integration of resources from multiple agencies.
- ILL Person** : Any sort of undefined illness
- ILS** : Intermediate Life Support, EMT-Intermediate level service
- Incident** : A human-caused or natural occurrence, that requires emergency service action to prevent or reduce the loss of life or damage to property or natural resources
- Incident Action Plan** : (IAP) Contains objectives reflecting the overall incident strategy and specific tactical actions and supporting information for the next operational period. The plan may be oral or written. When written, the plan may have a number of attachments, including: incident objectives, organization assignment list, division assignment, incident radio communication plan, medical plan, traffic plan, safety plan, and incident map
- Incident Commander** : (IC) Individual responsible for the management of all incident operations at the incident site.
- Incident Command Post (ICP)** : The location at which the primary command functions are executed. Usually collocated with the incident base.
- Incident Management Team** : A management team comprised of the Incident Commander (IC), appropriate command, and general staff personnel assigned to an incident.
- Indirect Attack** : A method of suppression in which the control line is located along natural fuel breaks, favorable breaks in topography, or at considerable distance from the fire and intervening fuel is burned out.
- Initial Attack** : The actions taken by the first resources to arrive at a wildfire to protect lives and property, and prevent further extension of the fire.
- Infrared (IR)** : A heat detection system used for fire detection, mapping, and hotspot identification.
- Isolate** : (1) To set apart. (2) Second of three steps (locate, isolate, mitigate) in one way of sizing up an emergency situation.

L

- Ladder Company** : (Truck Company) standard term to describe a fire truck with an aerial ladder, equipment and the personnel. The truck may or may not have a pump and onboard water tank.
- Ladder Fuels** : Fuels which provide vertical continuity between strata, thereby allowing fire to carry from surface fuels into the crowns of trees or shrubs with relative ease. They help initiate and assure the continuation of crowning.
- Landing Zone** : A temporary landing spot for a medivac helicopter. Same as Helispot.
- Lead Plane** : Aircraft with pilot used to make dry runs over the target area to check wing and smoke conditions and topography and to lead air tankers to targets and supervise their drops.
- Light (Fine) Fuels** : Fast-drying fuels, generally with a comparatively high surface area-to-volume ratio, which is less than 1/4-inch in diameter and has a timelag of one hour or less. These fuels readily ignite and are rapidly consumed by fire when dry.

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Light Rescue : A truck or other vehicle that is equipped with extrication hand tools, EMS supplies, and personnel trained in light extrication and rescue techniques.

Lookout : A person designated to detect and report fires from a vantage point.

M

Mechanism of Injury (MOI) : The way in which traumatic injuries occur; the forces that acts on the body to cause damage.

Medical Control : Physician instructions that are given directly by radio (online/direct) or indirectly by protocol/management guidelines (off-line/indirect), as authorized by the medical director of the service.

Medical Direction : The process by which a physician guides and oversee the patient care provided by an emergency medical services (EMS) system.

Medical Director : The physician who authorized or delegates to the EMT the authority top perform medical care in the field.

Mine Rescue Team : Team locates and rescues individuals lost or trapped in active or abandoned mine shafts or other below-ground entrapments.

Mobilization : The process and procedures used by all organizations, federal, state and local for activating, assembling, and transporting all resources that have been requested to respond to or support an incident.

Mop Up : To make a fire safe or reduce residual smoke after the fire has been controlled by extinguishing or removing burning material along or near the control line, felling snags, or moving logs so they won't roll downhill.

Mutual Aid : Any resources from another agency which are dispatched as a result of a request for assistance from the IC on an incident.

O

Offensive Attack : Aggressive fire attack that is intended to control or extinguish a fire before it spreads to other uninvolved property.

Operational Period : The period of time scheduled for execution of a given set of tactical actions as specified in the Incident Action Plan. Operational periods can be of various lengths, although usually not more than 24 hours.

Origin : Location where the fire started.

Overhaul : Searching for and extinguishing any hidden or remaining fires once the main body of fire has been extinguished.

Overhead : People assigned to supervisory positions, including incident commanders, command staff, general staff, directors, supervisors, and unit leaders.

P

Prescribed Fire : Controlled application of fire to wildland fuels in either their natural or modified state, under specified environmental conditions which allow the fire to be confined to a predetermined area and at the same time to produce the intensity of heat and rate of spread required to attain planned resource management objectives.

R

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

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- Red Card** : Fire qualification card issued to fire rated persons showing their training needs and their qualifications to fill specified fire suppression and support positions in a large fire suppression or incident organization.
- Red Flag Warnings** : Term used by fire weather forecasters to alert forecast users to an ongoing or imminent critical fire weather pattern.
- Relative Humidity (Rh)** : The ratio of the amount of moisture in the air, to the maximum amount of moisture that air would contain if it were saturated. The ratio of the actual vapor pressure to the saturated vapor pressure.
- Resource** : A resource may be a single person (such as a supervisor) or a combination of equipment and personnel (an engine).
- Resource Order** : An order placed for firefighting or support resources, typically from Taos Zone or State Forestry District Offices.
- Response Zone** : A specific geographic area in which a specific agency has primary responsibility to respond to emergency calls. A response zone is not necessarily identical to the agency's formal jurisdiction.
- Rehab (Rehabilitation)** : A designated area for incident personnel who are working in an environment to become over exerted.
- Rope Rescue Team** : A team that has training in rescue operations through the use of rigging techniques, anchor systems, belays, mechanical advantages, subject extrication techniques, and low- and high-angle rescue techniques.

S

- Safety Zone** : An area cleared of flammable materials used for escape in the event the line is outflanked or in case a spot fire causes fuels outside the control line to render the line unsafe. In firing operations, crews progress so as to maintain a safety zone close at hand allowing the fuels inside the control line to be consumed before going ahead. Safety zones may also be constructed as integral parts of fuel breaks; they are greatly enlarged areas which can be used with relative safety by firefighters and their equipment in the event of a blowup in the vicinity.
- SCBA** : Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus.
- Scratch Line** : An unfinished preliminary fire line hastily established or built as an emergency measure to check the spread of fire.
- Second Alarm** : A standardized response to notification of an emergency incident. Alarms are further designated as "first alarm" which is dispatched automatically, and "second and greater alarms" which are dispatched in response to the request of the Incident Commander (IC) on the incident.
- Single Resource** : Any combination of personnel and equipment that function as a single unit, i.e. a fire engine and its staff of firefighters.
- Shock** : A condition that develops when the circulatory system is not able to deliver sufficient blood to body organs, resulting in organ failure and eventually death if untreated.
- Size-up** : To evaluate a fire to determine a course of action for fire suppression.
- Slop-over** : A fire edge that crosses a control line or natural barrier intended to contain the fire.
- Smoldering Fire** : A fire burning without flame and barely spreading.
- Snag** : A standing dead tree or part of a dead tree from which at least the smaller branches have fallen.
- Spot Fire** : A fire ignited outside the perimeter of the main fire by flying sparks or embers.
- Spot Weather Forecast** : A special forecast issued to fit the time, topography, and weather of each specific fire. These forecasts are issued upon request of the user agency and are more detailed, timely, and specific than zone forecasts.
- Staging Area** : Locations set up at an incident where resources can be placed while awaiting a tactical assignment on a three-minute available basis. Staging areas are managed by the operations section.

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- Stand By** : Agency may need assistance. Respond to the station and get ready.
- Standard Response** : The normal response for any given incident; the standard dispatch; the “First Alarm” assignment.
- Strike Team** : Five fire engines of the same ICS Type, with common internal communications capability, and supervised by a Strike Team Leader.
- Stroke** : A loss of brain function in certain brain cells that do not get enough oxygen during a CVA. Usually caused by obstruction of the blood vessels in the brain that feed oxygen to those brain cells.
- Structure Fire** : Any call such as, Structure Fire, Electrical Fire, Appliance Fire, Smoke in a Structure, Smell of Something Burning in a Structure, and Vehicle or Brush Fire Endangering a Structure.
- Supervisor** : A person with appropriate qualifications and credentials to manage a group of resources. The title is independent of formal rank.
- Surface Fire** : Fire that burns surface litter, other loose debris on the forest floor, and small vegetation.

T

- Taos Zone** : (TAZ) The Taos Zone is a dispatch center based on the principle of joint interagency management in wildland firefighting resources in Northern New Mexico.
- Task Force** : A combination of resources of different kind and type, supervised by a Task Force Leader.
- Tender, Water** : (Td) An apparatus used to transport water. May or may not have pumping capabilities.
- Tender, Fuel** : An apparatus capable of supplying fuel to ground or airborne equipment.
- Triage** : The process of sorting patients based on the severity of injury and medical need, to establish treatment and transportation priorities.
- Truck Company** : A resource that includes personnel and equipment, and a vehicle to transport them.
- Type** : The capability of a resource in comparison to another type. Type 1 usually means a greater capability due to power, size, or capacity.

U

- Uncontrolled Fire** : Any fire which threatens to destroy life, property, or natural resources.

W

- Water Tender** : A truck that carries at least 1000 gallons of water, has a “quick dump” capability, and carries fold-a-tanks with the capacity to hold all the water that the truck carries.
- Wet line** : Line that has been constructed using water or foam. Wet line is constructed to extinguish the flame front or to be used to burn from.
- Wildfire** : Any fire occurring on wildland except a fire under prescription.
- Wildland** : An area in which development is essentially nonexistent, except for roads, railroads, power lines, and similar transportation facilities.
- Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)** : The line, area or zone where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels.