

950 SUPPRESSION SAFETY

951 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INVOLVEMENT

- A. Initial attack personnel arriving on the scene of a potential hazmat (Hazmat/Weapons of Mass Destruction) incident (e.g., train derailment or truck transport accident) where potential hazardous materials may exist, should stay a safe distance upwind and away from the accident. Even if the train or truck is not on fire, back off, upwind, until it is determined whether or not hazardous materials exist. DNRC personnel are only trained to the hazmat awareness level as first responders.
- B. Try to identify what kind of material is involved, if at all possible, from a safe distance. Identification may be accomplished by talking to railroad or transport personnel in the area of the accident. Identification can also be done if placards, 4-digit identification (ID) numbers or other visible markers are present on the tank, vehicle or rail car. Also provide dispatch with accident location and possible hazards to people and structures in the area and note nearness of lakes, rivers, streams or any body of water that may spread or be contaminated by spilled materials.
- C. Initial attack personnel should notify the fire dispatcher immediately of the accident and the potential for a hazardous materials spill. Provide information to dispatcher regarding identifying placards, numbers, etc. that may indicate hazardous materials. Dispatchers should refer to their current "Hazardous Material Guidebook" to determine the material being transported. If the material is not listed, contact the local D&ES coordinator. If they cannot be reached, call the National Chemical Emergency Number, 800-424-9300, or Montana Emergency Services in Helena at (406) 841-6911.
- D. The fire dispatcher should notify the local Disaster and Emergency Services Coordinator and law enforcement personnel of the accident scene. Provide any pertinent information regarding the presence of hazardous materials or other threats. The fire dispatcher should review the information available concerning the existence of hazards and then issue specific instructions to the initial attack personnel on how to handle the wildfire situation.
- E. Railroad cars or trucks may not be carrying "hazardous materials," but may produce toxic gases from burning plastic or packaging materials inside the car. We should stick to confining the fire to the owned right-of-way, **after** following the procedures to find out what is burning. We may support RFD units, if requested, in suppressing the actual train fire--but do so only if the RFD has checked for hazardous materials and is following the recommended procedures.

- F. Approval is required before DNRC forces become involved in any actions involving weapons of mass destruction or a hazardous materials spill. Obtain approval by contacting one of the personnel in the following call-down list, following the order listed: (1) Administrator, Forestry Division, or (2) Chief, Fire and Aviation Management Bureau, or (3) Supervisor, Fire Suppression Section.
- G. Who does the train dispatcher contact in the case of a derailment? In what order? Who controls the accident scene? We may have to control traffic, etc., if we are first on the scene. We prefer local Emergency Preparedness or law enforcement officials to do this job.
- H. The following numbers have been provided for contacting the railroads listed:

Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF)
1-800-795-2673

Butte, Anaconda & Pacific Railway
406-563-2821

Central Montana Rail Inc.
406-567-2223

Dakota Missouri Valley & Western
701-223-9282

Mission Mountain Railroad
406-495-1096

Montana Rail Link (MRL)
406-523-1500

Union Pacific Railroad Company
402-544-5000

Yellowstone Valley Railroad
208-490-0365

952 EMERGENCY INCIDENT DRIVING REGULATIONS

These standards address driving by personnel actively engaged in wildland fire or all-risk response activities, including driving while assigned to a specific incident or during initial attack fire response (includes time required to control the fire and travel to a rest location). In the absence of more restrictive agency policy, these guidelines will be followed during mobilization and demobilization as well. Individual agency driving policies shall be consulted for all other non-incident driving.

- A. Agency resources assigned to an incident or engaged in initial attack fire response will adhere to the current agency work/rest policy for determining length of duty day.
- B. No driver will drive more than 10 hours (behind the wheel) within any duty-day.
- C. Multiple drivers in a single vehicle may drive up to the duty-day limitation provided no driver exceeds the individual driving (behind the wheel) time limitation of 10 hours.
- D. A driver shall drive only if they have had at least 8 consecutive hours off duty before beginning a shift.

Exception: Exception to the minimum off-duty hour requirement is allowed when **essential** to:

- Accomplish **immediate** and **critical** suppression objectives, or
- Address **immediate** and **critical** firefighter or public safety issues.

- E. As stated in the current agency work/rest policy, documentation of mitigation measures used to reduce fatigue is required for drivers who exceed 16-hour work shifts. This is required regardless of whether the driver was still compliant with the 10-hour individual (behind the wheel) driving time limitations.
- F. All driving requiring a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) will be performed in accordance with applicable Department of Transportation regulations found in 49 CFR 383 and 390-397.
 - 1. No driver of a vehicle requiring a CDL will drive the vehicle after 15 hours on duty during any duty-day.
 - 2. Exception: An additional two hours of driving time may be added if a driver encounters adverse driving conditions, unforeseen emergency situations (breakdown), or to ensure the safety of personnel.

Drivers are responsible for following these policies, and it is the supervisor's responsibility to ensure that employees adhere to the proper driving limitations and monitor employee fatigue.

953 SAFETY TIPS AND ADVICE FOR FIREFIGHTERS

A. FIREFIGHTING NEAR POWER LINES

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) has prepared the following guidelines for firefighters:

1. If fighting fires in the area of BPA high-voltage transmission lines, firefighters should not play a solid stream of water directly on the conductors.
2. Firefighters should immediately contact the nearest BPA facility to get a representative to the scene. Normally this is done through the Unit Dispatcher.
3. They should always consider the line energized until a BPA representative has arrived at the scene, taken a "clearance" and grounded the conductors.
4. Until the clearance has been issued by the BPA representative, firefighters should stay a respectful distance from any conductors.

B. USE OF INDIVIDUAL FIRE SHELTERS

1. Policy

Individual forest fire shelters are mandatory articles of safety equipment for all Department employees engaged in direct fireline activity. This policy shall apply equally to initial attack situations as well as to ongoing or project-size fires, and shall include overhead personnel while on the fireline.

2. Issuing Procedure

Initial attack personnel will be issued fire shelters to be used throughout the fire season. Shelters should be thoroughly inspected to ensure that shelter is in good condition. Check for tears or wearing of plastic case. Replace if any damage is suspected. The shelter should be returned at the end of the season along with other safety gear.

Other individuals or crews assigned to ongoing or project fires shall be issued fire shelters by the dispatch center at the time of dispatch, or upon arrival at the fire camp.

- a. Upon return from fire duty, each person shall return his fire shelter to the location of its original issue.
- b. In situations of limited availability of shelters, initial attack crews shall be given priority. The fire resource order form shall be used if extra shelters are needed for ongoing fires.

3. **Use**

The forest fire shelter is designed for emergency fireline use only, and will not be used for any other purpose. Any person who opens, uses, or causes to be used any fire shelter shall submit a written report documenting the circumstances of its use to the Incident Commander as soon as possible, and to the Area Manager within 24 hours of release from fire duty. **(See Annex A for Fire Entrapment Investigation & Review Guidelines.)**

4. **Training And Instructions**

An individual responsible for the issuing of fire shelters shall ensure that each person issued a shelter has been instructed in its proper use, and is aware of the requirement to document its use. In addition, all Supervisors shall ensure that each employee assigned to him has been trained in the proper use of the fire shelter, including normal care and maintenance.

954 NATIONAL SAFETY FLAGGING STANDARDS FOR WILDFIRES

The NWCG Safety and Health Working Team have recommended the following standards for safety on prescribed and suppression fires.

NFES #0258 - *Safety Zones/Escape Routes*--Lime green, fluorescent, biodegradable 1" wide.

NFES #0267 - *Hazards*--Yellow w/black diagonal stripes, fluorescent, biodegradable 1" wide.

The following are reasons for their recommendation:

- The colors quickly identify safety concerns to line personnel.
- They utilize color codes prescribed by OSHA and ANSI for hazards and safety items.

- They leave flexibility to use more common color ribbons to denote other “things” on fires.
- There is a significant tie to the LCES emphasis in operations planning and execution.
- Local use could include written information on the ribbon (example: type of hazard, date, access to what safety zone, etc.).

955 CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

A. WILDLAND FIRE CRITICAL INCIDENT PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

1. Wildland fire personnel do not experience human tragedy like emergency medical, structure fire, and law enforcement in most of their work and may feel unprepared for a critical incident.

Solution: Include critical incident stress in the training for all fire personnel at the start of fire season.

2. Some overhead personnel on the fire will not have training or direct experience with critical incidents or Critical Incident Stress Debriefings (CISD).

Solution: Have an SOP in place to immediately evaluate any unusual or stressful situation on the fire for critical incident effect on staff.

3. Extreme fatigue develops after many days on the fire with little rest, which can cloud decisions about critical incident effect.

Solution: Discuss the incident with appropriate personnel at the dispatching agency or request a consultation from a CISD contractor.

4. On an interagency fire it is hard to tell who should attend a debriefing.

Solution: All fire personnel who were part of the same incident must attend, regardless of which agency they are a member. Those who were not part of the incident, such as spouses, supervisors, or clergy, should not attend. Separate CISD debriefings may be held for them if indicated.

5. Sometimes fire personnel seem to do all right until several days or weeks later when the fire is over and they get back home.

Solution: Hold a debriefing within two days of the incident, then if needed, hold a second debriefing later when personnel go back home.

6. Spouses and other close associates need debriefing services, too.

Solution: Debriefing services for them can be arranged through the local critical incident team back home. Some local teams and employee assistance programs have experience working with family members.

B. AGENCY ADMINISTRATORS' GUIDE TO CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

The Agency Administrators' Guide to Critical Incident Management can be found at www.nwcg.gov/pms/pubs/pms926.doc

C. CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS DEBRIEFING TEAM (CISD)

1. **What It Is and What It Does**

A trained team of two or more CISD members meets soon after a casualty or other critical incident that creates unusual stress in emergency responders at the scene. In the debriefing process, those present express feelings and reactions to the incident and receive suggestions for getting through and over the incident. The purpose is to prepare personnel to return to duty and to assist and support them with the personal trauma associated with caring for victims in critical incidents.

2. **Team Members**

Firefighters, mental health professionals, nurses, human resource specialist and law enforcement officers are typical members of the team.

3. **Appropriate Incidents for CISD Debriefing**

Multiple or single casualty incidents, death or serious injury of co-workers in the line of duty, and certain child death incidents are examples. All emergency responders involved in the incident should be included. Debriefing must take place within one or two days of the incident.

4. **Contacts for CISD Teams**

CISD Teams may be ordered through the Northern Rockies Coordination Center by your Zone Dispatch Center. Reference

Critical Incident Stress Management Team. Refer to the Northern Rockies Interagency Mobilization Guide.

D. POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR CRITICAL INCIDENT
MANAGEMENT

Following are the policy and forms used to manage a critical incident.

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE: Robert A. Harrington
DATE:

Fire and Aviation Bureau

Subject: Policy and Procedures for Critical Incident Management

Author: Critical Incident Management Task Force Status: Final

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a thorough and timely response to critical incidents, including those that may involve a serious injury or fatality. The policy is intended to make certain that the emergency care of involved personnel is the top priority. It is also intended to provide guidance and direction for scene protection, managing the critical incident, conducting appropriate levels of investigation, providing training, and capturing lessons learned related to critical incident response.

I. Authority

Montana Code Annotated (MCA) 2-15-112(1)(b).

- (1) Except as otherwise provided by law, each department head shall:
 - (b) establish the policy to be followed by the department and employees.

Montana Code Annotated (MCA) 2-15-112(1)(f).

Provides that department heads shall prescribe rules for the administration of their departments and the conduct of its employees.

II. Policy and Procedures

Critical Incident: A fatality, serious injury, or other event that may have serious long-term adverse impacts on the agency, its employees, their families, or a community.

Care of Involved Personnel

The first priority for all critical incidents is to initiate appropriate life saving procedures, including applying first aid and/or requesting emergency services for the injured or afflicted person(s). Obtaining and providing for emergency life-saving measures takes priority over all other aspects of Critical Incident Management. This not only includes medical care for all personnel involved or affected at the incident, but also includes the opportunity for Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) for those who may not be physically injured. Key CISD factors to consider by first responders are included in the Critical Incident First Response Checklist. Additional information about CISD is found in Fire and Aviation Management’s 900 Manual.

A decision on whether the incident is a life-safety emergency or non-life-safety emergency event is critical. The Incident Commander or Chief of Party at the scene needs to determine what level of treatment is required, as well as the means of transport needed; the decision must be based on the best available information and recommendations of the most qualified medical personnel present.

Care for involved personnel includes proper and timely notification to immediate family members, next of kin, and involved agencies. Those in charge at the scene are expected to notify the Line Officer at the first possible opportunity after a critical incident has occurred. The Line Officer (beginning with Unit Manager) is then expected to follow the notification procedures outlined in the Notification Checklist found in Fire and Aviation Management's 900 Manual.

Scene Protection

Once appropriate life-saving measures have been accomplished, protection of the critical incident scene becomes an agency priority. The Incident Commander or Chief of Party is responsible for taking control of the critical incident scene.

As-soon-as it is safe to do so, the Incident Commander or Chief of Party must secure the critical incident site. All critical incident sites must be physically secured on a 24-hour basis to preserve evidence and protect personal and government property. Access to the incident site must be limited only to personnel authorized by the jurisdictional line officer(s) or Investigation Team Leader. Only the jurisdictional line officer(s) have the authorization to reduce or order the removal of scene protection measures.

As part of scene protection, communication must be controlled to guarantee the privacy of involved personnel. Key communication factors to consider by first responders are included in the Critical Incident First Response Checklist. A spokesperson must be designated by the Line Officer(s) to speak to the media and interested parties immediately after the Line Officer(s) notification of a critical incident. In the case of a fatality, a Liaison Officer must be designated by the Line Officer(s) to communicate and coordinate with the family members. If more than one agency has personnel involved in the critical incident, a Liaison Officer must also be designated by the Line Officer(s) within the first 12-hour period to communicate and coordinate with the other agencies.

Incident Management

Agency personnel whose job includes working or responding to situations where a critical incident may occur (like wildland-fire engine crews) must be provided with a Critical Incident Pocket Card that identifies agency performance expectations in the event of a critical incident.

Within the first 12-hour period following a critical incident, the Incident Commander or Chief of Party and Line Officer must finalized the Critical Incident First Response Checklist that identifies key actions needed and assigns individuals responsible for completing key actions. The Critical Incident First Response Checklist is located in the Fire and Aviation Management's 900 Manual and should be provided in day-planner format for agency incident commanders, chiefs of parties, line officers, and line officer representatives.

If a Safenet is filed in correlation with a critical incident, the Investigation Flowchart provides the details for an agency investigation and response.

If the critical incident is coupled with another incident, such as a fatality occurring on a wildland fire, timely decisions must be made about management of the primary incident (the fire), management of the critical incident (the fatality), and coordination between the two. The primary goal is for the agency to safely and effectively deal with the situation at hand. Key

coordination factors to consider by first responders and line officers are included in the Critical Incident First Response Checklist.

It is acceptable during a critical incident (fatality) for the responders working on a primary incident (fire) to simply withdraw and regroup. The Critical Incident First Response Checklist includes a quick analysis of the key factors that must be addressed in order to ensure safe and effective management of both primary and critical incidents. Primary incident resources should not re-engage until the Critical Incident Response Checklist is completed.

Critical Incident Investigation

The Department will complete an Initial Investigation for all critical incidents. The local Line Officer at the Unit Manager or higher level will be responsible for forming or ordering an Initial Investigation Team. The Investigation Team must receive a thorough briefing and agency expectations clearly spelled out in a written Delegation of Authority. In the case of a fatality, the Area Manager or designee will serve as the responsible Line Officer. Investigation Teams should be expected to arrive at the incident within 24 hours of being ordered.

Recommended investigation team compositions and investigation requirements are to be based on complexity of the critical incident. An Investigation Flowchart located in Fire and Aviation Management's 900 Manual provides agency line officers with the sequential and/or escalating types of investigations and corresponding team composition recommendations. The Investigation Flowchart also includes the requirements for the agency to respond to a Safenet.

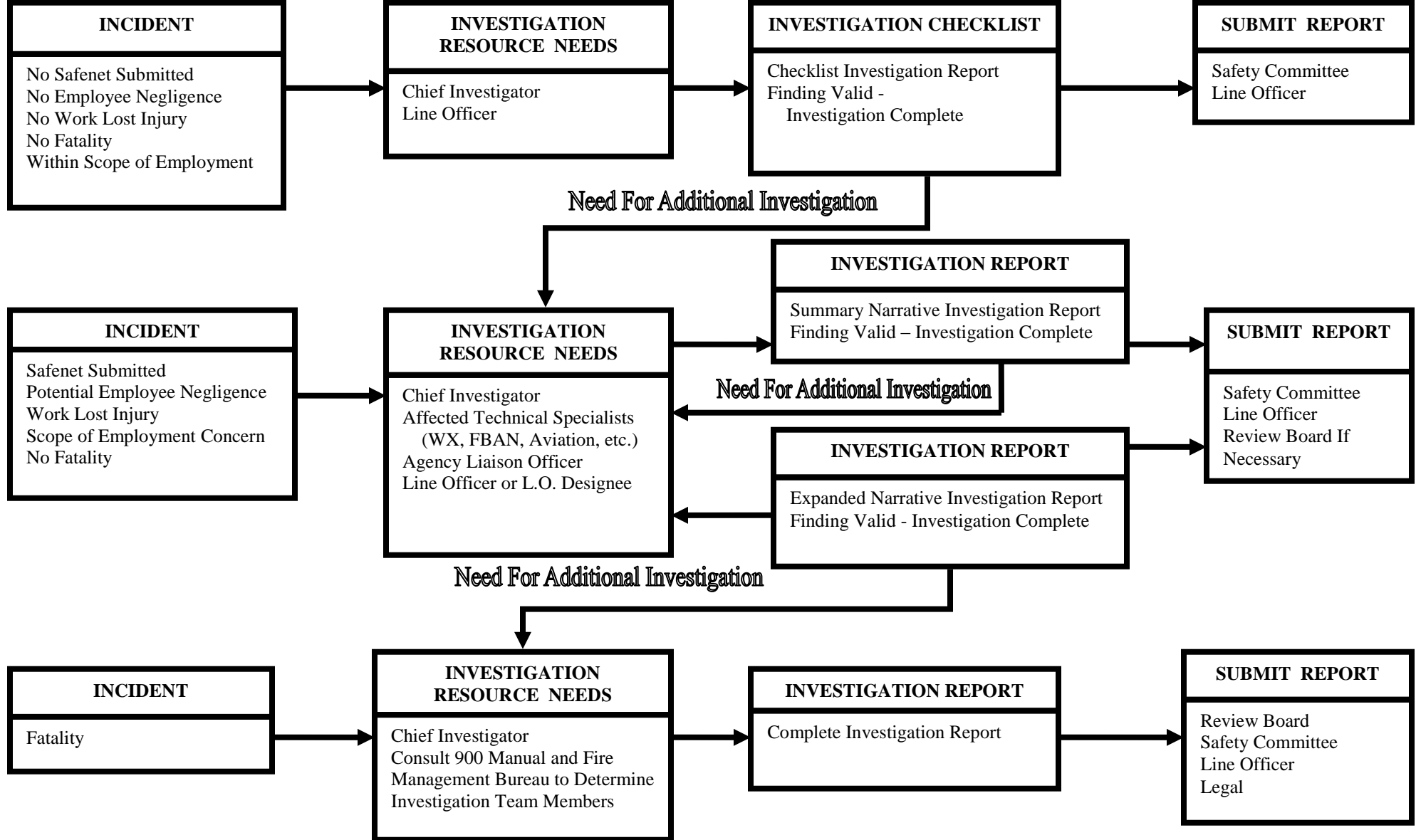
Initial Investigation Teams should strive to complete their investigations within 48 hours of receiving their Delegation of Authority. If based on the Initial Investigation there is a need to do additional or continued investigation(s), it must be identified and delineated in the Initial Investigation Report, and signed off on by the Line Officer. The initial investigation is directed at fact finding. Subsequent or additional investigation(s) may occur based on the results of the initial investigation, or as a result using the Investigation Flowchart.

Training and Lessons Learned

In order to identify learning opportunities and develop training and standards to reduce the injury or death to employees and cooperators, all critical incidents will be subject to an After Action Review (AAR). The Training and Safety Team will be responsible for organizing and completing the AAR. The results of the AAR may cause additional review or other actions directed at situational learning.

Robert A. Harrington, Administrator
Forestry Division

INVESTIGATION FLOW CHART



Revised 5/2/2012

INCIDENT INVESTIGATION CHECKLIST

Incident Name:
Investigation Date:
Chief Investigator:
Location:
County:

INCIDENT DESCRIPTION:

- No Safenet Filed.
- No Employee Negligence. Explain

- No Work Lost Injury.
- Personnel Within Their Scope of Employment. Explain

- No Fatality.
- No Potential for Incident to be Significantly Worse. Explain

___ INVESTIGATION COMPLETE ___ FURTHER INVESTIGATION REQUIRED

CHIEF INVESTIGATOR _____ DATE _____

FINDING:

LINE OFFICER _____ DATE _____

Critical Incident First Response Checklist

**Revised
5/22/2007**

The following is a checklist designed to provide all personnel with a protocol to be used in the event of a critical accident or injury. The plan addresses both life-threatening emergency and non-emergency injuries/accidents, burnovers, entrapment, or fatalities. This document must be completed by both the Incident Commander (IC) or the Chief of Party (CP) and the unit Line Officer (LO) within the first 12 hours.

Initial Response Protocol

Incident Commander or Chief of Party must take control of the scene
Withdraw and regroup if personnel are not able to safely continue with assignment

The most qualified person available will initiate appropriate life saving measures; apply first aid and/or request emergency services

Notify appropriate dispatch center of situation

Initial	Date/Time
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- **Content of Notification**

- **Do not release name(s) of injured over the radio**

- Is this a life-threatening emergency or non-emergency event?
 - Description of injuries
 - What services are immediately needed? (Evac, EMS, Law...)
 - Brief description of how incident occurred
 - Incident location
 - Name of person making notification
 - Determine need for air space restriction over the incident and initiate

if needed

Establish check-in schedule with dispatch, and relay actions taken

Assign someone to documentation, and document everything

Order CISD team if necessary

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Expectations for the IC/CP

Withdraw and regroup if personnel are not able to safely continue with assignment

Identify need for operational control of the primary incident and the critical incident. Order or re-assign resources needed to accomplish operational control.

Record witness contact information.

Secured and preserve on a 24 hour basis the scene and all pertinent evidence must be

Maintain communication with the proper dispatch center.

Brief your supervisor on the situation.

Identify a spokesperson until one is assigned by the line officer.

Isolate injured party from the Media

Asses the need for a CISD team, order if needed

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

In Case of fatality

Do not disturb the deceased unless required for the safety of others.

If necessary, cover the deceased with blanket.

Isolate all personnel involved from the media.

Follow-up Items

Complete Workers Comp. First Report of injury (must submit within 6 days).

Complete Supervisor's Incident Investigation Report.

II. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS ASSESSMENT

Describe the environmental conditions contributing to the incident

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT:

Describe the physical environment factors affecting the incident (altitude, slope, vegetation, etc).

WEATHER:

Describe the weather conditions affecting the incident.

FIRE BEHAVIOR:

Describe the fire behavior impacts to the incident (if incident involves a fire).

III. HUMAN FACTORS ASSESSMENT

Identify the human factors contributing to the incident

QUALIFICATIONS OF INVOLVED PERSONNEL:

Determine the qualifications and training of personnel involved in the incident.

PHYSICAL & PSYCHOLOGICAL STATE OF THE FIREFIGHTERS:

Consider length of shift or assignment, stress, conditioning and fatigue of personnel involved.

DUTIES:

Identify the duties of individuals directly involved in the incident.

MANAGEMENT:

Determine the organization, supervision, command, and control of personnel involved in the incident.

COMPLIANCE:

Identify applicable rules, policies, operating guides, etc. that may apply to the incident. Describe compliance or deviations from the compliance documents during the incident. If a Safenet has been filed, assess and respond to the Safenet.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Identify the types of communication used before, during, and after the incident.

IV. EQUIPMENT FACTORS ASSESSMENT

Determine what equipment was involved in the incident.

EQUIPMENT:

*Identify the equipment used in association with the incident. **If equipment was a contributing factor to the incident provide details about the contribution.***

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE):

Identify the PPE available and utilized during in the incident and assess effectiveness.

V. AFTER ACTION REVIEW ASSESSMENT

Describe the principles/doctrine factors associated with the incident.

WHAT WAS PLANNED?:

WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED?:

WHY DID IT HAPPEN?:

WHAT WOULD THE INVOLVED PERSONNEL DO DIFFERENTLY IN THE FUTURE?:

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Provide recommendations, conclusions, and follow-up actions.

INVESTIGATION TEAM MEMBERS:

List the Investigation Team Members, positions, and contact information

INVESTIGATION TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS:

Investigation Assessment Prepared By:	Name: _____ Date: _____
	Signature: _____
	Title: Chief Investigator

VII. FINDING

Provide a narrative accepting, rejecting, or modifying the Investigation Team recommendations, conclusions, and follow-up actions.

NEED FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION:

Investigation Report

More Detailed Assessment

No Further Assessment

Investigation Assessment Approved By:

Name:

Date:

Signature:

Title: Line Officer or Designee

956 INJURY/FATALITY PROCEDURES

A. EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY

Serious injuries or fatalities may occur on wildfires as a result of fire suppression actions. All Department personnel should be aware of the proper procedures to follow. Every employee involved in fire suppression activities should become familiar with the available manuals, guidelines, policies, etc., that list the proper procedures to follow in case of a serious injury or a fatality.

B. SAFETY OFFICERS

A safety officer is required at each land office, the Department headquarters and the Forestry Division complex. The safety officers should be able to answer any questions you have on this subject. The Department Personnel Director can also help with many questions relating to this topic.

C. AVAILABLE PUBLICATIONS

The following is a list of publications that should be available at all offices as reference material:

- Fireline Handbook (NWCG Handbook 3) PMS 410-1, NFES #0065 Chapter 4 on Firefighting Safety, page 43.
- Department Safety Manual, January 1, 2002.
- Department Operations Manual, Chapter 13, Safety, Memo #MM 1-88-13-1, 10/1/87 (Contains Department Safety Manual as insert).
- State of Montana Employee Safety Program (1984).

D. DNRC FATALITY PROCEDURE

The following is the official Department standard in the event of any employee fatality and is quoted in its entirety. Director Bud Clinch approved this procedure effective 04/05/96.

STANDARD FOR EMPLOYEE FATALITY WHILE IN THE LINE OF DUTY

While it is the goal of the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation to prevent any serious injuries and/or fatalities from occurring to DNRC employees in the line of duty, death from accident or illness can occur. In such cases it is important that a fatality notification procedure be followed that conforms to requirements of the law and which will ensure that proper notification of the next of kin is conducted.

When encountering an injured or afflicted person, the first priority is to initiate appropriate life saving procedures including applying first aid and/or requesting emergency services. Only in cases where death is apparent beyond any reasonable doubt, should fatality notification procedures take precedence over lifesaving measures. In these cases it is not necessary for emergency service personnel to take risks in responding to the scene and the county coroner is the individual best prepared to handle the situation. In the event a fatality occurs, this procedure establishes the actions to be taken by DNRC employees.

Notification of Proper Authority and DNRC Personnel

1. Notify the Coroner of the county in which death apparently occurred.
2. Notify appropriate law enforcement officials for fatalities that occur on city, county, state or federal highways (i.e., city police, county sheriff, highway patrol) or if unable to contact County Coroner. *Notify Department of Justice, Fire Prevention and Investigation Bureau of all fire fatalities.*
3. Chief Pilot for fatalities involving DNRC aircraft.
4. Director of the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation. (Director or his designee will make appropriate news releases.)
5. Appropriate Division Administrator or designee as per employee's division.
6. The on-duty fire coordinator, if a wildland fire-related fatality.
7. DNRC Personnel Director, to provide personal information (i.e., next of kin, phone, address, etc.).
8. Department Safety Officer, to instigate necessary safety investigation.
Investigation Team: Investigation team members should include the Department Safety Officer, a representative from the Department of Justice, Fire Prevention and Investigation Bureau, incident safety officer and a representative from the USFS-MEDC accident investigation team.

Content of Notification

1. Location of deceased. If location is not easily identified(i.e., four miles up Elk Creek, Missoula County) meet the coroner or law enforcement authority at an identifiable location in order to provide transportation and/or direction to the site of the deceased.
2. Time and date of accident or fatality.
3. **Do not release** the name of the deceased, nor broadcast name via radio.
4. Brief description of how fatality occurred.
5. Name of person making notification and witness.

Fatality Location

1. Secure the area.
 - a. Do not allow anyone but the proper authority (coroner/law officer) to move or touch the deceased.
 - b. Keep the public away from the site of the fatality.
 - c. If necessary, cover the deceased with a blanket.

Notification of Next of Kin

Notification of next of kin is handled by the County Coroner.

1. Notification of family should be made as soon as possible. This will help in preventing the family from hearing of the fatality from an outside source.
2. In cases where the County Coroner makes the initial notification, a follow-up visit should be made by the immediate supervisor.
3. The DNRC Personnel Director or appropriate payroll technician should make contact with the spouse or appropriate family member to explain Montana insurance coverage (i.e., Worker's Compensation, PERS, etc.) and answer questions as needed.

Legal Requirements as Per Montana Code Annotated:

44-3-404. Criminal penalty. A person is guilty of a misdemeanor and may be fined not more than \$500 or imprisoned in the county jail for not more than one year, or both, if he:

- (1) purposely fails to report or conceals a death;
- (2) refuses to make available prior medical or other information in a death investigation; or
- (3) without an order from the coroner or state medical examiner, purposely touches, removes, or disturbs a corpse, its clothing, or anything near the corpse under investigation with the intent to alter the evidence or circumstances surrounding the death.

46-4-102. Investigation of suspicious death.

- (1) Whenever a coroner is informed that a death was caused by other than natural causes or that a death has occurred under circumstances such as to afford a reasonable ground to suspect that the death is the result of criminal conduct or when no physician or surgeon licensed in the State of Montana will sign a death certificate, the coroner shall make an investigation thereof.
- (2) It shall be the duty of every person acquiring knowledge of such death to report the same forthwith to the coroner of the county in which death apparently occurred.
- (3) In cases where criminal conduct is suspected, the coroner shall notify the state medical examiner and one or more state law enforcement agencies having jurisdiction. The law enforcement agencies so notified shall have the responsibility to investigate the case.

957 MONTANA DNRC, FIRE & AVIATION MANAGEMENT, ACCIDENT ACTION PLAN

A. SUMMARY

The following is a short guide designed to provide protocol to be used in the event of an accident or injury within the DNRC Fire Management Program. The plan addresses both emergency and non-emergency injuries/accidents.

B. PROTOCOL

1. Fire Ground/Field Protocol: The Incident Commander (IC) on the fire, or Chief of Party (CP) if traveling, is responsible for taking control of the scene (not to be confused with providing care and treatment).
2. The most qualified person available (assigned by the IC or CP) will conduct immediate care and treatment of the injured person. The IC may need to delegate the tactical fire operations to another qualified person to allow for attention to this new “incident within an incident.” Order additional help as needed to your initial report.
3. A decision on whether this is an emergency or non-emergency event is critical. The IC needs to determine what level of treatment is required, as well as the means of transport needed; the decision must be based on the best available information and recommendations of the most qualified medical personnel present.
4. For an injury on the fire ground, the IC will establish an initial contact with fire dispatch (if dispatch is unavailable, contact 911). For an accident or injury requiring medical assistance and/or transport when you are not on an incident, contact the local 911 center directly (either by cell phone or radio). Follow-up notification shall then be made to the agency dispatch center so that the appropriate dispatch and Unit personnel can be apprised of the situation early on.
5. An initial report is to include:
 - a. Is there an emergency or non-emergency event? The difference between the two is a judgment call, but consider these suggestions:
 - 1) **Non-emergency:** Injury/condition is considered non-life threatening, and affected party is ambulatory (can get to transportation under own power).

2) **Emergency:** Injury/condition is considered potentially life threatening and/or cannot get to required transportation under own power. If the IC deems this to be an emergency, and volume of radio traffic warrants, dispatch/IC will request everyone clear the channel for emergency traffic only.

- b. General description of the injured party and the nature of the injury, including symptoms and any complications. This is typically gathered during the assessment by the first responder/EMS provider and relayed through the IC. An example could be: "On scene with a 22-year-old male with a bee sting in the arm. Respiration and heart rate is normal and patient has minor swelling."
- c. Determine whether adequate medical assistance is on scene or additional help is needed, and how transportation will be conducted. After the initial assessment first aid treatment is administered, relay actions taken. An example could include: "EMT is on scene and has assisted with an ice pack. The injured party is walking out to the vehicle with the EMT. We will contact you when we arrive at the vehicle. We do not require ambulance for transport."
- d. Do not use the injured party's name over the radio, but DO give enough information that the receiving end of your communication understands the full extent of your situation. The IC, by establishing control of the scene, can ensure that the appropriate response is being made in a professional timely manner.

6. **Follow-up Items**

- a. Workers Comp. First Report of Injury (must submit within 6 days).
- b. Supervisor's Incident Investigation Report
- c. Vehicle Accident Report, if appropriate.
- d. Written narrative of incident (should be complete, factual and unbiased).
- e. Witness statements, if applicable.

7. It is important to remember the obligation you have to the other people you are still supervising and the overall mission you are engaged in. At the earliest convenient time, make arrangements to debrief with your supervisor either by cell phone, or in person; they will be getting questions and it is your responsibility to make sure they are informed with the most current information.