

MNICS

MINNESOTA INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

CHARTER

I. INTRODUCTION

The National Interagency Incident Management System (N.I.I.M.S.) is the result of a study made by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group, a group comprised of representatives from all Federal Agencies having forest and wildland fire responsibilities and two representatives from State Forestry Agencies. The Federal Emergency Management Agency also participates. N.I.I.M.S. is a combination of the best features of two tried and tested systems, the typical forestry Large Fire Organization combined with the National Interagency Fire Qualification System and the Incident Command System. Implementation of the N.I.I.M.S. concept began on October 1, 1985.

Implementation of N.I.I.M.S. will involve many autonomous agencies, each with its own policies, jurisdictional responsibilities, funding differences and other special abilities and limitations. In order to bring all of these agencies together into an effective association, it is necessary to have an efficient system for decision making, coordination and cooperation.

A number of decisions and agreements will be made over the next few years which will bear significantly on the course of N.I.I.M.S. implementation in Minnesota. These agreements will provide the following:

- A. Common terminology for organizational functions, resources and facilities.
- B. A modular organization flexible enough to meet greatly varied needs in command, operations, planning, logistics and finance.
- C. Integrated communications using special equipment and/or shared frequencies. Includes adoption of "clear text" phrases in place of codes and signals.
- D. A predetermined method of developing a unified command to deal with multi-agency or multi-jurisdictional situations.
- E. A method of developing consolidated action plans to set incident priorities satisfactory to all agencies with a responsibility to fulfill.
- F. Instilling accepted span-of-control procedures to provide for adequate supervision while avoiding a top heavy organization.
- G. Standardizing the methods of organizing and committing resources to an incident to simplify management and staff support to them, and to provide for more efficient operation of the resource itself.

II. ADMINISTRATION

Responsibility for administration of the Minnesota Incident Command System (MNICS) will be vested in a Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall consist of the representatives of the major emergency and fire agencies who are participating in the N.I.I.M.S. effort in Minnesota. The assignment of an alternate to periodically attend for an agency is acceptable. Additional members may be added to the Board as the need arises.

To carry out the goals and objectives of MNICS, a decision making process having the following characteristics has been designed for implementing N.I.I.M.S. in Minnesota.

- A. A "Directors" level for policy decisions.
- B. A "Task Force" level which processes information and formulates policy for consideration by the Board of Directors.
- C. A "Working Team" level to perform staff work and carry out the decisions processed at the two upper levels.

It is anticipated that the Task Force can assume responsibility in the implementation of N.I.I.M.S. after a period of familiarization. Participation in these groups will give all agencies a voice in the implementation of N.I.I.M.S. In execution of the N.I.I.M.S. program, most field level problems will be identified by the Working Teams or by the Task Force. Once an interagency problem has been recognized by any level of the partnership, the problem must be completely defined by the group perceiving the problem of others, and assigned by either the Task Force or the Board of Directors. The Task Force or Board of Directors may assign the most qualified persons to investigate the problem singly or as a team and recommend alternative solutions. These investigators will report their findings and recommendations to the Task Force and/or Board of Directors for review. The Task Force or Board of Directors will either make an appropriate decision or return the problem to the investigators for further study.

Approval for some Working Team findings can be accomplished at the Task Force level. For example, certain decisions on N.I.I.M.S. terminology, procedures and field actions may be made. In general, recommendations on operational expenditures within overall budget commitments should be made at the Task Force level for their respective agencies. Policy decisions, fiscal commitments, and long range implementation plans will require the Board of Directors' approval, after which such action will be carried out by the Task Force. Board members agree that agency exceptions to Board decisions may from time to time be necessary and that any such agency exceptions to recommendations of the Task Force or Board level decisions will be confirmed in writing.

The goals and objectives as outlined in the Implementation Plan provide guidelines and directions for the decision team.

III. Minnesota Incident Command System - Board of Directors

A. Membership

The Board of Directors consists of a representative from the agencies listed below and shall have the needed policy level authority to act for their agency on items brought before the board:

Bureau of Indian Affairs	Area Director (Acting)	Denise Homer
U.S.F.S Chippewa National Forest	Forest Supervisor	Steve Eubanks
U.S.F.S. Superior National Forest	Forest Supervisor (Acting)	Kathy McAllister
State of Minnesota Division of Forestry	Director - Division of Forestry	Jerry Rose
State of Minnesota Division of Emergency Management	Director	James Franklin
St. Croix National Scenic Riverway	Park Superintendent	Anthony Anderson
Voyageurs National Park	Park Superintendent	Ben Clary
U.S Fish & Wildlife Service	Regional Director	Sam Marler
Isle Royale National Park	Park Superintendent (Acting)	Stu Croll
Northeast Area State & Private Forestry	Area Director	Pat Ebarb

B. GOALS

1. To establish an active, decisive body that will guide the implementation of N.I.I.M.S. in Minnesota.
2. To assure that necessary actions are taken to maintain an agreed to N.I.I.M.S. operational capability in Minnesota.
3. To provide an agency commitment.
4. To accept a charter and set policy.
5. To appoint a Task Force composed of representatives of the

Board of Directors and other organizations participating in N.I.I.M.S in Minnesota.

6. To establish Working Teams and set objectives for these Teams.
7. To identify barriers to the implementation of N.I.I.M.S. both interagency and by individual agencies, and act to resolve barriers.

C. OPERATING PROCEDURES

1. The Board of Directors will appoint one of its members to serve as Chairman.
2. The Board will meet at the call of the Chairman. The frequency of meetings and allotted time should be consistent with decisions to be made.
3. Board members will strive for consensus in decision making. Proposed actions will be based upon consideration of common concern for each agency's needs, commitments and capabilities. Decision making will be by majority vote using Roberts' Rules of Order.

D. AUTHORITY

Authority for directing the MNICS N.I.I.M.S. program is vested in the Board of Directors.

1. Minnesota State Statutes 471.49, 88.01, Subdivision 4, 90.041, Subdivision 1, 84025, Subdivision 7, 88.10, 471.59.
2. Protection Act of 1922 (16 U.S.C. 594)
3. Memorandum of Understanding between United States Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture, Dated January 28, 1943.
4. Reciprocal Fire Protection Act of May 27, 1955 (69 Stat.66; 42 U.S.C. 1856a).
5. Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1702).
6. National Park Service Organic Act of August 1916 (16 U.S.C. 1).
7. Forest Service Cooperative Agreement Act of December 12, 1975 (16 U.S.C. 565a1-3).
8. Granger-Thye Act of April 24, 1950, as amended (16 U.S.C. 572c).

9. National Wildlife Refuge System Administrations Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 668dd-668ee; 80 Stat. 927) as amended.
10. Disaster Relief Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 1521).
11. Joint Fire Agreement between the Forest Service of the Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Park Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service of the Department of Interior as amended May 5, 1987.
12. National Indian Forest Resources Management Act of 1990 (25 U.S.C. 3104).
13. Fish and Wildlife Improvement Act of 1978, as amended (16 U.S.C. 742f)

IV. MINNESOTA INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM - TASK FORCE

A. MEMBERSHIP

The Task Force shall consist of a representative from the agencies listed below who has authority to speak for his agency, subject to final policy level approval by his department or agency head:

U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs

U.S.F.S.- Chippewa National Forest

U.S.F.S.- Superior National Forest

St. Croix National Scenic Riverway

Voyageurs National Park Service

Isle Royale National Park Service

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources-Division of Forestry

Minnesota Division of Emergency Management

B. GOALS

1. To provide the Board of Directors with studies, statements, and other recommendations for decision making.
2. To implement within their respective agencies agreements which are adopted.

3. To oversee the day-to-day operations, maintenance, and procedural developments of N.I.I.M.S. within their respective agency.

C. OBJECTIVES

1. Identify problem areas in interagency coordination.
2. To recommend the assignment, monitoring, and dissolution of working teams as problems are identified, addressed and solved.
3. To analyze working team reports and forward their recommendations to the Board.
4. To determine geographic and/or jurisdictional areas for implementation and timetables for proceeding.
5. To assist their own and other agencies in the implementation process.

D. OPERATING PROCEDURES

1. A Chairperson shall be for a one year term beginning October 1st, of each appointed year. This appointment shall be made and approved by a majority of the Task Force. His staff shall provide clerical needs of the Task Force.
2. The Task Force shall meet as requested by the Board of Directors or at the request of the Task Force Chairman consistent with the work in progress. Scheduled meetings are expected on a quarterly basis.
3. Depending on the task at hand, the Task Force may function in either a management or staff role.
4. Decision making on development issues, and recommendations to the Board will be by majority vote; recording votes by agencies. The procedure shall be carried out by Roberts' Rules of Order.
5. A liaison will be assigned from the Task Force to each established working group.

E. AUTHORITY

The Task Force functions both in a management and staff role. In a management role, the Task Force formulates policy for N.I.I.M.S. implementation and prepares "action plans" for the Board of Directors decision. In a staff role, the Task Force assists the Board of Directors in all activities which will lead to an orderly implementation of N.I.I.M.S.

V. MINNESOTA INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM - WORKING TEAM

A. MEMBERSHIP

The membership of a working team shall be made up of key specialists from participating agencies who are knowledgeable in this specific discipline and also to assess the effects of the actions under study on their respective agency.

1. Training Working Team
2. Finance Working Team
3. Operations Working Team
4. Logistics Working Team
5. Communications Working Team
6. Prevention Working Team
7. Prescribed Fire Working Team
8. Human Resource Working Team

B. GOALS

1. To provide the Minnesota N.I.I.M.S. teams with detailed expertise in this specific discipline.
2. To be able to identify and suggest resolutions to agency concerns associated with the varied details of N.I.I.M.S. implementation in Minnesota.

C. OBJECTIVES

1. To conduct studies necessary to ensure the compatibility of N.I.I.M.S. sub-systems, concepts, and principles with agency operations.
2. To prepare a documentation for use within each agency in N.I.I.M.S. concepts and operations.
3. To provide planning, fiscal, and technical information to the Board of Directors and Task Force for use in long range and day-to-day planning for N.I.I.M.S. implementation.

D. OPERATING PROCEDURES

1. The working team shall convene as necessary to accomplish their assignments.
2. Each working team will operate as agreed by its members. They will respond to requests for:

- a) Technical expertise.
- b) Fiscal data required for long range planning.
- c) Planning information required to synchronize the implementation of N.I.I.M.S. between agencies.
- d) Internal needs of each agency to assure an orderly transition from "status quo" to N.I.I.M.S.

E. AUTHORITIES

The working team will operate primarily in a staff role to the Task Force or Board of Directors. Actions taken by the working team will be coordinated through the Task Force Chairman to assure that such actions are compatible with the overall N.I.I.M.S. concept.

AGREEMENT

The undersigned, acting as the MINNESOTA INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM, BOARD OF DIRECTORS, approve and accept this CHARTER as an instrument to initiate the implementation of the N.I.I.M.S. program in Minnesota. Provided, that nothing herein is intended to require any partner agency to act in any way which is contrary to its legal, fiscal, or policy constraints.

Bureau of Indian Affairs
Agency Minneapolis Area Office

By Denise Homer
Denise Homer

Date 1/26/94

U.S. Forest Service
Agency Chippewa National Forest

By Steve Eubanks
Steve Eubanks

Date 1/20/94

National Park Service
Agency St. Croix Nat. Scenic Rwy

By Tony Anderson
Tony Anderson

Date January 14, 1994.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Agency Region Three

By Sam Marler
Sam Marler

Date 2-1-94

Northeast Area
Agency State & Private Forestry

By Pat Ebarb
Pat Ebarb

Date 2-10-94

National Park Service
Agency Voyageurs National Park

By Ben Clary
Ben Clary

Date 2/24/94

U.S. Forest Service
Agency Superior National Forest

By Kathy McAllister
Kathy McAllister

Date 1-20-94

National Park Service
Agency Isle Royal National Park

By Stu Croft D. Barnard (Supt.)
Stu Croft D. Barnard (Supt.)

Date 2/2/94

State of Minnesota
Agency Division of Forestry

By Jerry Rose
Jerry Rose

Date 1/25/94

State of Minnesota
Agency Division of Emergency Mgt

By James Franklin
James Franklin

Date Jan. 24, 1994