

Chapter 7 – Cooperator Fire Departments

INTRODUCTION

The Division of Forestry (DOF) has close working relationships with Cooperator Fire Departments (FD's). The FD's include paid and volunteer departments. The FD's often are first on scene within the wildland/urban interface. Cooperator resources - engines, water tenders, and personnel who are equipped and trained to provide structure protection - are beneficial to the DOF.

REFERENCES

Cooperative Fire Protection Agreements
Annual Operating Plans (AOP) and associated attachments
DOF Structure Fire Department Guide

SIGN-UP PROCEDURE

The fire department establishes a formal relationship with the Division by signing a Cooperative Fire Protection Agreement (often referred to as a [“Cooperative Agreement” or CFPA](#)) (Appendix E). The agreement is signed by the fire department's Chief or governing official and sent from the Area, through the Region, to the Central Office for the State Forester's and the Department's signatures. Once activated, the Cooperative Fire Protection Agreement remains in effect until either party terminates the agreement in writing, with 30 days-notice. The Agreement is reviewed every five years. The fire department also signs an Annual Operating Plan (AOP) that contains contact information, a personnel roster that includes hourly rates and equipment they are willing to rent to DOF. The AOP also contains Division contact points, radio frequencies, and so forth. The local Area Forester or Fire Management Officer signs the AOP for the DOF. The original AOP is either sent or scanned to the Central Office.

The Area Fire Management Officer or Area Forester is usually the one who maintains dialogue and establishes a working relationship with the local fire Chiefs. The FMO often discusses mobilization details with the Chief and decides what resources will be available from the FD to fill local or out-of-Area Resource Orders.

Fire departments will follow the [AOP](#) (Appendix D) and use the rates listed therein for engines, water tenders, and command vehicles. The rates are also included within the Online Application System (OLAS). FEPP equipment will be hired at 66% of the established rate for that equipment type. Requirements for each type of equipment and other restrictions are also listed in Appendix A.

Other vehicles/equipment owned by the FD such as boats, ATVs, and trailers will be signed up using the regular Emergency Equipment Rental Agreement (EERA), Conditions of Hire, EERA hiring procedures, and rates listed in Chapter 6. The rate structure differs slightly for FD equipment vs. equipment hired under an EERA. This equipment is also registered through OLAS but on the Vendor side. Personally owned vehicles cannot be signed up under the FD AOP.

ON-LINE APPLICATION SYSTEM (OLAS)

FDs are required to register their fire department under the (OLAS) and enter information regarding equipment the FD wishes to make available for fire assignments. OLAS will be used in the future for entering and tracking Cooperative Agreements and AOP's submitted by Cooperators. The link for FD's to sign up apparatus and other equipment is: [OLAS](#). This link is also used by DOF personnel to track, hire, and manage equipment in OLAS.

HIRING

Upon acceptance of an order for service, either verbally or via Resource Order, a binding contract between the Cooperator and Forestry is created incorporating the terms of the Cooperative Fire Protection Agreement, the AOP, and the Cooperator Conditions of Hire. The operator/personnel shall keep a copy of the FD Cooperative Fire Agreement, the AOP, and the Conditions of Hire with the apparatus.

At time of dispatch, a Resource Order number will be assigned for a specific category, type, and class of equipment and this will determine the proper rate to be paid to the Cooperator. Any Cooperator using rates that are non-compliant with Forestry specified rates will normally be the last hired and the first released.

The Cooperator is responsible for providing apparatus to Forestry in a good and safe operating condition. Each apparatus will be subject to a pre-use inspection by the local Area at time of hire. If, in the determination of Forestry, the apparatus is not in good, safe operating condition based upon the manufacturer's general safety specifications when it arrives for work, Forestry may reject it. If equipment is rejected, Forestry will not pay any costs, including transportation costs.

DOF may conduct annual pre-season inspections of all equipment registered in OLAS to ensure that mechanical soundness, safety, and the equipment inventory meet the requirements set forth in the FD Conditions of Hire.

The Cooperator shall furnish the number of personnel as established in Tables 1, 2 and 3 of [Appendix D](#) for each apparatus. Operators/personnel from FD's using the Direct Payment Method (see the Payment/Paperwork Procedure section for payment methods) will be hired by Forestry as Emergency Firefighters (EFF). The operator(s), if hired by Forestry as EFF, will become Forestry employee(s), and are subject to the Conditions of Hire established in the latest version of the [Alaska Emergency Firefighter Type 2 Crew Management Guide](#). EFF Personnel must be Red Carded (meet established NWCG physical fitness and training standards) for the position hired. EFF must complete an EFF hire packet at the local DOF Area office and obtain a Resource Order. Operators from FD's using the Cooperator Reimbursement Method and the Combined Personnel and Apparatus Reimbursement (Lump Sum) Method will remain employees of the department. The operator must possess a valid driver's license with applicable endorsements. The Cooperator will ensure that the operator/personnel are qualified to operate the apparatus. Variations from the staffing levels shall be agreed upon by Forestry and the Cooperator and shall be noted on the Resource Order. The FD must choose the method prior to mobilization so that the appropriate Resource Orders can be generated.

The operator/personnel receive work assignments from, and perform work under, the general direction of Forestry. In the event Forestry terminates an operator for cause, replacement operator/personnel may be requested from the Cooperator. A performance evaluation will be completed for each operator/apparatus under this circumstance.

There is no guaranteed length of hire under any order for service. Forestry may terminate an order for service when it is determined by Forestry that the apparatus is no longer needed. When the order for service is terminated, Forestry shall be liable only for payments in accordance with payment provisions of the contract (see paragraph 1 under Hiring) for services rendered prior to the effective date and time of termination. In the event the Cooperator requires the return of its apparatus, the Cooperator shall notify Forestry, and the equipment shall be released within eight hours.

The Cooperator is responsible for obtaining at their own expense, carrying a copy of, and showing proof at the time of hire, all necessary licenses and permits required by state and federal law/regulation, for both the apparatus and operator/personnel.

The Cooperator is responsible for the cost of all servicing to include providing and maintaining the apparatus with fuel, oil, lubricants, filters, and other operating supplies to maintain the apparatus in a safe operating condition. It is the responsibility of the operator/personnel to determine that the fuel used is the proper fuel for the apparatus. Forestry will provide fuel for apparatus assigned to project fires.

ASSIGNMENTS

For FD resources to be eligible for reimbursement under the Cooperative Agreement, they must be requested or approved by the Division or its Federal Cooperators. Federal Cooperator denotes federal agencies under the Department of the Interior (e.g. Bureau of Land Management, National Parks Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) and U.S. Department of Agriculture (i.e. Forest Service). Payment will be made only for fire suppression activities and all-hazard events on lands outside the FD's established jurisdictional boundaries or on State or Federal lands within the FD's jurisdictional boundaries when requested by the jurisdictional agency. Independent action taken by the FDs on lands owned by the State or Federal government is not eligible for reimbursement without immediate notification to the Division and approval of the jurisdictional agency. Although action may occur under "closest forces" or mutual aid to protect the FD's jurisdiction or neighboring jurisdictions during IA, FDs should not assume they will be reimbursed.

The Division's Area Forester or Fire Management Officer (FMO) must approve resources dispatched outside of the local interagency fire center dispatch zone.

Initial Attack (IA)

Initial Attack is defined as an incident lasting for no longer than one shift. Under this definition, no hiring takes place, but the time of hire done under Extended Attack can be retroactive to the original dispatch time of the Initial Attack incident.

Extended Attack

Extended Attack is defined as an incident lasting longer than one shift. Mobilization for Extended Attack assignments usually occur after the local FMO or dispatcher has talked to the FD Chief to ensure that the resources and personnel are available and can meet the desired time frame and resource needs. Resources will be tracked by the local interagency fire center by use of Interagency Resource Ordering Capability (IROC).

When dispatched to an extended attack incident, an Equipment Packet will be provided by the local Area. Equipment will be inspected at the Area before departure to the incident and documented on the Vehicle/Heavy Equipment Inspection form. If equipment is mobilized at the direction of the State without an inspection, the Incident Commander (IC) or Section Chief shall determine the start time. If equipment responded to an incident without a pre-use inspection, the incident personnel must inspect the equipment as soon as feasible.

The interagency dispatch center will inform the resource where to report. Once on the incident, equipment and personnel must check-in with incident management and provide required documentation (e.g. Resource Order and equipment hire packet). If an IMT is managing the fire, check-in takes place in the Planning Section and a copy of the equipment hire packet must be provided to the Finance Section. On a smaller incident, check-in and management of the FD equipment and paperwork may be handled by the IC.

Agencies using equipment or personnel from FD's are responsible for equipment and personnel timekeeping at the incident. However, **ALL original Equipment Packets are to be sent back with the FD to their home Area for their home Area DOF office to audit and process payment documents.** (The incident should keep a copy of the Equipment Packet for inclusion in the final fire package.) **It is then the responsibility of the FD to submit all original payment documentation from the incident, both personnel and equipment, along with a Cooperators Use Invoice or other Cooperator generated invoice to the appropriate Area office for payment.** When five or more engines are dispatched to an incident, DOF may furnish, upon request, a liaison to ensure the FD's and the incident are made aware of their responsibilities. The role of the liaison is to ensure Cooperative Agreements are valid and FD resources are familiar with the IMTs procedures, (i.e. timekeeping, caterers, showers, re-supply, etc.).

Resources will comply with Incident Command System (ICS) / National Incident Management System (NIMS) demobilization procedures and will never “self-demobilize” from an assigned incident. When released from an incident, a release inspection and post-inventory will be required on equipment. FD personnel must ensure that Emergency Equipment Shift Tickets, Emergency Firefighter Time Reports and other needed forms are complete and **signed**. All FD Engines will be evaluated by the incident supervisor and the evaluation form will be included in the equipment packet and a copy kept by the incident upon release from the incident. FD personnel are required to return non-consumable supplies and equipment issued on the incident.

Prescribed Fire (RX) and other Fire Management Projects

Under the direction of the Division, the AOP may be used for procuring personnel and equipment for other fire management activities such as fuels mitigation and RX projects, inside and outside the FD jurisdictional area. Project work conducted for federal agencies must be performed under the conditions of agreements specific to their agency specific procurement requirements.

All Risk Assignments

It is common for wildland fire resources to assist with non-fire incidents. When requested under the authority of the Stafford Act, it is possible for Alaska state resources to assist with these incidents. However, such incidents must have a State or presidential declaration of disaster before services are eligible for reimbursement or an approved Fire Management Assistant Grant (FMAG). All such incidents must be handled on a case-by-case basis. Cooperators should check with the local DOF Area office before accepting all risk assignments under the Cooperative Agreement program.

TIME KEEPING

Copies of completed and signed [Shift Tickets](#) (Form 5) for equipment and [Crew Time Reports \(CTRs\)](#) (Form 4) for personnel will be turned in to the Finance Section at the end of each operational period so that Finance can generate [Emergency Equipment Use Invoice OF-286's](#) (Form 7) and [OF-288's](#) (Form 6). Any piece of equipment that is rotating personnel must clearly show the hours of the personnel that are being rotated. The line supervisor or IC will sign the CTR and/or Shift Tickets. The **original packet given to the Finance Section (pink for the Shift Ticket and white for the CTR) must be returned to the FD upon release from the incident so that the originals can be submitted with the invoice to the Area office.** The incident should keep copies to be included as part of the final fire package. The FD should also keep a copy for their records.

Operator/personnel will be paid for all hours they are on-shift at the appropriate hourly rate of pay. Operator/personnel may be on a shorter or longer shift than the apparatus to which they are assigned. Hours shall consist of the period working (assigned), ordered standby, or compensable travel time. The number of operator/personnel listed on the rate charts is standard staffing. Any changes to standard staffing will be agreed to in the AOP. No additional personnel will be paid by Forestry unless Resource Ordered.

Compensable Meal Periods

Personnel assigned to the fire may be compensated for their meal period if all the following conditions are met:

1. The fire is not controlled.
2. The Operations Section Chief decides that it is critical to the effort of controlling the fire that personnel remain at their post of duty and continue to work as they eat.
3. The compensable meal break is approved by the supervisor and documented on the CTR and/or Shift Ticket at the next level.
4. In those situations, where incident support personnel cannot be relieved from performing work and must remain at a post of duty, a meal period may be recorded as time worked for which compensation shall be allowed and documented on the CTR/Shift Ticket in “Remarks” section as “No lunch taken due to uncontrolled fire line”. If a meal break is not documented on the CTR or Shift ticket, the break will be automatically deducted by the State.

Equipment rates have been determined by Forestry for all categories, types, and classes of equipment and are included in [OLAS](#) (Appendix A). Resources rented with higher rates than listed in OLAS/Appendix A should be the last resource hired and the first released. Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP) apparatus provided by a Cooperator may be paid up to 66% of the normal rate. If apparatus will be used 24 hours per day (a rare circumstance), then the Resource Order must document the need for a double shift and relief crew to work the second shift. Only in this case will a double-shifted rate be paid for the apparatus. The FD will provide a relief crew to work the extra shift. Hours shall consist of the period working (assigned), ordered standby, or compensable travel time.

- The start of the rental period (time under hire) begins at the time the equipment passes inspection or begins travelling to the incident from the point of hire (if requested by the State to go directly to the incident without inspection) after being ordered by the State. The rental period ends at the estimated time of arrival back to the point of hire after being inspected and released from the incident. Each service call will be documented via [shift tickets](#) (Form 5) to an [Emergency Equipment Use Invoice, OF-286](#) (Form 7), or equivalent. The Cooperator or its operator/personnel must sign shift tickets during the assignment and the Emergency Equipment Use Invoice document at the time of release from work.
- On the first and last shift of hire or assignment, the Cooperator shall be paid at the half day or daily rate, provided the apparatus is operable and available. The half day rate will be paid if the apparatus is hired after 1600 hours or released before 0800 hours (depending on estimated time of arrival at home unit). The daily rate will be paid if the apparatus is hired before 1600 hours or released after 0800 hours.
- If the apparatus is inoperable or unavailable during an on-shift period, this will be considered down time, and charges will not accrue.
- For shifts under hire or assignment between the first and last, the Cooperator shall be paid at the daily rate, provided that the apparatus is operable and available the entire shift.
- For apparatus not operable for the full shift, the deduction is calculated by converting the length of shift to determine the hourly rate and paying the Cooperator for the total hours worked before the equipment became nonoperational (not to exceed the daily rate). Apparatus is inoperable when the apparatus itself is inoperable, or when the operator/personnel are unavailable.
- In those cases, where Forestry is the direct cause of the apparatus down time, Forestry will negotiate a reasonable settlement with the Cooperator.
- Forestry has the right to correct the invoice in case of calculation, arithmetic errors, or if the Cooperator chose the improper category, type, class or rate in [OLAS](#).

- A FD is allowed up to four hours with home unit’s DOF Fire Manager Officer’s approval for refurbishing and rehab of their equipment only for extended attack and/or discretionary response wildland fires.

A shift is the hours worked as stated by the Incident Action Plan (IAP) and/or as determined by the dispatching office. The incident or dispatch office will compile the amount earned by the apparatus on an [Emergency Equipment Use Invoice OF-286](#) (Form 7) which both parties will sign to show concurrence of the amount due the Cooperator at the time of release from assignment. The incident or Area Admin office will also post Cooperator personnel time on [OF-288’s](#) (Form 6). OF-286’s and OF-288’s will be generated whether the Cooperator’s method of payment is by Cooperator Reimbursement, Lump Sum, or Direct Payment method.

Documentation Requirements for Assignments

One copy of each of the following documents is required for Out-of-Area Assignments

Mobilization Finance Packet	Demobilization Finance Packet
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Resource Order b. Annual Operating Plan (AOP) c. Emergency Equipment Rental Agreement d. Cooperator Conditions of Hire e. FD Cooperative Fire Protection Agreement f. Vehicle Inspection Checklist g. Initial Shift Ticket h. Blank Contractor Evaluation Form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Resource Order b. Annual Operating Plan (AOP) c. Emergency Equipment Rental Agreement d. Cooperator Conditions of Hire e. FD Cooperative Fire Protection Agreement f. Vehicle Inspection Checklist g. Completed Shift Tickets h. Completed OF-288’s i. Emergency Equipment Use Invoice j. Claims documentation, if applicable k. Completed Evaluation l. Any receipts documenting reimbursable expenses accrued on the assignment

Payment/Paperwork Procedure

There are two methods the FD’s may choose from to be reimbursed. It is the responsibility of the FD to submit to the Area Forestry office the Equipment Packet with the paperwork listed in the Timekeeping section under Demobilization Equipment Packet.

1. **Cooperator Reimbursement**

Actual costs of personnel and apparatus are reimbursed to the Cooperator. Personnel remain the employees of the FD. Under Cooperator Reimbursement, the FD will submit an invoice and the Equipment Packet to its own Area Forestry office for the use of its equipment using the rates as listed in [OLAS](#), and personnel with rates documented on the Cooperator Personnel Roster and Pay Rates. Forestry will not pay administrative fees for personnel more than 13.5%. Billing can be submitted using the Cooperator Standardized Invoice or FD’s own invoice.

The FD is responsible for payment to its personnel.

In the case of Cooperators being paid by the reimbursement method, both the [Emergency Equipment Use Invoice OF-286](#) (Form 7) and any pertinent Emergency Firefighter Time Report ([OF-288's](#)) (Form 6) will be included as backup documentation for any invoice requesting reimbursement from the State.

2. Direct Payment

Where the apparatus is rented from and paid directly to the FD. FD personnel, as mutually agreed to by both the Cooperator and the State, are hired as Emergency Firefighters (EFF) by the State and paid directly. Under Direct Payment, the FD will submit the Equipment Packet and will be paid from an invoice submitted by the FD or the incident generated [Emergency Equipment Use Invoice OF-286](#) (Form 7) for only the apparatus, using the rates established on [OLAS](#). EFF must submit a signed final [OF-288](#) (Form 6) to the Home Unit upon return. The State will directly pay the FD personnel hired as EFF at the level on their Overhead Resource.

Forestry will not pay for backfill positions unless required by municipal ordinance, union contract, or written department policy, under the Cooperator Reimbursement or Lump Sum Methods. In such cases, the State only pays for the difference in the overtime above what the regular salary would be for the backfilling employee.

Forestry has the right to correct invoices in case of accounting errors, or if the Cooperator chose the improper category, type, class or rate in [OLAS](#).

The following items make up the **Payment Packet**

- a. Cooperator's Use Invoice or invoice on their CFD letterhead.
- b. [Emergency Equipment Use Invoice OF-286](#) (Form 7) - originals.
- c. Completed Equipment [shift tickets](#) (Form 5) - originals.
- d. Completed ([OF-288's](#)) (Form 6)- originals, unless operator(s) are EFF (then copies).
- e. Any receipts documenting reimbursable expenses accrued on the assignment - originals.
- f. [Emergency Equipment Rental Agreement \(EERA\) OF-294](#) (Form 8)
- g. [Vehicle/Heavy Equipment Safety Inspection Checklist](#) (Form 3) - original.
- h. Resource Order.

Payment packets totaling \$10,000.00 or less may be sent directly to Juneau for payment if the appropriate signing authority is available in the Area office. If the appropriate signing authority is not available or the invoice totals more than \$10,000.00, the payment packet is sent to the Region Office for approval.

For FD's using Cooperator Reimbursement, the FD's are responsible for filing the appropriate paperwork for any personnel who are injured or become sick while on an incident and a medical claim was filed. For FD's using Direct Payment, the State will use procedures detailed in Chapter 4 for processing and timeline requirements for injured EFF.

If EFF request reimbursement for travel expenses, a State Fire Trip-Details w/ [Trip Closure](#) (Form 10) form needs to be completed and submitted to the local Area office.

If equipment is damaged on an incident, FDs should refer to Chapters 8, 10, and 11 for procedures.

Evaluations should be given to the Area Training Officer.

TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

FD's entering into a Cooperative Agreement with DOF must meet NWCG training and qualification standards for the position they are filling on an incident for any fire assignment outside the local interagency dispatch zone. Individuals serving on structural engines deployed outside the local dispatch zone for structure protection will, at a minimum, be certified at the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) WWF1 level as well as NWCG FFT2.

The Division accepts FD personnel qualifications within the Area and it is the responsibility of the FD Chief to ensure that local fire department personnel are properly trained and equipped.

The local Areas maintain NWCG Red Card records for FD personnel through the Incident Qualification System (IQS).

TRAVEL

While in travel status, reimbursement for meals will be made at the State established per diem rate. A Fire Trip-Details w/ [Trip Closure](#) (Form 10) will be completed by FD personnel and submitted to their home Area if they were authorized to receive per diem or travel costs.

No individual can exceed ten hours driving time in one day.

½ hour lunch must be taken while in travel status over eight hours.

Lodging

Lodging will be reimbursed at actual cost, therefore, receipts for all lodging must be provided for reimbursement.

Meals and Bedding

If a Forestry-subsisted incident camp is established, meals and bedding for operator/personnel will be furnished without additional charge. Such meals and bedding will be commensurate with that provided to Forestry employees.