

**File Code:** 5120**Date:** February 25, 2026**Route To:****Subject:** Forest/Unit Duty Officer Delegation Letter**To:** Forest/Unit Duty Officers

“Each forest or grassland fire management officer or assistant fire management officer will perform the duties of a Fire and Aviation (FAM) duty officer (DO) for their unit, or will provide a delegated DO, during any periods of predicted or actual incident activity. Individuals performing as DO must have the approval of the unit’s agency administrator and meet the minimum NWCG qualifications as identified in the Forest Service Fire and Aviation Qualifications Guide (FSFAQG), chapter 4.” – 2025 Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations, Chapter 5 - USFS Program Organization and Responsibilities.

As a Moderate Complexity Unit any individual performing as Forest/Unit Duty Officer (DO) must meet the minimum NWCG qualification (currency not required) as outlined in [Forest Service Fire & Aviation Qualification Guide, Chapter 4, 12/2016](#):

- Taskforce Leader (TFLD) -AND- Type 3 Incident Commander (ICT3) or Prescribed Burn Boss 2 (RXB2)
-OR-
- Helibase Manager (HEBM) -AND- Incident Commander Type 3 (ICT3)

This letter is the delegation of authority for you to act in the capacity of Forest/Unit Duty Officer on the Upper Peninsula Fire and Aviation Management Unit consisting of the Hiawatha and Ottawa National Forests. As Forest/Unit Duty Officer you are responsible for the following:

1. Day-to-day fire management as directed in FSM 5100.
2. Serving as the primary contact with Forest Supervisor (or acting), District Rangers (or acting), Michigan Interagency Dispatch, District/Zone Duty Officers, and the Regional Office.
3. Serve as the primary contact with Dispatch for both on and off-unit assignments.
4. Coordinate and set priorities for unit suppression actions and resource allocation.
5. Convene Forest strategy and staffing meetings as deemed appropriate.
 - a. During inactive fire periods utilize a Forest conference call every other Thursday. During high activity periods utilize every Thursday. You may also establish alternate calls or meetings to meet the situational needs.
6. Maintain communication with Michigan Interagency Dispatch and Zones.



Incident Commander Delegation of Authority Calendar Year 2016

- a.** Ensure both entities are always aware of your primary communication method and your location while you serve as Forest/Unit Duty Officer.
- 7.** Monitor local Fire Danger. Verify local Preparedness Levels and adjust as appropriate. As conditions warrant request severity funding through the Regional Office.
- 8.** Monitor national and geographic area fire activity, preparedness levels, and resource availability. Ensure coordination between the Forest/Unit and the Eastern Area Coordination Center as needed.
- 9.** Keep the Forest Supervisor(s) and Forest Leadership Team(s), Agency Administrators, Information Officers, and resources apprised of the current and expected fire situation.
- 10.** Consult with Zone Duty Officers and District Rangers/Agency Administrators and prioritize the Unit response to wildland fire and make recommendations to the Forest Supervisor(s) on wildland fire management actions and objectives.
 - a.** Reference the Risk and Complexity Assessment (RCA) in the current “Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations (Red Book), Chapter 11 and/or the Organizational Needs Assessment which is incorporated into WFDSS.
- 11.** Coordinate with fire management cooperators. This includes taking the lead in building cost share agreements should they be required.
 - a.** Use FSH 5109.17 (Forest service Fire and Aviation Qualifications Guide), Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations (“Red Book”) Section 11 “Incident Management & Response”, and/or WFDSS Risk Assessment to determine the Type category of an incident.
- 12.** Monitor Work/Rest and Length of Assignment Guidelines for fire management personnel on the Unit. For incidents that are managed under the approval of the Forest Supervisor (Type I & II) and which the Incident Commander has requested to exceed Work/Rest or Length of Assignment Guidelines, make recommendations to Forest Supervisor(s) as to whether such action is justified. Use Incident Business Management Handbook Section 12.7 as guidance.
- 13.** Monitor the Hiawatha and Ottawa National Forest LRMP’s direction/guidelines for Threatened & Endangered Species and Sensitive Areas on all incidents. Serve as a liaison between Forest Resource Specialist, District Rangers, and District/Zone Duty Officers
 - a.** When there is an “imminent threat to public and firefighter safety” on an incident, work with the Ranger or Acting Ranger to document any decision that deviates from the T&E direction/guidelines.
- 14.** As needed and available, assist District Rangers in the completion of wildland fire management decisions along with short- and long-term fire planning utilizing the Wildland Fire Decision Support System program.

- 15.** Serve as the Forest/Unit contact for assigned Incident Management Organization (IMO). Attend in coming IMO briefing and the daily Incident Commander briefings to provide oversight and ensure compliance with Forest direction/delegation. During long-duration fire events or fires of national significance, coordinate with the Regional Office concerning the management of these events.
- 16.** Assess and assist in the coordination and implementation of prescribed fire operations(conditions, multiple ignitions, and contingency force availability). Ensure coordination across the region when making resources available, prioritizing within region support for RX and wildfires first before leaving the GACC.
- 17.** During Forest/Unit Duty Officer transition, each is responsible for ensuring a quality transition occurs. Provide updates on current fire activities, environmental conditions, forest priorities, and overarching forest strategies.
- 18.** Should a fire on the Forest/Unit move to extended attack, or have structures threatened, Forest/Unit Duty Officer will be notified by the District/Zone Duty Officer or District Ranger and briefed on the situation. The Forest/Unit Duty Officer is to notify Forest Supervisor(s) or acting of the situation and seek direction on strategies and tactics of extended attack and/or long-duration structure protection. Forest/Unit Duty Officer is also to coordinate with the appropriate County representative concerning the long-term strategies and any possible cost-share agreements that may be necessary.
- 19.** Ensure that the Forest Service Wildland Fire Risk Management Protocol and Forest Service Prescribed Fire Risk Management Protocol are implemented. These protocols will be documented in the rational section of WFDSS for fires that require a signed WFDSS decision and in the project record for all prescribed fire.

Any questions or needs please contact Shannon Rische at 218-241-9319 and Lenore Lamb at 715-499-3288.

We look forward to working with you.

Shannon Rische
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Hiawatha National Forest

Lenore Lamb
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cc: ELCS