



**File Code:** 5120/1230  
**Route To:**

**Date:** February 21, 2025

**Subject:** Zone Duty Officer Delegation Letter  
**To:** Zone 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 Zone Duty Officer (DO) must meet the minimum NWCG qualification (currency 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 Zone Duty Officer on the Upper Peninsula Fire and Aviation Management Unit consisting of the Hiawatha and Ottawa National Forests. As Zone Duty Officer you are responsible for the following:

1. Day-to-day fire management oversight as directed in Forest Service Manual (FSM) 5100.
2. Serve as the primary contact with respective District Rangers (or acting), Michigan Interagency Dispatch and the Unit Duty Officer for new starts, prescribed fire projects, ongoing fire management actions, and on and off forest assignments for zone resources.
3. Attend or designate a representative to the staffing and strategy meetings. The Forest Duty Officer is responsible for establishing a meeting schedule during the fire season.
4. Maintain communication with Michigan Interagency and Zone by either phone or radio during the length of the Duty Officer assignment. Insure both entities are aware of your primary communication method and your location.
5. By 1000 am Zone Duty Officer will ensure the MIDC SharePoint resource status page is correct. Any changes to personnel or equipment will be updated in a timely fashion. Changes made after 1000am will be communicated to Dispatch.



6. Evaluate conditions, ensure program integrity with fiscal responsibility when staffing, extending hours, and requesting additional resources, through coordination with the Forest Duty Officer.
7. Keep the District Ranger (or acting), Unit Duty Officer, Agency Administrators, Information Officers, and resources apprised of the current and expected fire situation.
8. Coordinate with Initial Attack ICs to provide for a safe and effective response to wildland fire.
9. When possible, visit on-going fires to ensure safety practices and objectives are being accomplished.
10. Make decisions on the management and deployment of firefighters and suppression modules; coordinate with Forest Duty Officer as needed. Monitor to assure that only qualified personnel are assigned to a fire.
11. Monitor Work/Rest Guidelines of resources for all incidents on the zone. District Ranger approval to exceed Work/Rest Guidelines should be obtained in a timely fashion.
12. Contact the appropriate Specialist/Biologist/Archeologist for fire suppression guidelines for threatened & endangered species and sensitive areas for guidance on acceptable impacts.
  - a. When there is an "imminent threat to public and firefighter safety" on an incident, work with the District Ranger or Acting District Ranger to document any decision that could have a negative impact to T&E and sensitive areas.
13. With coordination from the (Incident Commander, complete the incident "complexity" and "risk" analysis for incidents as deemed necessary, especially "emerging" incidents that appear to be escalating in complexity. Ensure incident complexity matches incident commander qualifications.
  - a. Use the Forest Service Fire & Aviation Qualifications Guide and/or Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations ("Red Book") Chapter 11 to determine the Type category of an incident.
14. Accept fires in WFDSS and complete Course of Actions tab if fires are following Preplanned Response. If fires are not following Preplanned Response coordinate with FMO (or acting) and Forest/Unit Duty Officer on new Course of Action for the incident. With a recommendation from District Ranger and FMO assign who will author incident in WFDSS to process a new course of action.
15. 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.

- 16.** Communicate and coordinate with both District Rangers concerning prescribed burning and current and expected Fire danger.
- 17.** Responsibility for prescribed fires in patrol/mop-up status may be assigned to the unit duty officer until declared “out.” The duty officer (DO) may assign either a burn boss or IC at a level commensurate with expected activities to coordinate onsite actions (e.g., ICT5 for one engine to patrol). In the event that elements of the burn plan other than patrol/mop-up (e.g., holding or contingency) become necessary, then an appropriately qualified burn boss will be assigned to continue implementation of the approved burn plan.
- 18.** As Duty Officers transition, each is responsible for ensuring a quality transition occurs with a briefing including but not limited to: updates on current fire activities, environmental conditions, forest priorities, and overarching forest strategies.
- 19.** Should a fire on the zone move to extended attack, or have structures threatened, notify affected District Ranger and Forest Duty Officer to advise them of the situation and coordinate strategies and tactics.

Should any problems or concerns arise with any aspect of the fire, please contact the Unit Fire Management Officer, Eric Rebitzke at (906) 428-5856 or (906) 241-5719 or the Unit Assistant Fire Management Officer, Shelby Majors at (406) 224-8542.

Shannon Rische  
Forest Supervisor  
Hiawatha National Forest

Darla Lenz  
Forest Supervisor  
Ottawa National Forest