

## **INITIAL ATTACK DISPATCH CENTER - COMPLEXITIES**

A dispatch center's complexity is determined by the program complexity of the units supported by that dispatch center. A unit's program complexity is computed following the Interagency Fire Program Management Qualifications Standards and Guide, Instructions and Guiding Principles for Complexity Descriptors. Basically, if the unit complexity is high, the dispatch center's complexity is high.

Only the Initial Attack Lead Dispatcher and the Center Manager positions are affected by the dispatch center's and unit's program complexity. Initial Attack Dispatchers are represented in all dispatch centers at each complexity level with the same knowledge, skill, and ability requirements. Minimum Qualifications Standards for Initial Attack Lead Dispatcher and Center Manager are not affected by program complexity.

### **HIGH COMPLEXITY**

A high complexity dispatch center is an interagency dispatch center that supports more than one unit. At least one of the units has a high program complexity. These centers have a Center Manager. Normally there are at least two Initial Attack Lead Dispatchers or Assistant Center Managers representing the major agencies supported by the dispatch center.

### **MODERATE COMPLEXITY**

A moderate complexity dispatch center is either:

1. An interagency dispatch center that supports more than one unit and at least one unit has a moderate program complexity, or
2. A single agency dispatch center and that unit has a high program complexity.

These centers have a Center Manager and an Initial Attack Lead Dispatcher or Assistant Center Manager. A single agency dispatch center may or may not have a Center Manager with the Initial Attack Lead Dispatcher supervising the center.

### **LOW COMPLEXITY**

A low complexity dispatch center is either:

1. A single agency dispatch center supporting a single unit with low or moderate program complexity, or
2. A single agency dispatch office supporting a single unit with moderate or high program complexity, but the dispatch center orders through an interagency dispatch center to the geographic area coordination center.

These centers would not have a center manager. The Initial Attack Lead Dispatcher would supervise the center.

---

 Minimum Qualification Standards
 

---

## CENTER MANAGER

This position can be established at either the professional or technical level, depending upon whether professional or technical knowledge is required. This, in turn, depends upon the structure which the position is established. If the position is established at the technical level, any professional duties would be handled by a separate, usually higher graded, professional position.

### OPM Standard Requirements - GS-455/462 Technician Series

One year of specialized experience equivalent to the next lower grade level. Graduate education may be substituted for specialized experience only when it is directly related to the work of the position. Further information can be obtained from OPM's Qualification Standards Operating Manual, specifically, OPM's Group Coverage Qualification Standard for Technical and Medical Support Positions and the Individual occupational requirements for either the 455 or 462 series. OPM's Qualification Standards Operating Manual is posted at <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/>

### OPM Standard Requirements - GS-401 Professional Series

Bachelor's degree in biological sciences, agriculture, natural resource management, or a related discipline appropriate to the position being filled; OR a combination of education and experience as defined in the Supplemental Qualification Standard for the GS-0401 Fire Management Specialist. Additional information can be obtained from OPM's Qualification Standards Operating Manual, Group Coverage Qualification Standard for Professional and Scientific Positions and the Individual occupational requirements for the 401 series. The Supplemental Qualification Standard for the GS-0401 Fire Management Specialist and assistance in interpreting the standard are posted at <http://www.ifpm.nifc.gov/>. OPM's Qualification Standards Operating Manual is posted at <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/>

**Common grade level at moderate complexity: GS-10**

**Common grade level at high complexity: GS-11**

*(Note: Actual grade level will depend on the duties and responsibilities of the position.)*

#### **Specialized Experience -**

Applicants must have a minimum of one year of creditable specialized wildland fire management experience equivalent to the next lower grade level.

Specialized experience is that experience which has provided the applicant with the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to successfully function in the wildland fire

management position applied for. Possession of the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities can be evidenced by:

- reviewing and evaluating fire management plans for ecological soundness and technical adequacy.
- conducting field inspections before and after prescribed or wildland fires to determine if objectives were achieved and/or evaluate the effectiveness of actions taken.
- developing analyses on the ecological role of fire and its use and/or exclusion, and smoke management.

In addition to fire program management, appropriate experience must have included either prescribed fire/fuels management - OR - fire management operations as described below:

Prescribed fire/fuels management - experience in a broad range of activities such as:

- inventory methods and procedures
- fuel treatment methods and programming
- land use planning and environmental coordination
- evaluating prescribed burn plans or fire management plans to ensure containment is possible and identify contingencies if containment is not obtained.

Fire management operations - analyzing and applying fire management strategies, plus experience in at least five of the following activities:

- mobilization and dispatch coordination
- fire prevention and education
- training
- logistics
- equipment development and deployment
- fire communication systems
- suppression and preparedness
- aviation

The above specialized experience may be evidenced by the following or similar positions:

Wildland firefighting operations experience is required

AND

Initial attack Lead Dispatcher/ Assistant Center Manager

**NWCG Incident Management Qualifications - Currency Not Required**

<b>Primary Core Requirement</b>	<b>Secondary Core Requirement</b>
EDSD	90 days of wildland firefighting experience

**Additional required training as presented in the following courses, or agency equivalent:**

- S-491 “National Fire Danger Rating System”

**Selective Factor Justifications**

- The EDSD qualification provides the incumbent with a higher knowledge of standard fire dispatch procedures, predefined initial attack response zones, and operating guides used in ordering of overhead, crews, aircraft, equipment, and supplies for wildfire, prescribed fire, and other non-fire emergencies.
- The combination of EDSD, S-491, and previous wildland fire fighting experience provide the incumbent with the knowledge and skill in planning and coordinating an initial attack dispatch center by providing focused, responsible coverage during daily operations and emergency situations with other federal, state, tribal, county, and local cooperators.
- S-491 provides the incumbent with the training and ability to ensure that weather data from Weather Information Management Systems (WIMS) is accurately input.
- The S-491 course requires a number of pre-requisite courses, and is not always readily available in all geographic areas.

**Employee Development Training**

Employee should receive the following developmental training, (or agency equivalent) to fully achieve competencies:

- D-111 (formerly D-105) “Entry Level Dispatcher”
- D-110 “Dispatch Recorder”
- D-310 “Support Dispatcher”
- I-100 “Introduction to ICS
- I-200 “Basic ICS”
- I-300 “Intermediate ICS”
- I-400 “Advanced ICS”
- I-401 “Multi-Agency Coordinating (MAC) Group”
- S-110 “Basic Wildland Fire Orientation”
- S-205 “Fire Operations in Urban Interface”
- S-260 “Fire Business Management Principles”
- S-270 “Basic Air Operations”
- S-290 “Intermediate Fire Behavior”
- Aviation acquisition/procurement

- Aviation capabilities & limitations
- Aviation dispatching
- Aviation management & coordination
- Aviation mishap reporting
- Aviation policy and regulations
- Aviation radio use
- Aviation transport of HAZMAT
- Crew resource management
- Flight payment document
- “Hazardous Material Awareness Program for Firefighters”
- Human factors in aviation
- Interagency aviation organizations
- Mission planning & flight request process
- Multi-media First Aid
- Risk management (aviation)
- “Weather Information Management System”



## COMPETENCY DESCRIPTORS FOR CENTER MANAGER

---

### Center Manager Position Descriptor

A Center Manager is one whose primary purpose is to direct, plan, organize, supervise, coordinate, and manage personnel and operational activities of an initial attack dispatch center by providing for focused, responsible coverage during daily operations and emergency situations with other federal, state, tribal, county and local cooperators. Executes operating plans and action guides for efficient and cost-effective mobilization to emergency situations. Ensures activities directed by the initial attack dispatch center are conducted safely. Performs a variety of staff and administrative duties relating to fire suppression and prescribed fire activities. Prior fire fighting experience is a requirement of this position.

### EXPERTISE LEVELS DEFINITIONS

#### WORKING – W

**Definition:** The minimum level of experience and/or training that it takes to produce work of acceptable quality.

#### JOURNEY – J

**Definition:** Has sufficient experience to be considered a seasoned employee. Is skilled in performing the more difficult tasks related to the function. Has received advanced training in the function.

#### EXPERT – E

**Definition:** Reflects the quality of experience and/or training needed to perform the most challenging aspects of the position.

"Program Complexity Levels" refers to those determined from the complexity analysis process. Some positions do not vary in the expertise levels of competencies, regardless of the complexity of the program to which they are assigned. Others have only a minimum level of competency expertise defined, recognizing that there is too wide a variety of programs within and between agencies to define all situations. The remainder have either two or three levels of competency expertise, based on their unit's program complexity.

### Example of Expertise and Complexity Levels

<u>Competencies</u>	Low	Moderate	High
Knowledge of processes and sources of training.	W	J	J

In this example, a “W” Working level of expertise is required in a Low complexity fire program; a “J” Journey level of expertise is required in both Moderate and High complexity fire programs.

**I. Fire Program Management Support**

Description

This element identifies the knowledge, skills and abilities required to provide efficient and effective support to fire program management.

Outline

A. Develop and implement goals and objectives in support of fire program management.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>
Knowledge of presuppression, suppression, detection, and fire management activity plans as they apply to dispatching.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of agency and interagency financial management system.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of the incident support organization.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of computer data entry and retrieval.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of federal, state, tribal, county, and local wildland firefighting organizations, terminology, techniques, resources, Mutual Aid Agreements and operating plans for the dispatch center's jurisdictional area of responsibility.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Skill in planning and coordinating an initial attack dispatch center by providing focused, responsible coverage during daily operations and emergency situations with other federal, state, tribal, county and local cooperators.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Skill in utilizing computer hardware and specialized applications specific to initial attack dispatching, expanded dispatch, fire suppression, prescribed fire, aviation management and administration.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Skill ensuring that unit personnel's incident qualifications are maintained using various agency computer programs.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Ability to analyze the activity and suppression planning for their area of influence and adjacent areas and keep fire managers apprized of potential problems.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>
Ability to develop dispatch operating guides which include authorities, roles, and responsibilities for expanded dispatch, technical and administrative support within the incident support organization.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Ability to identify and define dispatch related issues and apply corrective actions and enforce policies and procedures to increase efficiencies and effectiveness.	<b>J</b>	<b>E</b>
Ability to prepare or direct the preparation of the daily situation report, annual fire report, fire statistics, and aviation activity reports.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Ability to follow established agency and interagency procedures for records creation, maintenance, and disposal.	<b>W</b>	<b>W</b>

B. Supervise and develop employees.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>
Ability to effectively oversee the dispatch center and make sound operational and cost effective decisions during critical situations and changing priorities.	<b>J</b>	<b>E</b>
Ability to recognize stressful and adverse operating conditions, such as long hours, heavy workloads, emergency situations, adverse working and environmental conditions and apply corrective actions.	<b>J</b>	<b>E</b>

C. Communicate orally and in writing, using appropriate technology.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>
Knowledge of documentation requirement to preserve data pertaining to dispatch center activities.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Skill in instructing and operating telecommunication equipment, computer based applications, and other related communications equipment in the dispatch center.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Ability to effectively and efficiently communicate and interact with co-workers, public, media, and other customers of the dispatch center.	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>
Ability to present dispatch training, and develop or modify existing training packages.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>

## II. Mobilization

### Description

This element describes the knowledge, skills and abilities required to mobilize and demobilize overhead, crews, aircraft, equipment and supplies for wildland fire, prescribed fire activities, and other activities.

### Outline

A. Provide local, geographic and national mobilization and demobilization support.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>
Knowledge of standard fire dispatch procedures, predefined initial attack response zones, and operating guides used in ordering and mobilization of overhead, crews, aircraft, equipment and supplies for wildfire, prescribed fire and other non-fire emergencies.	<b>J</b>	<b>E</b>
Knowledge of agency and interagency mobilization policies, procedures and guidelines.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of fire management resources, fire position qualifications, equipment, capabilities, sources and ordering procedures.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of the organization and function of the National Interagency Coordination Center and the geographic area coordination centers.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge and understanding of field operational procedures, principles, and techniques employed in all aspects of fire suppression.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of fire behavior and weather conditions to effectively dispatch fire management resources.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of cache management procedures.	<b>W</b>	<b>W</b>
Knowledge of maps and land photos of various types such as topographical, unit, and aerial.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Skill in applying national, geographic area, local mobilization guides, and dispatch operating guides.	<b>J</b>	<b>E</b>
Skill in ensuring that monitoring and tracking resources follow standard guidelines and procedures, including aircraft, overhead, crews, and equipment.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>

<u>Competencies</u>	Moderate	High
Skill in ensuring that plotting and identifying locations to determine land status, direct resources to the incident site, and track resources through the application of latitude and longitude, township, range, and section, and VOR bearing and distance.	J	J
Ability to determine when to expand dispatch center based on activity levels.	J	J
Ability to ensure that dispatch center functions as the incident focal point prior to the arrival of the responding resource.	J	J
Ability to ensure that dispatch center is obtaining and documenting incident size-up information per the dispatch center's operating guide, and brief supervisor of incident status or anticipated needs.	J	J
Ability to take independent action when dispatch procedures have not been established or do not apply to the current situation.	E	E
Ability to prioritize and allocate resources based on resource values as identified in land management plans, national, geographic area, and local preparedness levels, resource availability, and existing and predicted weather conditions.	E	E
Ability to coordinate mobilization of resources to multi-jurisdictional incidents including mutual aid with local non-federal cooperators.	J	E

### III. Operations

#### Description

This competency identifies the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for providing dispatch support to field operations involving preparedness, suppression, fuels and prescribed fire, and aviation activities.

#### Outline

- A. Provide preparedness dispatch support services.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>
Knowledge of aerial and land-based detection systems and technologies.	<b>W</b>	<b>W</b>
Knowledge of wildland fire prevention principles and techniques, fire prevention guides, and applications.	<b>W</b>	<b>W</b>
Knowledge of fire permitting processes and closures.	<b>W</b>	<b>W</b>
Skill in interpreting and relaying daily fire weather forecasts, "red flag" warnings, spot weather forecasts, predicted weather and burning indices and the relation to preparedness levels and staffing for suppression and aviation resources.	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>
Ability to ensure that weather data from weather information management system (WIMS) is accurately input.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Ability to identify and utilize new technology as it relates to weather data.	<b>W</b>	<b>W</b>

B. Provide suppression, fuels, and prescribed fire support services.

<b><u>Competencies</u></b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>
Knowledge in fire suppression and prescribed fire strategies, tactics, methods and procedures.	<b>W</b>	<b>W</b>
Knowledge of appropriate management responses.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Knowledge of various smoke management regulations including EPA, state, tribal, and agency specific.	<b>W</b>	<b>W</b>
Skill in recognizing changing conditions, developing alternative strategies and taking appropriate action.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>
Skill in keeping field personnel and agency administrators or MAC Group informed of critical information (red flag, fire behavior, burning conditions, resource shortages).	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>
Skill in determining anticipated fire behavior.	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>

C. Provide aviation dispatch support services.

<u>Competencies</u>	Moderate	High
Knowledge of fixed and rotary-wing aircraft relating to fire and administrative operations in terms of capabilities, duty limitations, scheduling, flight following, incident or accident notification, and economics.	J	J
Knowledge of airspace designations (e.g., MTR, MOA, TFR, hazards,). Ability to follow established notification procedures for airspace coordination.	J	J
Knowledge of aircraft flight planning, including but not limited to scheduling flights, pilots and aircraft; duty limitations, ordering procedures, procurement and cost comparison analysis.	J	J
Knowledge of aviation safety, including airspace management, search, rescue and medivac procedures, incident reporting procedures, briefing and debriefing pilot, chief of party and passengers.	J	J
Knowledge of communication equipment, radio use, management and etiquette, frequency management, computer and software used in aircraft dispatching.	J	J
Skill in applying safe and efficient aviation management procedures.	J	J
Skill ensuring aircraft flight following is according to national, geographic and local area procedures.	J	J
Skill in incident or accident notification.	J	J

**IV. Safety and Welfare**

Description

This competency identifies the knowledge, skills and abilities required to support the environmental and workplace hazards of the wildland fire environment, and to provide leadership and direction to subordinates in the recognition and mitigation of these hazards using all applicable laws, policies and guidelines. Personal accountability and zero tolerance for unsafe acts are paramount.

Outline

- A. Support wildland and prescribed fire operations in accordance with safety-related laws, policies and guidelines, including:
  - 1. Occupational Safety and Health Act
  - 2. Applicable state safety regulations
  - 3. Department and agency policies and guidelines
  - 4. NWCG guidelines

<u>Competencies</u>	Moderate	High
Knowledge of the laws, policies and guidelines pertaining to safety, such as the Code of Federal Regulations, national and agency policies and guidelines, Standard Firefighting Orders, Watch Out Situations, and other related fire safety guidelines, including the Occupational Safety and Health Act and NWCG guidelines.	J	J

- B. Conduct safety related education programs focusing on:
1. Training
  2. Certification

<u>Competencies</u>	Moderate	High
Skill in the effective use of education and certification processes to achieve safety management objectives and ensure compliance.	W	W

- C. Assist with the preparation of hazard, risk, and trend analyses for wildland fire environmental hazards including, but not limited to:
1. Fuels
  2. Weather
  3. Topography

<u>Competencies</u>	Moderate	High
Skill in conducting hazard, risk, and trend analyses.	W	W

- D. Identify hazards and risks with appropriate mitigation actions.

<u>Competencies</u>	Moderate	High
Skill in recognizing and mitigating a variety of hazards encountered within the wildland fire environment and other work environments; e.g., aviation, mechanized equipment, and hazardous materials.	W	W