



Multi-Agency Coordination System Publication

FIRESCOPE Operations Team Member Orientation  
MACS 410-6

April 2025

This document contains information relative to the Incident Command System (ICS) component of the National Interagency Incident Management System (NIIMS). This is the same Incident Command System developed by FIREScope.

Additional information and documentation can be obtained from the following resources:

OES - FIREScope - OCC  
Document Control  
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Riverside, Ca 92518  
(951) 782-4174  
Fax (951) 782-4239  
[www.firescope.caloes.ca.gov](http://www.firescope.caloes.ca.gov)

## Table of Contents

FIRESCOPE Mission Statement.....	2
FIRESCOPE Organization .....	3
Board of Directors:.....	3
Operations Team: .....	3
Task Force: .....	2
Specialist Groups:.....	4
Subcommittees: .....	3
Document Approval Process .....	5
Participation and Attendance .....	5
Meeting Accommodations and Travel Arrangements .....	4
Further Information and Research .....	6

Welcome to the FIREScope Operations Team (Ops Team). Your assignment to the Ops Team shows both your home agency's and the FIREScope organization's collective faith in your skills and commitment to the fire service. This document is intended to provide basic information about FIREScope and to outline the expectations of your participation in the organization.

You are now poised to directly contribute to the advancement of all hazard incident management and interagency cooperation that has been the FIREScope mission since its inception in 1972. Over the years, FIREScope has relied on individuals from many agencies to design and maintain the FIREScope programs including the Incident Command System (ICS) and the Multi-Agency Coordination System (MACS).

As a member of the Ops Team you will be expected to represent your agency and/or the Region or fire service segment your Agency is associated with. You should be prepared to provide input in the development of guidance and procedures that contribute to effective incident command through ICS. The Ops Team is a collaborative group that focuses on collective solutions to industry challenges. Although the organization was founded in the fire service, we currently address all hazards and cross disciplines.

## **FIREScope Mission Statement**

*"The mission of FIREScope is to provide recommendations and technical assistance to the Office of Emergency Services (OES), to maintain the FIREScope Decision Process, and to continue the operation, development, and maintenance of the FIREScope Incident Command System (ICS) and the Multi-Agency Coordination System (MACS). The mission of the OES Fire and Rescue Services Advisory Committee is to provide professional recommendations and technical assistance to the Director of OES and the OES Fire and Rescue Branch on program elements."*

FIREScope, an acronym from its full title, **F**irefighting **R**ESources of **C**alifornia **O**rganized for **P**otential **E**mergencies, remains the leader in incident management development. Under provisions set forth by Senate Bill 27, chartered on October 2, 1989, under Health and Safety Code Section 13070, the Office of Emergency Services (OES), the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) and the State Fire Marshal (SFM) are to jointly establish and administer the FIREScope Program.

ICS is recognized at a national level as an incident command element of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) as administered by Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA). The system has been accepted internationally as a model of effective incident management. As effective as the current ICS model may be, it is a living system that requires continual review and updating to assure that it meets current incident command and resource management practices. Your work with FIREScope is important and may ultimately have international influence.

## **FIRESCOPE Organization**

The FIRESCOPE organization currently operates using five primary levels of committees, each one reporting up to the next level. Each group has representation from a broad spectrum of fire and emergency management agencies providing input ranging from federal to volunteer perspectives. FIRESCOPE relies on the “consensus” decision-making process that creates buy-in among diverse local, state, and federal agencies toward a common goal. Active participation from all members is expected during discussions and product development.

### **Board of Directors:**

The Board of Directors (BoD) is comprised of Chief/Director/President/Executive Director level members from a variety of federal, state, and local agencies who are responsible for charting the overall direction of FIRESCOPE programs.

The BoD meets four times a year in January, April, July, and October. The meeting locations alternate between the north and south. Additional conference call meetings are arranged by the BoD Chairman as needed to assure continuity of FIRESCOPE business.

### **Operations Team:**

The Operations Team (Ops Team) is made up primarily of Chief Officers at the Division, Assistant, Deputy, or higher level in their home agencies. The group’s primary responsibilities are to provide technical expertise to the Board of Directors and professional direction to the Task Force. The Ops Team further serves as the reviewing body for products forwarded from the TF and determines when products and issues provided by the Task Force are ready to be forwarded to the BoD for consideration and direction.

The Ops Team holds an in person two-day meeting quarterly, in March, June, September, and December. These meetings are normally on dates immediately following TF meetings to facilitate common travel and attendance. Additional conference call meetings are arranged by the Ops Team Chairperson as needed to assure continuity of FIRESCOPE business.

### **Task Force:**

Task Force (TF) members typically hold the rank of Battalion or Division Chief. The TF’s main function is to provide operational and functional expertise in the areas of mutual aid, ICS, and MACS. At the direction of the Ops Team, the TF maintains the ICS 420-1 Field Operations Guide and manages projects as assigned to define and clarify ICS functions as they apply to a variety of disciplines.

The TF meets monthly. The meetings are held at different locations around the state and typically cover two days. Length of the meeting may be adjusted by the Chair as needed to handle the current workload. Meeting dates and locations are determined by collective agreement of the TF members.

Meeting sites and accommodations are coordinated by a hosting member of the TF.

There are four fixed meeting months for co-located meetings with the Operations Team: March, June, September, and December.

The December Task Force and Operations Team meetings will also include the subcommittee executive staff to present their group's annual plans of work, charters and rosters for the upcoming year.

A MAC Group Exercise managed by the Task Force occurs annually in May and alternates between northern and southern California and also rotates through all Cal OES Regions.

The TF maintains the management of projects that are assigned by the Ops Team and listed in the FIREScope Plan of Work. Some projects are completed by members of the TF while some are delegated to Specialist Groups & Subcommittees that are organized by specific disciplines. The TF also has the responsibility to bring issues to the Ops Team that are determined to need attention.

### **Specialist Groups:**

Specialist Groups (SG) are assembled to assist the Task Force in the development, implementation, and maintenance of FIREScope products. Specialist Groups review and deconflict products from the subordinate Subcommittees. Representation on these groups is comprised of members of the subordinate Subcommittees. Two members of each Subcommittee are elected to sit on the respective Specialist Group.

There are currently 6 Specialist Groups that address the following disciplines:

- Health and Safety
- Special Operations
- Incident Technology
- Emergency Operations
- Air Operations
- Training and Education

The Task Force liaisons from each subcommittee shall meet with their assigned specialist group and will ensure two specialist group meetings occur annually (spring/fall) The liaisons will provide direction and support to their respective group as needed.

### **Subcommittees:**

Subcommittees are assembled to assist the Task Force & Specialist Groups in the development, implementation, and maintenance of FIREScope products.

Representation on these groups is determined primarily by the issues being addressed and the subsequent level of technical expertise required. Each Subcommittee will elect two members to serve on the respective Specialist Group that oversees their Subcommittee.

Subcommittees will either be “Standing” or “Ad Hoc”. Standing Subcommittees are established to address long-term needs while “Ad Hoc” Subcommittees are established to address a specific need or short-term issue. Once the need or issue has been addressed, the Ad Hoc Subcommittee will be disbanded.

The list of current subcommittees is listed on the link below:

<https://firescope.caloes.ca.gov/ICS%20Documents/FIRESCOPE%20Organizational%20Chart.pdf>

Each Subcommittee will have at minimum, two Task Force members assigned as Liaisons responsible for providing their respective group with direction and support as needed.

## **Document Approval Process**

As FIRESCOPE products and documents are developed, they are to be submitted to the next higher organizational level for review and approval. After review, the materials should be either:

1. Approved as submitted and moved to the next level
2. Returned with comment for additional editing
3. Amended as determined by the approving group and moved to the next level of the approval process.

Prior to publication, all FIRESCOPE documents and products shall have the approval of the Board of Directors as recorded in their meeting minutes.

## **Participation and Attendance**

As an Ops Team member, it is important that you are present at the quarterly meetings. Although all members hold important responsibilities at their home agency, they are expected to attend the Ops Team meetings. The home agency of each member has pledged their support for FIRESCOPE and is expected to honor that support by allowing your attendance at the meetings. Each member's input and representation are vital to the collective mission of FIRESCOPE. It is critical to the team effort that we establish and maintain solid and productive working relationships amongst our members.

Appropriate attire at all FIRESCOPE meetings is a minimum of business casual or departmental uniform.

For the sake of continuity and productivity, it is highly recommended that each member provides a succession plan for their replacement if they leave the group. There is a great value in the exposure to the group's meetings and practices prior to assuming a full participatory seat.

## **Meeting Accommodations and Travel Arrangements**

The Ops Team meetings are coordinated by the Cal OES FIRESCOPE Deputy Chief. The Deputy Chief is expected to coordinate a meeting place and hotel availability at a conveniently close facility. Typically, the meeting place is at a departmental facility of the member's home agency.

Since travel cost caps restrict a number of the Ops Team members, arranging a block of hotel rooms at a negotiated “State Rate” is expected. Individual reservations are the sole responsibility of each member.

Another common restriction placed on travel by home agencies is advanced notice. It is expected that the accommodations will be finalized and posted to the FIREScope web site at least 45 days in advance.

Each Ops Team member is responsible for arranging their own travel in accordance with their home agency’s policies. As a part of the assignment to the Ops Team, the member’s home agency has committed to fiscal support of the individual’s FIREScope travel requirements. Pay for the Ops Team member’s time commitment is part of the home agency’s financial support of the FIREScope assignment.

FIREScope does not provide reimbursement for hours worked or travel costs. (Exception: The Ops Team Chair’s air travel costs to BoD meetings is arranged and paid through Cal OES.)

## **Further Information and Research**

To better understand the FIREScope organization, mission and goals it is recommended that each Ops Team member explore and review the FIREScope web site:

<https://firescope.caloes.ca.gov/>

Specifically, the document, *MACS 410-4 Articles of Organization and Procedures*, provides a complete description of the FIREScope operational structure.