



Multi-Agency Coordination System Publication

FIRESCOPE Board of Director's Member's Orientation  
MACS 410-5

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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[www.firescope.caloes.ca.gov](http://www.firescope.caloes.ca.gov)

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Welcome to the FIREScope Board of Directors. Your position as a fire service leader adds great value to FIREScope and strengthens the California fire service as a whole. This document is intended to provide key information about FIREScope and outline the level of participation required to ensure the success of the organization.

You are now poised to directly contribute to the advancement of all-hazard incident management and interagency cooperation that has been FIREScope's mission since its inception in 1972. Since FIREScope's founding, the organization has relied on top professionals such as you from local, state, and federal agencies to design, improve, and sustain FIREScope's core functions, including the Incident Command System (ICS), Mutual-Aid System, and Multi-Agency Coordination System (MACS).

The Board of Directors is a collaborative group that focuses on collective solutions to industry challenges. While FIREScope was founded as a result of interoperability issues associated with wildland firefighting, the organization has evolved to address all-hazard incidents by developing policies, procedures, training, and guidance documents for a wide range of emergency response disciplines. As a member, you will be expected to provide input, recommendations, and direction on a wide range of emergency management topics and matters from a perspective affecting the California fire service, your home agency, and any region or group of fire departments you may have the responsibility to represent.

## **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 **RES**ources 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 California Office of Emergency Services (Cal 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 the 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 committee, each one reporting up to the next level in the hierarchy. 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 federal, state, and local agencies who share responsibility for the following:

- Sets FIRESCOPE policy and establishes direction
- Sets priorities and provides direction to the Operations Team
- Final authority for FIRESCOPE decision process
- Recommends policy and procedure changes to Cal OES Director

The selection of Operations Team and Task Force members are made by BoD members for their respective home agency or group of fire departments they may represent (e.g., CAL FIRE, USFS, Large City Fire Departments South, Volunteer Fire Departments, County Fire Departments North, etc.)

The BoD meets four times a year in January, April, July, and October for a two-day meeting. The locations typically alternate between north and south regions.

Additional conference call meetings are arranged by the BoD Chairperson as needed to ensure continuity of FIRESCOPE operations and to handle any time sensitive business.

### **Operations Team:**

The Operations Team is made up primarily of Chief Officers at the Division, Assistant, Deputy, or higher level in their home agencies. Each BoD member is responsible to appoint a member of the Ops Team that represents their respective home agency or group of fire departments they may represent (e.g., CAL FIRE, USFS, Large City Fire Departments South, Volunteer Fire Departments, County Fire Departments North, etc.).

Appointed Ops Team members should have a diverse fire service background and be familiar with FIRESCOPE and current issues impacting the California fire service. The group's primary responsibilities are to provide technical expertise to the Board of Directors, develop FIRESCOPE's annual Plan of Work, and provide 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 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 members typically hold the rank of Battalion or Division Chief. Each BoD member is responsible to appoint a member of the Task Force that represents their respective home agency or group of fire departments they may represent (e.g., CAL FIRE, USFS, Large City Fire Departments South, Volunteer Fire Departments, County Fire Departments North, etc.).

Appointed Task Force members should have a diverse fire service background and be familiar with FIRESCOPE and current issues impacting the California fire service. 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 convene for two days. Length of the meeting may be adjusted by the Chairperson as needed to handle the current workload.

Due to the workload of the Task Force, new members must ensure they have the time available to fully commit and participate. In the event a Task Force member is unable to attend a meeting, it is requested that a representative familiar with current work projects attend in their place. 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 or 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 and 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 group for review and approval. After review, the materials should be either:

1. Approved as submitted and moved to the next level of review.
2. Returned with comment for additional editing.
3. Amended as determined by the approving body 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 a Board of Directors' member, it is important that you are present at the quarterly meetings. While members have important matters to address at their home agency, they are strongly encouraged to attend all Board of Directors' meetings. Should a BoD member be unavailable to attend a meeting due to other commitments, the BoD member should make every effort to have an agency representative fill in for them during their absence. Alternate agency representatives do not have voting rights.



Each member's input and representation are vital to the collective mission of FIREScope. It is critical to the team effort that productive working relationships are established and maintained between Board Members.

For the sake of continuity and productivity, it is highly recommended that each member provides a succession plan to identify their replacement once they determine, or anticipate, that they will no longer be able to serve on the group. There is great value in the exposure to the group's meetings and practices prior to assuming a full participatory role.

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

## **Meeting Accommodations and Travel Arrangements**

The Board of Directors meetings are coordinated by the Cal OES FIREScope Deputy Chief. The Deputy Chief is expected to coordinate a meeting place at a conveniently located facility.

Each Board of Director member is responsible for arranging their own travel in accordance with their home agency's policies. As a part of the assignment to the Board of Directors, the member's home agency has committed to fiscal support of the individual's FIREScope travel requirements (Exception: Local Government BoD members' air travel is arranged and paid by Cal OES). Pay for the Board of Director 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.

## **Further Information and Research**

To better understand the FIREScope organization, mission, operational structure, and goals, BoD members are encouraged to review MACS 410-4 Articles of Organization and Procedures, which is available at <https://firescope.caloes.ca.gov/>. The FIREScope Executive Coordinator/Cal OES Fire & Rescue Chief is also available to help with any questions that may arise during a BoD member's orientation period.