

**ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

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| **80.02 Emergency Response – Fire Season Timekeeping** | **Revised: November 1, 2023** |

1. GOVERNING REGULATIONS

The timekeeping practices for emergency response incidents are governed by the policies, regulations, rules, and procedures which relate to normal time and recordkeeping activities.

1. REFERENCE PUBLICATION

Texas A&M Forest Service emergency response business procedures are similar to the guidelines published by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) in the [Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook](http://www.nwcg.gov/sites/default/files/publications/pms902.pdf).

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of these procedures is to maintain accurate and consistent timekeeping documentation for employees during emergency response operations, and to ensure appropriate recordkeeping is maintained to meet state and federal audit requirements.

1. FIRE SEASON INCIDENTS
   1. The Associate Director for Forest Resource Protection, in consultation with the Director, determines when the conditions warrant declaration of a fire season incident and the area it covers.
   2. If a fire season incident covers the entire state, the activity will normally be accounted for as two separate incidents – one for East Texas and one for Central/West Texas. The incidents will normally be managed by one Incident Management Team (IMT).
2. WORK SCHEDULE
   1. Normal hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
   2. After taking the current fire threat into consideration for his/her area, each District Forester, Fire Coordinator, and Task Force Coordinator, in conjunction with the applicable Regional Operations Chief will set the work hours schedule for his/her employees.
   3. Time charged to the incident before 8:00 a.m. or after 5:00 p.m. should be for direct involvement on a fire, standby for the imminent possibility of responding to a fire, or providing direct support to the incident.
   4. If an employee works beyond the 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. timeframe and there is no involvement with a fire, standby or supporting the incident, the hours are to be considered normal duties and not included on the [Crew Time Report (CTRs)](http://tfsfinance.tamu.edu/modules/finance/admin/procedures/Crew%20Time%20Report.xlsx).
   5. An employee will take a minimum 30 minute meal break for each 8 hours worked. The District Forester, Fire Coordinator or Task Force Coordinator will make the decision as to the length of lunch breaks based on the present fire danger.
   6. In situations where personnel cannot be relieved from active performance of duty (suppression of an uncontrolled fire), a meal period may be recorded as time worked and documented on the CTR as “uncontrolled fire (name of fire).”
3. TIME REPORTING
   1. To charge fire time for an employee to an incident, the employee must be on a resource order for the incident.
   2. Each Regional Operations Chief or department head is responsible for providing the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) with the names of their employees to be placed on a resource order. When an IMT is stood up, this should be run through the IMT operations for ordering and tracking of resources.
   3. All employees assigned to the incident must submit a CTR daily to the Incident Command Post (ICP) Finance Section – regardless of whether they have fire time or no fire time to report.
   4. If an employee will be off the incident (i.e., not available for fire duty) for more than a week, the applicable Regional Operations Chief can have the employee demobed from the incident. When the employee returns to active fire duty, the Regional Operations Chief is responsible for having them put back on a resource order. Alternatively, if the employee knows they will be returning to the incident, they can fill out in advance one CTR indicating the days they will have no fire time to report and submit it to the ICP Finance Section.
   5. CTR’s and Shift Tickets will be submitted daily and must be signed by the employee’s incident supervisor. If no fire hours are being reported on the CTR, the supervisor’s signature is not required. The CTR’s and Shift Tickets will be scanned and submitted by e-mail to the ICP Finance Section via the dedicated e-mail address: [icpfinance@tfs.tamu.edu](mailto:icpfinance@tfs.tamu.edu).
4. FIRE TIME
   1. Once a fire season is declared, activity related to all fires in the covered area will be charged to the appropriate incident in Workday. If it is a fire response of any kind and those resources are assigned to a TX-TXS number, it should be charged to that incident number and shown on the CTR/Shift Ticket. The employee’s incident supervisor will check the CTR’s/Shift Tickets to ensure these rules are followed.
   2. Any hours worked in the home office or normal service area and not on fire duty should not be put on the CTR/Shift Ticket.
   3. With regards to working standby or traffic, employees required to remain at their home office during normal work hours (Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.) for the possibility of responding to a fire are not considered to be working on the incident. Their supervisor can and should have other activities for them to perform at the office. When an employee is required to work overtime on standby at the office outside normal work hours, the time is considered to be on the incident since their only purpose for working that time is for fire response.
5. MANAGEMENT DIRECTED DAYS OFF
   1. Compliance with the Administrative Procedure, [10.15](http://tfsfinance.tamu.edu/modules/finance/admin/admin_procedures/1015%20Management%20Directed%20Days%20Off.docx) *Management Directed Days Off* is mandatory. This is for the safety of all employees in or out of district and on assignment.
   2. Per the procedure, the primary supervisor (i.e., the employee’s supervisor for normal day-to-day activities) is responsible for monitoring the consecutive workdays of each of his/her employees. When an employee is assigned to an out of area incident, this information should be passed on to the appropriate ICP personnel, as well as, to the employee.
   3. Consecutive workdays are counted from an employee’s last day off. It applies to all time worked whether normal duties or emergency response.

**Example 1:** If an employee is off on Sunday, works his/her normal duties on Monday and Tuesday, and goes out on an incident assignment on Wednesday, then Monday and Tuesday count towards the 14 or 21 day requirement.

**Example 2:** If an employee takes leave on Wednesday, works his/her normal duties on Thursday and Friday, and travels to an incident assignment on Saturday, then Thursday and Friday count towards the 14 or 21 day requirement.

CONTACT: [FRP Business Administrator](mailto:vdavenport@tfs.tamu.edu), (979) 209-4293