

# ACTION PLAN RECOMMENDATION FOR THE WFCA WILDLAND FIRE POLICY COMMITTEE BRANCH

## PRE- EVENT

*Based on the priorities established from the  
WFCA Wildfire Summit*

Over the past few years, the western United States has experienced some of the most devastating wildfires in our nation's history. Many of these incidents have set new records for acreage burned, lives lost, or costs to bring them under control. In recent years, these historically catastrophic wildfires are occurring so frequently, they are pushed out of the news cycle by another devastating wildfire before full containment can even be reached. Though we have all worked hard to build, maintain and support the systems necessary to ensure rapid deployment of mutual aid resources when called upon, the system is struggling to keep up. The demands upon these critical systems we rely on are stressed.



While we must acknowledge the work that has been done by so many in the development of these essential policies, procedures, systems and agreements, we cannot ignore the need to ensure these systems are properly nurtured and allowed to evolve in order to meet the demands placed on them today.

The purpose of the WFCA Wildland Fire Policy Committee (WFPC) Pre-Event Branch is to leverage the work that has been done and use it as a foundation to identify and build best practices while exploring new opportunities to create greater consistency, efficiency and effectiveness of our mutual aid system and our approach to fire in the wildland urban interface.

Action planning for the Pre-Event Branch will organize around four primary groups:

### **Mutual Aid & Cooperative Fire Protection Agreements**

This group will focus on the identification and analysis of best practices to support the development of model language for inter and intrastate Mutual Aid agreements that minimize deployment time for critical resources during rapidly evolving incidents. Additionally, the area will focus on standardization of Cooperative Fire Protection Agreements and reimbursement processes to ensure participating agencies can provide resources with confidence that they will be made financially whole for the full cost of services within a reasonable amount of time regardless of jurisdiction.

### **Evacuation and Repopulation**

This group will focus on the identification and analysis of best practices to support the development of model language and terminology for rapid, efficient and effective evacuation of persons threatened by rapidly evolving incidents. Additionally, the group will focus on standardization of the process of repopulation of areas evacuated during emergency incidents. In addition to fire service personnel, the group will incorporate key individuals representing Law enforcement, Emergency Management and All Hazards Incident Management Teams.

### **Building & Maintaining All-Hazard Bench Strength**

This group will focus on the identification and analysis of best practices to support certification and educational processes to promote, support, and enhance the profession of incident management. The group will also endeavor to develop a succession plan by promoting training and certification of personnel during the early, developmental years of their professional career. Additionally, the group will incorporate subject matter

experts and representatives of the key certification and qualification systems, including NWCG, CICC, NIMS, and All Hazards Incident Management Team Association.

### **Hazard Mitigation and WUI Code development**

This group will focus on the identification and analysis of best practices to support the development of model language for hazard mitigation, fuels management, defensible space, and code development for structures in the Wildland Urban Interface, or Threat Zones adjacent to the aforementioned interface. The Hazard Mitigation and WUI Code development area will work closely with the Insurance Branch on their identified goals:

- Establishment of methodologies for empirically measuring structural ignitability risks and mitigations.
- Operationalizing ignitability risks into variables usable in actuarial analysis.
- Alignment of structural ignitability mitigations with State/Local codes/ordinances, and their inclusion in insurance industry actuarial risk assessment methodologies.

Through chosen Branch Chairs, Mike McLaughlin, Fire Chief, Cosumnes Fire Department, will manage the deliverables for all four groups. A kick off session with members of all Branches is recommended. This will provide an opportunity to frame the range of issues and key deliverables for all of the pre-event Branches. Subsequent to this initial meeting the Chairs will coordinate with their group and plan conference calls, web meetings, and in person meetings as necessary to manage the workload. Updates and recommendations will be provided to WFCIA WUI Policy Committee Chair for consideration and approval as necessary.

Following are initial recommendations for involved persons based on professional experience and stakeholder awareness. Prior to the initial kickoff meeting, it is intended to broaden each of the Branches to include a wide variety of stakeholders and subject matter experts to represent the issues and the footprint of the Western Fire Chiefs Association member states.

### **Streamlined and Effective Mutual Aid & Cooperative Fire Protection Agreements**

1. Group to be formed

### **Standardized Evacuation and Repopulation Terminology, Education and Application**

2. Group to be formed

### **Building & Maintaining All-Hazard Bench Strength (Certification and Qualification)**

3. Group to be formed

### **Hazard Mitigation and WUI Code development, adoption and enforcement**

4. Group to be formed

