

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Office of Fire and Aviation
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Instruction Memorandum No. FA IM-2006-032
Expires: 09/30/07

To: All Field Offices
From: Director, Office of Fire and Aviation
Subject: Bureau Policy on the use of the "9999" Fire Code

Program Area: This instruction memorandum (IM) provides direction to all fire program employees and those involved in procurement or contracting relating to the fire program.

Purpose: The purpose of this IM is to inform all offices regarding the use of the "9999" fire code with subactivity 2821, Fire Suppression.

Policy/Action: The issue of "9999" fire code use is essentially twofold. First, ensuring the charges are appropriate to suppression operations, subactivity 2821, and second, ensuring that the "9999" fire code is the correct project number.

It is essential that charges against 2821 are appropriate and in line with the Congressional intent for the appropriation. The "9999" fire code is to be used only in those situations where it is impossible to identify and charge individual fire numbers.

It is especially critical that state/field offices do not use the "9999" fire code to charge support for billable fires. The "9999" charges are not spread to actual fires, so the Bureau is unable to recoup costs for billable charges unless they are directly charged to the appropriate incident.

The use of the "9999" fire code will require documentation as to the reason the code was used. State/field offices are responsible to review "9999" charges in the Management Information System (MIS) and make necessary corrections in the Federal Financial System (FFS) to ensure this policy is followed.

The Office of Fire and Aviation (OF&A) reviews the “9999” fire code expenditures by state. In order to accurately attribute 2821-HU- 9999 expenditures to the state or field office generating the charge, indicate the benefiting state and office code (e.g., AZ-O30-2821-HU-9999), on the resource order in the financial code block and on other financial documents (e.g., time and attendance records, charge card statements, requisitions, travel vouchers, etc.).

Charges to the “9999” fire code are considered incident charges, and per the Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook, Chapter 20-Acquisition, “the incident order and request number must be included on all acquisition documents (including convenience check and purchase card receipts).” For support charges, it is acceptable to use the incident order and request number in ROSS that generated the charge (e.g., overhead resource order that generated a meal or lodging charge).

The following is specific guidance when NOT to use the “9999” fire code:

- For any costs not directly related to suppression.
- As the normal default cost structure for government employee charge card or a vehicle dispatch charge card. Charge cards should be defaulted to the normal funding code of the individual’s program.

Offices may establish an internal coding structure as a default cost code for these cards, but must ensure that all charges are cleared out to actual cost codes prior to fiscal year end.

- To fund monthly/annual cell or satellite phone costs.
- For exclusive use aircraft daily availability. Daily availability for call-when-needed (CWN) aircraft and flight hour costs in direct support of multiple fires is to be broken out for individual legs between fires.
- To base fund monthly charges for GSA and "I" (Interior) vehicles.
- For fire investigations. Fire investigation costs should be charged to the appropriate fire code. If fire investigation costs will be incurred beyond the two-year period for charging to the fire code, then a request should be made to extend the ending date through the Denver Business Center.
- To base fund any government employees.

The following is specific guidance regarding the use of “9999” fire code with subactivity 2821, Fire Suppression. Field offices should issue supplemental information to address categories not covered by this IM.

1. Pre-position of Resources: Resources, such as Incident Management Teams (IMT), aircraft, engines, crews, smokejumpers, and overhead are often mobilized to a location in

anticipation of fire activity without a specific fire number to charge. These resources are staged until assignment to an incident occurs, including initial attack, at which time a specific fire number is charged.

If severity funds have been requested and approved, charge mobilization and support costs (e.g., housing, food, local transportation, per diem) and personnel time for pre-positioned resources to the severity code. If severity funds are not available, use the “9999” fire code as the financial code on the resource order and charge mobilization and support costs to the “9999” fire code. Demobilization costs for pre-positioned resources should rarely be charged to the “9999” fire code, as resources should have been assigned to a specific incident and return travel is charged to the releasing incident.

The resource order serves as back-up documentation for the “9999” fire code charges. Reference the incident order and request number on all payment documents.

2. Personnel Time: Every effort should be made to break out personnel time into blocks when supporting multiple fires; however, this is not always feasible. Dispatchers, warehouse/cache workers, and other support staff, including casuals (ADs), in support of multiple fires where hours cannot be broken out to a specific fire number may use the “9999” fire code.

The employee and supervisor are responsible to ensure that “multiple incident support” is documented on the Emergency Firefighter Time Report, OF-288, or in the “Memo” line on the electronic QuickTime and Attendance Report. Personnel, on a resource order with the “9999” fire code number, will reference the incident order and request number on time and attendance documents.

3. Cache Costs: Cache and warehouse operations may use the “9999” fire code to procure generic boxes and packing materials intended for multiple fire support. Charge cartons assigned an NFES number to the Stores Account. During fire support operations, re-supply should be done against specific fire numbers when possible; otherwise the “9999” fire code may be used.

Charge refurbishment costs to the fire ordering (or returning) the item and use the original incident order and request number as documentation.

Charge shipping costs between cache locations to the ordering cache. The ordering cache should provide a specific fire number or the “9999” fire code may be used if appropriate.

4. Cell and Satellite Phones: Base service costs should be funded out of preparedness or other such subactivity.

Cell phone costs above base costs should be charged to the fire to which the individual is assigned. The “9999” fire code may only be used if #1 or #2 above applies. Same supporting documentation requirements apply.

State/field offices are required to establish procedures to ensure that incident-related cell phone costs are timely documented and forwarded to the individual responsible for processing cell phone bills, and correctly charged.

5. Utility Charges: The base cost of utilities is paid from preparedness or other such subactivity. Additional utility costs (telephones, sewer, water, electricity, fuel, etc.) that are incurred directly in support of suppression efforts should be charged to 2821 and the specific incident number. Use the “9999” fire code if multiple fires are supported within a billing period and costs cannot be accurately charged to a specific fire.

States should consider requesting severity funding if appropriate to the circumstance.

6. Vehicle Costs: Base costs should be programmed and funded out of preparedness or other planned subactivity. Emergency equipment or rental vehicles (e.g. forklift, rental cars) and GSA/I vehicle mileage costs attributable to #1, #2 or #3 above may be charged to the “9999” fire code. Same supporting documentation requirements apply. Charge vehicle costs associated with deliveries to a specific fire to the respective fire code.
7. Obligation of Funds: States/field offices may initially obligate funds to the “9999” fire code if detail information is not readily available. For example, a suppression bill is received late in the fiscal year and there is insufficient time to review documentation and allocate charges to specific fires prior to fiscal year end. Such costs may be obligated against the “9999” fire code, but must be charged to specific fires when the payment is processed and the initial “9999” fire code obligation deobligated.

Offices may consolidate 2821 charges on the fiscal year-end obligation for Aviation Management Directorate (AMD) charges and use the “9999” fire code per individual office code. Individual AMD payment documents will be paid against the specific fire numbers on those documents.

Offices must coordinate with the Office of Fire and Aviation, Budget and Evaluation Staff prior to obligating or making payment for any “9999” fire code expenditure over \$100,000.

Timeframe: This policy is effective immediately upon issuance of this IM.

Manual/Handbook Sections Affected: The appropriate manuals and handbooks will be updated to reflect this new policy as part of their normal recurring cycle.

Contact: Questions should be addressed to Hallie Locklear, Incident Business Specialist, at 208-387-5166 or Lynne Willoughby, Chief, Budget & Evaluation, at 208-387-5161.

Union: All offices with a union are required to make notification of this action to the union representatives.

Signed by:
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Authenticated by:
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