



NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP

NWCG Memorandum 20-009

September 21, 2020

TO: NWCG Executive Board Members

FROM: Frank Guzman, Chair, NWCG Executive Board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frank Guzman", is written over the "FROM:" line.

SUBJECT: Establishing a National Standard for Call Signs for Exclusive Use (EU) Air Attack Platforms

Purpose: The purpose of this memo is to communicate the adoption of standard call signs for Exclusive Use (EU) Air Attack platforms. This standard was developed and recommended by the Interagency Aerial Supervision Subcommittee (IASSC) in coordination with the National Interagency Aviation Committee (NIAC) and the National Coordination System Committee (NCSC). This standard will be integrated into the next revision of the *NWCG Standards for Aerial Supervision*, PMS 505, <https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/505>.

Background: Since the 1970s, the Pacific Southwest Region of the Forest Service has used call signs for EU Air Attack. The number corresponds to the Forest number where the EU platforms are stationed. Aerial supervisors have discussed the potential to develop a national convention for naming EU Air Attack platforms. Adopting the call sign system lends itself to developing alignment with other call sign identified resources (e.g., engines and crews).

Issue/Action Requested: NWCG requests assistance with the adoption of the call sign standard for EU Air Attack platforms. The initial year implementation of the standard would be considered a beta test, with permanent updates planned for sequential years. Updates would include all appropriate documents and applications at the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC), Geographic Area Coordination Centers (GACC), and local dispatch centers. Implementation of the proposal will include updating Automated Flight Following (AFF) to display call signs. Additional points include:

- Total Mobility (see *National Interagency Mobilization Guide*, Chapter 10) is supported through this proposal. The call sign standard provides information pertinent to resource movement and prioritization, and it distinguishes between EU and Call When Needed (CWN) platforms.
- AFF will be updated with the new resource identifier call signs. For EU aircraft, the call sign stays with the platform while under contract.
- CWN platforms will continue to use the last three characters of their registration number (N#).
- Operationally, Air Attack platforms will continue to use incident call signs when assuming incident air attack (for example, AA-402 becomes Ranch Air Attack).

NWCG standards are interagency by design; however, the decision to adopt and utilize them is made independently by the individual member agencies and communicated through their respective directives systems.

Below is description of the call sign standard for all interagency EU Air Attack call signs:

- First Number:
 - The Forest Service regional identification number where the platform is hosted (e.g., 1, 2, etc.).
- Numbers Two and Three:
 - Forest Service will use the two-digit number of the Forest that hosts the platform:
 - USFS: 0-29
 - Cooperating agencies will use the two-digit number assigned to the agency:
 - BLM: 30-39
 - BIA: 40-49
 - States, NPS, FWS: 50-99

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Distribution:

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