

## Questions & Responses from the AA Refresher Webinar hosted April 9, 2020

The following questions were captured in the chat window throughout the webinar. There wasn't sufficient time to answer these on the webinar itself so questions and their respective answers are below.

### **1. Has the NMAC reviewed scenarios of "turn down" assignments due to COVID-19?**

No NMAC has not really discussed this in detail, it is something we will likely get into at some point. We have discussed related topics, but more to come.

### **2. Q: Medical support of incidents will likely be greatly diminished if not completely unavailable for repositioning. What kind of contingencies should we be considering?**

Due to the probable lack of most resources and the risk of exposure to individuals during repositioning there may not be a lot of this type of tactic. Prior to the season and activation of outside resources it would be prudent to check with the local Health Officials to determine the level of stress on the current system. Local preseason meetings could help develop these contingencies to prepare for an incident.

### **3. Q: Dan Dallas' presentations on product development... is there training available for SOPLs?**

The answer to the question right now is there is no specific RMA training for SOPLs or any other position. However, this question is related to the "ask" I made at the end of my presentation. Many of the analysts who participate in RMA now started out with no knowledge but ended up being exposed to it on an incident. SOPLs, LTAN's, Fuels Planners, and GISS and GIS Specialists are particularly inclined to pick up RMA analytics quickly, so I encourage them to join us. If you are interested call Rick Stratton at 406 546 3546.

### **4. Q: Under the Dingell act, will Air Resource Advisors be required for all type 1&2 incidents regardless of impact?**

Under the Dingell Act, Air Resource Advisors (ARA) will not be required for all type1 and 2 incidents.

Agency Administrators through the delegated Incident Management Team should consider ordering an ARA based on the risk to firefighters and public health and safety; projected magnitude and duration of smoke impacts to air quality; transportation safety posed by smoke on roads; and when they need help to analyze, summarize, and communicate these impacts to incident teams, air quality regulators, public health departments and the public.

### **5. Q: How much of the Dingell Act funding will be for fuel treatments**

No additional funding was given to either the Department of the Interior or the USDA Forest Service for any of the requirements listed in Section 1114 of the Dingell Act.

**6. Q: Will Agency Administrators have access to consistent COVID BMP's that they could include in their incident DOA's?**

The intent of the Wildland Fire Response Plans is to provide BMPs for incident response. These should provide the basis for AA to develop DOA's and letters of intent for all levels of fire management. The WFRP is intended to be a living document; updated as necessary to incorporate what is learned as the season progresses to. These updates should include removal of a BMP if it is found to be unhelpful or has negative impacts on effectiveness of fire response or COVID-19 protocols. As far as consistency they should be for the most part consistent throughout the season in the outside of updates that are required and will be stored in an accessible place yet to be determined. There will most likely be a link on the Geographical Area websites to the WFPR.

**7. Q: What is status of COVID-19 testing capability in support of fire response?**

There are BMPs in the WFRPs to cover some of the these, though the reality remains that test availability is an issue currently and efforts to prioritize test availability for wildland firefighters are underway. This is a rapidly evolving issue that is actively being engaged by the Emergency Medical Team for the National Fire Management Board. For those units that are already experiencing fires, please continue close coordination with your local public health officials and share how you are addressing these issues with the interagency wildfire community. Responding to fire under COVID 19 conditions demands we learn together quickly, and share the lessons you are learning with others.