



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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To: CDD District Manager, All Field Managers
(Attention – District/Regional and Field Office FMO's)

From: State Director

Subject: Minimum Staffing Levels on Type 3 Engines

In reference to the 2005 Red Book, chapter 15 states that BLM Staffing Levels will be: *“Type 3, 4, or 5 engines will have a minimum crew size of three. An engine operating as a single resource will have a minimum of one ENGB/ICT5 with one ENOP, and one or more Engine Module Members”*.

In California this is an unnecessarily restrictive requirement, and not in concert with our interagency wildland partners (primarily USFS and NPS). While having an Engine Boss (ENGB) and Engine Operator (ENOP) with one to three firefighters on the engine everyday is the optimum, it is certainly not practical at all times of the year. For example, just prior to and just after normal fire season, we often have the need to send an engine on a wildland fire when the majority of our firefighting force is not employed. Usually these are short duration initial attack assignments. In these cases, what the 2005 Red Book requires is not always achievable. Staffing with an ENGB and two firefighters is achievable, and provides sufficient work force and supervision for initial attack needs. Staffing our BLM Engines with one qualified supervisor (ENGB) also meets the Incident Command System (ICS) span of control of one to five.

The guidance from the Red Book is hard to achieve given the current budget constraints. The requirement for two supervisory positions on a module when the staffing is well below the 1 in 5 ICS recommended span of control is not necessary when staffing with a three person module. Supervision of the two engine module members by the ENGB is well within the scope of the position. The ENGB is also qualified as a Crew Boss which qualifies them for the position. Allowing minimum staffing that includes an ENOP Trainee does not compromise safety.

California's accepted policy shall be:

BLM - Staffing Levels - on Type 3 engines will be a minimum crew size of three:

An engine operating as a single resource will have a minimum of one ENGB/ICT5 an ENOP, or an ENOP Trainee and one or more Engine Module Members.

Every effort will be made to staff engine modules with a qualified ENOP, however in limited circumstances, we need to have the flexibility during early and late season, and before and after daily work hours, to staff an engine and respond to incidents within our Direct Protection Areas (DPAs).

Any questions should be directed to Ed Wehking, State Fire Management Officer at 916-978-4431, or Gary Cardoza, State Equipment/Operations Specialist at 916-978-4434.

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