FAMWEB SIT REPORT
NOTE - 051208

May 12, 2007

TOPIC: Providing accurate incident location information on the ICS-209.

There continues to be many errors made on the Incident Status Summary Report (ICS-209). Among the most common errors involve the location of an incident. On the ICS-209 report blocks 12 (county), 13 (lat/long) and 14 (location description) describe with the location of an incident.

It's critical that we get accurate information on the location of every incident that submits an ICS-209. It's very time consuming for us on the Intelligence Desk at the National Interagency Coordination Center to verify and correct errors on ICS-209s. Looking at all ICS-209s from the Southern Area on May 12, 45% had either incorrect or missing lat/long or location description information. Not only does this affect the National Incident Management Situation Report, but it also affects the large fires map we produce each day. Additionally, information from ICS-209s is gathered by many other entities directly from the situation reporting system. These entities use that information for statistical and geospatial analysis. As well, the data from ICS-209s is archived for future analysis. Much analysis done today requires geospatial accuracy in order to produce accurate results for reports, maps and other documents.

At the National Interagency Coordination Center we correct many mistakes that we find in Situation Reports and ICS-209 reports. However, we cannot control all entities outside of the National Interagency Coordination Center that also gather this information directly from the ICS-209 reporting system.

On May 12, there were 24 large fires reported in the Southern Area. It took 35 minutes for us to fix incorrect or missing location information on those 209s with incorrect or missing information. Here is one example, the Florida Bugaboo fire showed the location as "Taylor, Florida," but the lat/long put the fire near Swainsboro, Georgia. There was no way to validate the true location of the fire for the National Situation Report, nor for our GIS archive. (Refer to diagrams 1 and 2.)

We often see large fires appear in the wrong GACC, the wrong state, the wrong jurisdiction, out in the ocean, and even in the wrong country because of bad lat/long information. Again, it is exceedingly difficult and time consuming for us to correct every mistake found on Situation Reports and ICS-209s.

Incidents have a responsibility to submit accurate and complete information. There are many helpful resources available to assist folks in submitting correct ICS-209s and Situation Reports. Many of these documents I have created myself. The web link below is a very useful resource to get information on intelligence reporting and using various

intelligence reporting systems:
http://gacc.nifc.gov/training/intelligence/intelligence.htm

Everyone who is involved in incident reporting should use this available resource.

When entering lat/long information into the ICS-209 the following tips may be useful:

- Make sure that latitude coordinates are entered into the latitude block, and longitude into the longitude block. Don't transpose the numbers.
- *Use degrees, minutes and seconds only.*
- Double check the latitude and longitude to be sure its correct before submitting the ICS-209.
- The lat/long should be taken at the origin of the incident, and should not change as the fire grows.
- For those who are tech-savvy, the correct datum to use in the GPS receiver is NAD83 (WGS84 will also work).

Here are some helpful hints for reporting incident locations.

Block 14, Short Location Description, should always be from an identifiable town (a town that can be found on a road map, such as Rand McNally Road Atlas). This is so that readers of the IMSR can locate a fire on a small scale map by the location description in block 14. Tiny villages or towns should not be used, even if they are closest to the incident. It should be a town identifiable on a road map of the state (such as the Rand McNally Road Atlas).

The direction should be in cardinal compass points (NW, SE, E, N, etc.), and distance in miles. The state the town is located in should also be identified (since the *identifiable town* closest to an incident may actually be in a different state). The example above in block 14 shows how an incident's location should be identified. The wording must contain number of miles from town, the state abbreviation and cardinal compass direction. How information in block 14 is used in the National Incident Management Situation Report is shown in diagram 3.

Examples of acceptable wording in ICS-209, block 14:

"43 miles northwest of Tok, AK"

"17 miles NW of New Meadows, ID"

"0 miles from Riverside, CA" or "in Riverside, CA" (if the incident is within city limits).

Examples of unacceptable wording in the ICS-209, block 14:

"the intersection of Forest Road 14 and Route 12" *(we have no way of determining where that is).*

"east of Pineville" *(in what direction and how many miles from Pineville – and in what state?).*

"near Rockland, MO" *(in what direction and how many miles?).*

"Alameda County, CA" *(the county covers a vast area – where is the incident in relation to a town?).*

"I-84, milepost 233".

"Alligator Creek, Ocala National Forest".
"Penobscot State Park"
"Across the road from the rest area, highway 12".

Diagrams 1.

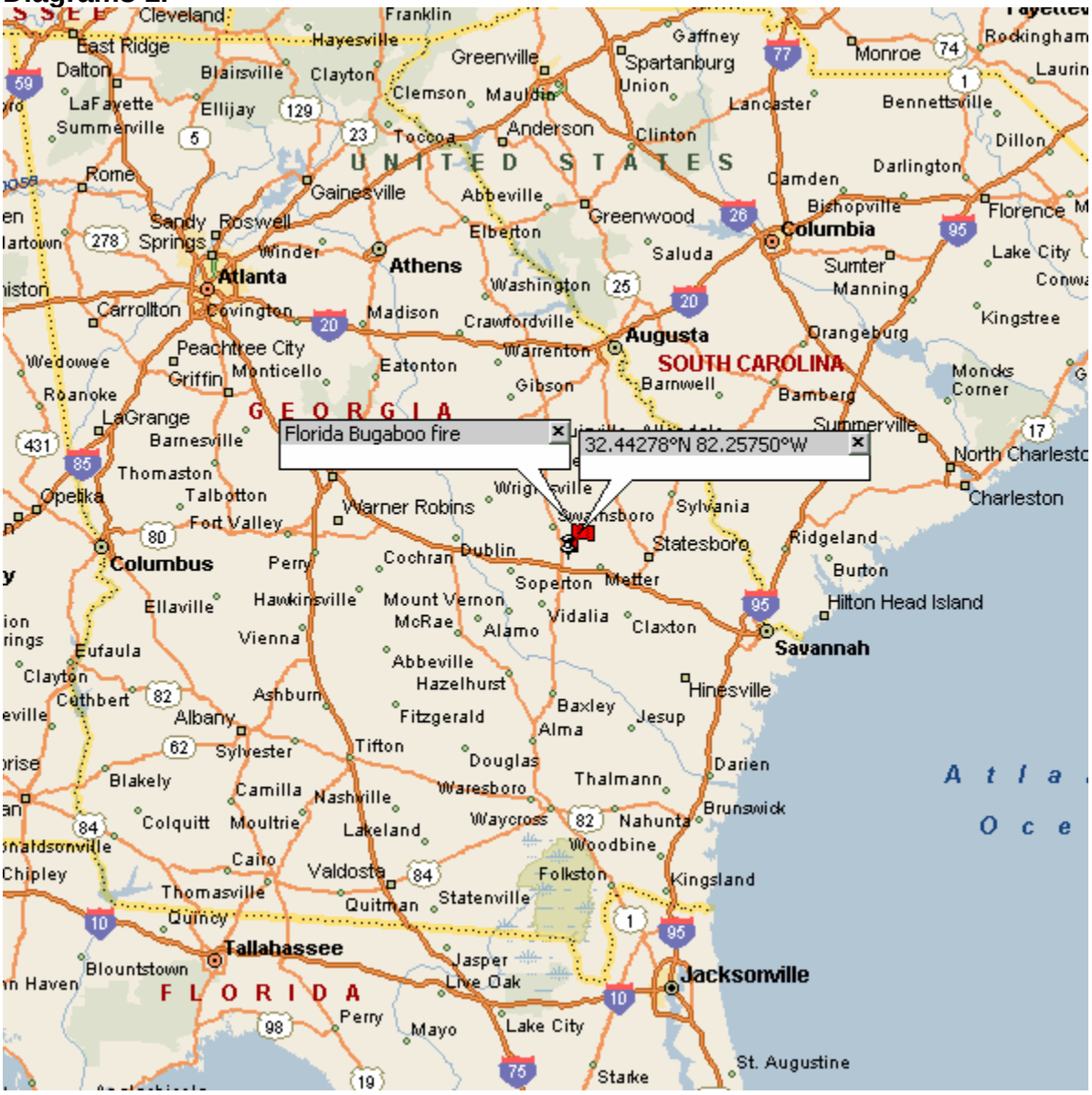

Diagram 2.

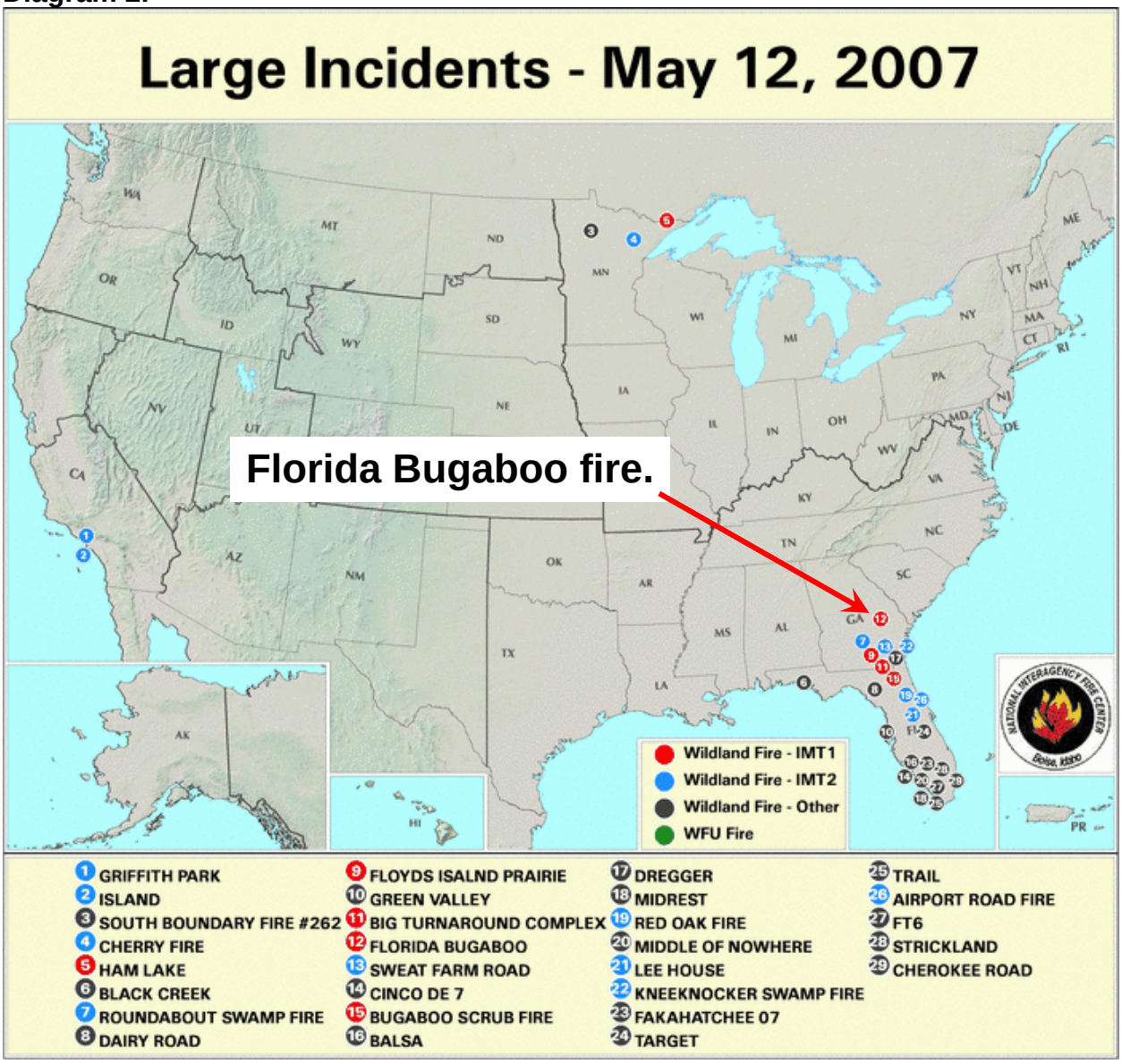
Large Incidents - May 12, 2007
Florida Bugaboo fire.
Wildland Fire - IMT1
Wildland Fire - IMT2
Wildland Fire - Other
WFU Fire
1 GRIFFITH PARK
2 ISLAND
3 SOUTH BOUNDARY FIRE #262
4 CHERRY FIRE
5 HAM LAKE
6 BLACK CREEK
7 ROUNDABOUT SWAMP FIRE
8 DAIRY ROAD
9 FLOYDS ISALND PRAIRIE
10 GREEN VALLEY
11 BIG TURNAROUND COMPLEX
12 FLORIDA BUGABOO
13 SWEAT FARM ROAD
14 CINCO DE 7
15 BUGABOO SCRUB FIRE
16 BALSA
17 DREGGER
18 MIDREST
19 RED OAK FIRE
20 MIDDLE OF NOWHERE
21 LEE HOUSE
22 KNEEKNOCKER SWAMP FIRE
23 FAKAHATCHEE 07
24 TARGET
25 TRAIL
26 AIRPORT ROAD FIRE
27 FT6
28 STRICKLAND
29 CHEROKEE ROAD

Diagram 3.

ICS-209 – Providing Correct Location Information

Incident Status Summary (ICS-209)

1: Date	2: Time	3: Initial | Update | Final	4: Incident Number	5: Incident Name
08/27/2006	**1945**	| **XX** |	**ID-BOF-000152**	**Red Mountain**

6: Incident Kind	7: Start Date Time	8: Cause	9: Incident Commander	10: IMT Type	11: State-Unit
Wildland Fire	**08/14/2006 0000**	**Human**	**Lund**	**2**	**ID-BOF**

12: County	13: Latitude and Longitude	14: Short Location Description (in reference to nearest town):
Boise	Lat: **44° 14´ 36"** Long: **115° 23´ 11"** Ownership: **ID-BOF**	**16 miles northeast of Lowman, Idaho**

National Situation Report large fire narrative:

Red Mountain, Boise NF. IMT 2 (Lund) Sixteen miles northeast of Lowman, ID Grass. Running, torching and spotting. Road closures have been lifted.