

ROSS TIPS

ROSS TIP: ORG-2004-4
Date: April 12, 2004 – V3
Subject: Entering State Organizations into ROSS

The focus of this paper is to present data standards for entering state organizations into ROSS, and to show a few examples of typical state organizations and what information needs to be entered for each. In addition, we'll discuss the rationale for entering or not entering state sub-units and detached units as ROSS organizations, and we'll provide examples of each.

For an overview of entering organizations into ROSS, please see ROSS Tip #3. This, and other ROSS Tips can be found online at: <http://ross.nwcg.gov/rosstips.htm>. The ROSS Helpdesk is an excellent source of assistance and can be contacted at 1-866-224-7677 or via e-mail at helpdesk@dms.nwcg.gov.

Data Requirements and Entry:

Entering any organization into ROSS requires some advanced planning. State organizations are considered **Government (Non-Dispatch) Organizations** in ROSS. Data requirements for each state organization may include:

- Unit code (unit identifier/unit ID)
 - Location (latitude and longitude)
 - Address (type, street, city, state, zip, country)
 - Contacts (numbers and contact methods)
 - Radio frequencies
 - Affiliations (managing, reporting and agency relationships) **REQUIRED**
 - Financial code (agency, fiscal year)
 - Subordinate organizations
 - Whether or not the organization is a resource provider

Agency Entry:

Before entering state **Government (Non-Dispatch) Organizations**, it's best to consider the **Agency** to which a particular state organization belongs and make sure that agency is entered in ROSS. In terms of ROSS, an **Agency** can best be thought of as an "umbrella" that encompasses its organizations, personnel and infrastructure. An agency does not have a physical location. Instructions on agency entry are covered in ROSS Tip # 3.

The first determination you'll have to make is what degree of detail you wish to obtain from the ROSS reports you'll run on an agency's resources or incidents. For example, in Alaska, the **Alaska Division of Forestry (Alaska DOF)** is a state agency that is PART of the **Alaska Department of Natural Resources (Alaska DNR)** agency. If you don't anticipate ever having to produce a report showing data on resources or incidents related to other divisions of Alaska DNR (e.g., Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation), then there probably is no

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reason to enter Alaska DNR or Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation as agencies in ROSS. If, however, you anticipate needing that level of detail, go ahead and enter them as agencies. Keep in mind that, for each State, NICC has already entered the agency with primary wildland fire responsibility, including Alaska DOF. Contact the ROSS Helpdesk if corrections need to be made to these State agency entries.

The following are some examples of typical state wildland and emergency management agencies: **Arizona State Land Department, Colorado State Forest Service, Connecticut State Division of Forestry, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands, Wyoming State Forestry Division, California Office of Emergency Services, Hawaii State Civil Defense, Florida Division of Emergency Management, etc.**

State **Agency** records generally are created by NICC. If a state agency record is needed by a GACC, the GACC requests the agency entry from NICC. As with all agencies entered in ROSS, the agency name and abbreviation, if any, **MUST** be unique.

Example # 1:

Agency Name: **California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection**

Example # 2:

Agency Name: **Michigan Department of Natural Resources**

Government (Non-Dispatch) Organization Entry:

The headquarters organization is the top organization within a given state agency, and corresponds somewhat with the “Washington Office” of a federal agency. This **Government (Non-Dispatch) Organization** is typically the first organization of an agency to be entered in ROSS.

As with all organizations entered in ROSS, the organization name **MUST** be unique. The dispatch organization that provides dispatching services (i.e. processes resource orders) for an organization is responsible for creating and managing the state Government (Non-Dispatch) Organization record in ROSS.

Example #1: **Northern California Operations Center**, one of two GACCs in California, provides dispatching services for the **Sacramento State Office - CDF**. The Northern California Operations Center enters and manages the Sacramento State Office - CDF organization record.

Example #2: The **Minnesota Interagency Fire Center** provides dispatching services for the **Minnesota Department of Natural Resources NE Region**. The Minnesota Interagency Coordination Center enters and manages the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources NE Region organization record.

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State Organization Data Entry Standards:

There is great variety in the names of wildland and emergency management agencies that exist in the fifty states and the territories and commonwealths. A regional office in one state is comparable to an area, district or division or sub-unit office in another state. Because of this, only BROAD GUIDELINES can be offered for entering state organizations. The ROSS application is very flexible in the type of data it accepts, but by following some fairly general standards, the user will find that ROSS performs as predictably as possible from state to state.

The ROSS National Data Steward, a member of the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) staff, has established the following data standards for state Government (Non-Dispatch) Organizations:

Organization Name:

- **Headquarters or State-Level Office:** Data shall be entered as office name followed by a space (“ ”), a dash (“-”), a space (“ ”) and the agency abbreviation or similar. For example: **Sacramento State Office – CDF, Boise State Office – IDL, Nashville State Office – TDF, Jackson State Office – MFC, etc.** If there is NO state agency abbreviation (e.g. CDF), the organization name should be entered in such a way that any ROSS user would know which state and which agency is represented (e.g. **Colorado State Forest Service – State Office, Montana Disaster and Emergency Services, etc.**).
- **Regional/Division Office:** A state regional office shall be entered as the office name followed by a space (“ ”), a dash (“-”), a space (“ ”) and the agency abbreviation or similar. For example: **Region Coast Command – CDF, Central Land Office – DNRC, Division A – NJFS, etc.** If there is NO state agency abbreviation the organization name should be entered in such a way that any ROSS user would know which state and which agency is represented (e.g. **Washington State Department of Natural Resources SE Region, State of Utah – SW State, Alaska Division of Forestry Northern Regional Office, etc.**).
- **Field/District/Area Office:** A field, district or area office (or similar organization) shall be entered as the office name followed by a space (“ ”), a dash (“-”), a space (“ ”) and the agency abbreviation or similar. For example: **Siskiyou Unit – CDF, LaGrande Unit – ODF, etc.** If there is NO state agency abbreviation the organization name should be entered in such a way that any ROSS user would know which state and which agency is represented (e.g. **New Mexico State Forestry – Bernalillo Office etc.**).
- **Sub-Unit/Station:** Some state field units, districts, etc. contain sub-units (e.g. the **Gainesville District Office** of the **Georgia Forestry Commission** includes the **Hall County Unit**). Sub-units of a region/district/area DO NOT NECESSARILY have to be entered in ROSS. If the ROSS user needs the

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ability to differentiate and report resources from separate sub-units within a larger state organization, then they should be entered. If a sub-unit is entered, data shall be entered as the Sub-Unit Name (e.g. **Hall County Unit – GFC**; "GFC" stands for the Georgia Forestry Commission, Codes are not used for Sub-Units). An example of how this is done follows this section.

The following assumptions **MUST** be understood before entering a sub-unit as an organization:

- A sub-unit **IS NOT CONSIDERED** an **Incident Host**; the field/district office is. Although incidents occur on the sub-unit, the field/district office is the host.
 - A sub-unit **DOES NOT** have a **Unit ID**; the field/district office does. In ROSS, the Unit ID of the field/district office is applied to the sub-unit through the sub-unit's affiliation with the field/district office.
 - The field/district office is the **Resource Provider**, **NOT** the sub-unit. All **Resource Items** entered into ROSS **MUST** show the field/district office as the **Resource Owner and Provider**.
 - If entered in ROSS, a sub-unit can be designated as the **Home Unit** for those **Resource Items** attached to the sub-unit.
- **State Organizations Overlapping Dispatch Zones:** Because many state organizations overlap dispatch/coordination center zone boundaries, some ROSS users have found it helpful to artificially subdivide state organizations by dispatch center boundaries in ROSS. The advantage of this is that each dispatch center can enter and manage the state agency incidents and resources that fall within their zone, without having to work with multiple official agency subdivisions. For example, **Cody Interagency Dispatch Center** and **Casper Interagency Dispatch Center** each dispatch Wyoming State Forestry resources in their respective dispatch areas. These have been entered in ROSS as **Wyoming State Forestry – CDC Area**, and **Wyoming State Forestry – CPC Area** respectively. Another example would be **Colorado State Forest Service – FTC Zone** for the area within the Fort Collins Dispatch Zone.
 - **Units where detached employees are based:** Some units may serve as the office for employees who are detached from their home unit (e.g. an employee of **Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation [DNRC]** who works in the **Northern Rockies Coordination Center**). There is no need to create a separate organization for detached employees. If the person in the above example were entered in ROSS and designated as a "Resource Item," "Montana DNRC" would be selected as the employee's **Provider and Owner**, and "the **Northern Rockies Coordination Center**" would be selected as the **Home Unit**. A "Preferred Jetport" (Missoula) could be entered in the Resource Item screen to show that person's demobilization point.

State Organization Affiliations:

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The most important aspect of planning for data entry is determining where an organization fits within its agency structure and the dispatch channel. It's recommended that you first sketch out these relationships before actually entering organizations in ROSS. Most state agencies have a state or headquarters office, regional or division offices and local units (e.g. field, district or area offices, etc.). Each organization is served by a dispatch center. Let's look at some examples of state Government (Non-Dispatch) Organizations and their Affiliations. A diagram follows the examples.

Example #1: The Sacramento State Office of the California Division of Forestry and Fire Protection (Sacramento State Office - CDF) is a Government (Non-Dispatch) Organization that falls under the umbrella of the CDF agency. The Northern California Operations Center in Redding, which provides direct dispatching services for Sacramento State Office - CDF, enters the organization into ROSS. Thus, the Northern California Operations Center has a **Managing Affiliation** with the organization in ROSS. Only that dispatch office can edit or delete the organization.

Since the Sacramento State Office - CDF is at the top of its organizational hierarchy, it reports to no other organization in the agency. Therefore, the Sacramento State Office - CDF has no **Reporting Affiliation**. The Sacramento State Office - CDF is part of the California Division of Forestry and Fire Protection agency, so its **Agency Affiliation** is CDF.

Example #2: The Northern Region of the California Division of Forestry and Fire Protection (Northern Region – CDF) is a Government (Non-Dispatch) Organization that is part of the CDF agency. Assistant Region Chief, Operations reports to the CDF Director in the Sacramento State Office - CDF. The Northern California Operations Center, which provides dispatching services for the Northern Region – CDF, enters the organization into ROSS. Thus, the Northern California Operations Center has a **Managing Affiliation** with the organization in ROSS. Only that dispatch office can edit or delete the organization.

Northern Region – CDF has a **Reporting Affiliation** to the Sacramento State Office - CDF. Northern Region – CDF is part of the California Division of Forestry and Fire Protection agency, so its **Agency Affiliation** is CDF.

Example #3: The Siskiyou Unit of the CDF (Siskiyou Unit – CDF) is a Government (Non-Dispatch) Organization that is part of the California Division of Forestry and Fire Protection agency, and is headquartered in Yreka. The Siskiyou Unit Chief reports to the Assistant Region Chief, Operations of the Northern Region - CDF. The Yreka Emergency Command Center, which provides dispatching services for the Siskiyou Unit – CDF, enters the organization into ROSS. Thus, the Yreka Emergency

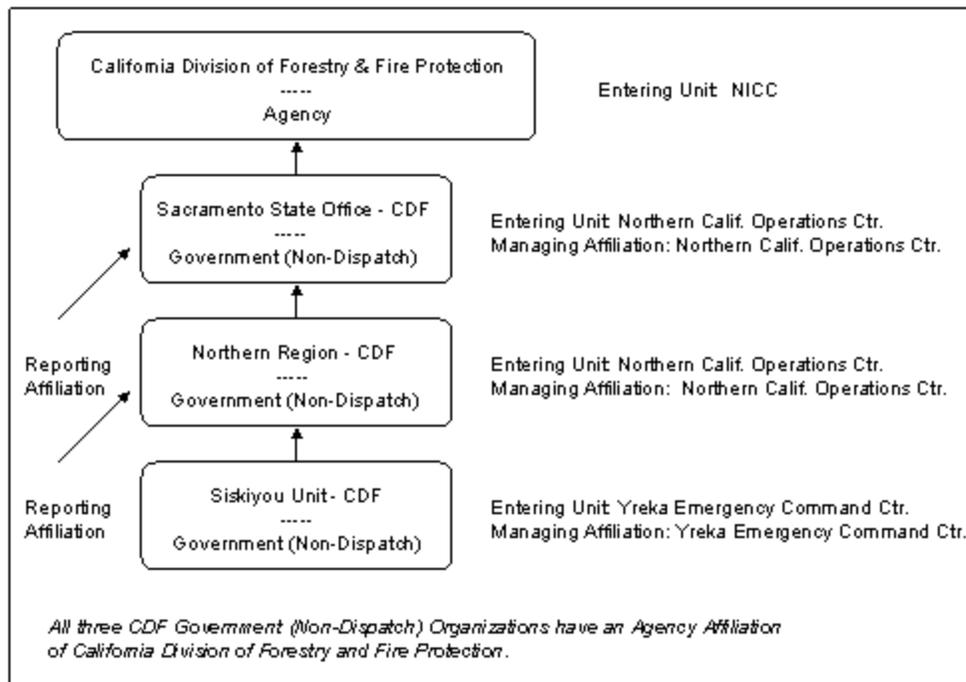
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Command Center has a **Managing Affiliation** with the organization in ROSS. Only that dispatch office can edit or delete the organization.

The Siskiyou Unit – CDF has a **Reporting Affiliation** to the Northern Region - CDF. The Siskiyou Unit – CDF is part of the California Division of Forestry and Fire Protection agency, so its **Agency Affiliation** is CDF.

Here is a diagram showing the above organizations and relationships:



“Add Non-Dispatch Government Organization” Window Entries:

Let’s look at typical state entries in the “Add Non-Dispatch Government Organization” pop-up window.

Name*: Enter the organization’s name as described in the above “State Organization Data Entry Standards” section (e.g. Wyoming State Forestry – CDC Area).

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Type: For the organization type, select “Government (Non-Dispatch)” from the drop-down menu for entering ALL state organizations. Note: each state **Agency** should already have been entered by NICC. If not, request this through your GACC.

Resource Provider: you will normally check this box UNLESS you are entering a sub-unit. The state/headquarters, regional offices, local units (e.g. field, district, area office etc.) would typically provide resources.

Unit ID*: IF you checked “Resource Provider,” this entry is mandatory (e.g. WY-CDS). Unit IDs are assigned to administrative units that can host an incident and/or which administratively control state resources. Each Geographic Area Coordinating Group approves Unit Identifiers for organizations in its area, so please use the approved Unit ID here.

SUB-UNITS ARE NOT ASSIGNED A UNIT ID. If a sub-unit (such as a state fire station organization) is entered in ROSS, ROSS will recognize it as part of its “parent” administrative unit (e.g. field office, district, area, etc) for reporting purposes. The field/district/area owns and provides the resources and hosts incidents, not the sub-unit.

Add to my list of Incident Hosts: you will normally check this box UNLESS you are entering a sub-unit.

Creating State Organization Records in ROSS

To create a **Regional/Field Area/District Office** organization, complete the following steps:

1. Open the **Organization** screen from the **Admin** drop-down menu.
2. Click the **Government (Non-Dispatch)** radio button.
3. Click the **New** icon (click the **Refresh** button if necessary).
4. BEFORE ENTERING A NEW ORGANIZATION, use the **Search Non-Dispatch Government Organizations** function to ensure that it hasn’t been created in ROSS previously. Please see ROSS Tip #3 **Entering Organizations in ROSS** for instructions.
5. In the **Name** field, enter the name of the organization (e.g. **Central Land Office – DNRC** or **State of Utah – SW State**, etc.).
6. In the **Type** field, select “Government (Non-Dispatch).”
7. Click the **Resource Provider** check box.
8. In the two **Unit ID** fields, enter the official Unit Identifier for this organization (state and unit).
9. Click the **Add to my list of incident hosts** check box.

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10. Click **OK** button. The organization has been created in ROSS.
11. To establish affiliations, for the new organization, click the **Pick Affiliations** button. The new organization will appear in the **Selected Organization** field. Your dispatch organization will appear in the **Current Managing Affiliation** field (since your dispatch organization just created the new organization).
12. Using the “Set Filter for Parent Organization” area of the “Pick Affiliations” window, filter and select the appropriate organization for the **Current Reporting Affiliation** of the new organization and click the **Select Organization** (“+”) button. Once you’ve selected a Reporting Affiliation for an organization, the **Current Agency Affiliation** field will be filled in automatically, provided the parent organization was correctly affiliated with the agency. If not, filter and select the correct state agency. If the parent organization has not been entered in ROSS you should not create it. This should be done by the office that provides dispatch services to the parent. Contact the ROSS Helpdesk (866-224-7677) for assistance.

For example: for the **Duluth Area Office Minnesota DNR**, enter “Region*” in the **Name** filter field (or “MN” in the **Unit ID** state filter field) and select **Minnesota Department of Natural Resources NE Region** as the **Reporting Affiliation** for the Duluth Area Office Minnesota DNR. Since **Minnesota Department of Natural Resources NE Region**, which has an **Agency Affiliation** of **Minnesota DNR**, has been selected as the **Reporting Affiliation**, the **Current Agency Affiliation** field for the Duluth Area Office Minnesota DRN will also show **Minnesota DNR**.

13. Click **Close** button to complete the affiliation entry.
14. Finally, highlight each of the first five tabs (**Address, Contacts, Frequencies, Financial Code** and **Locations**) and click the **New** button to enter appropriate information on the new organization. The last tab, **Subordinate Organizations** is not edited here. The information on any Subordinate Organization would be displayed automatically if another Government (Non-Dispatch) Organization selected your new organization as its “Current Reporting Affiliation” on the “Pick Affiliation” window.

To create a state **Sub-Unit** complete the following steps:

1. Open the **Organization** screen from the **Admin** drop-down menu.
2. Click the **Government (Non-Dispatch)** radio button.
3. Click the **New** icon (click the **Refresh** button if necessary).
4. BEFORE ENTERING A NEW ORGANIZATION, use the **Search Non-Dispatch Government Organizations** function to ensure that it hasn’t been created in ROSS previously. Please see ROSS Tip #3 **Entering Organizations in ROSS** for instructions.
5. In the **Name** field, enter the name of the organization (e.g. **Hall County Unit - GFC**).
6. In the **Type** field, select “Government (Non-Dispatch).”

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7. DO NOT click the **Resource Provider** check box.
8. DO NOT enter anything in the **Unit ID** fields.
9. DO NOT click the **Add to my list of incident hosts** check box.
10. Click **OK** button. The organization has been created in ROSS.
11. To establish affiliations, for the new organization, click the **Pick Affiliations** button. The new organization will appear in the **Selected Organization** field. Your dispatch organization will appear in the **Current Managing Affiliation** field (since your dispatch organization just created the new organization).
12. Using the “Set Filter for Parent Organization” area of the “Pick Affiliations” window, filter and select the appropriate organization for the **Current Reporting Affiliation** of the new organization and click the **Select Organization** (“+”) button. Once you’ve selected a Reporting Affiliation for an organization, the **Current Agency Affiliation** field will be filled in automatically.

For example: for **Hall County Unit - GFC**, type “Geor*” in the **Name** filter field (or “GA” in the **Unit ID** state filter field) and select **Georgia Forestry Commission – Gainesville District** as the **Reporting Affiliation** for the Hall County Unit - GFC. Since **Georgia Forestry Commission – Gainesville District**, which has an **Agency Affiliation** of **Georgia Forestry Commission**, has been selected as the **Reporting Affiliation**, the **Current Agency Affiliation** field for **Hall County Unit - GFC** will also show **Georgia Forestry Commission**.

13. Click **Close** button to complete the affiliation entry.
14. Finally, highlight the **Address** tab and click the **New** button to enter appropriate information on the new organization. Do the same with the **Contacts** and **Location** tabs. Frequencies and financial codes are related to incident hosts and should not be entered for sub-units. All frequencies and financial codes should be entered for the parent organization (e.g. region/field office/area, etc.). As explained above, the last tab, **Subordinate Organizations** is not edited here, and most state sub-units would not have subordinate organizations.