



What is? **IMET**

National Weather Service Incident Meteorologists (IMET) provide onsite, tactical weather support for wildland fires and other incidents.

National Weather Service meteorologists provide an array of services such as general fire weather forecasts and [Red Flag Warnings](#) and Watches. Few know that meteorologists actually deploy on large wildland fires to provide specific, timely weather forecasts for firefighters with one objective: firefighter safety.

Once dispatched, IMETs bring a kit to establish a mobile weather center on the incident. Forecasters set up remote automated weather stations to monitor conditions around the clock. A laptop computer and satellite communication connections provide access to weather information and forecast software on the web. Atmospheric instability is always of great concern to firefighters and weather balloons can be launched to gather data above the fire. The collection of data is only one part of an IMETs responsibility.

During the morning briefing, the [Incident Commander](#) updates overnight progress and states the objectives for the current day. Shift plans are handed out with assignments defined for every crew. Firefighters want to know about the



Establishing satellite communications. Photo Credit: NOAA National Weather Service

FIRE FACTS



wind, thunderstorms, lightning potential, cold fronts, and a myriad of other concerns - what was observed and what is predicted. Using the latest forecast and fire behavior models, the IMET and Fire Behavior Analyst give their interpretations of the day's expected fire behavior. Safety begins by understanding fire behavior, and IMETs play a critical role through their forecasts.

In addition to their work as IMETs, many meteorologists serve as instructors in required fire behavior classes such as S190 through S590. They have also led efforts to develop new research information and syntheses about wildland fire behavior.

For more information:

Northwest Coordination Center: <http://gacc.nifc.gov/nwcc/predict/fban-ltan.aspx>

Fire Management Today: http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/fmt/fmt_pdfs/fmt64-1.pdf

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