



Connections Call

October 5, 2023

Executive Board: Erik Litzenberg (IAFC), Greg Smith (NASF), Dave Haston (USFS)

NWCG Staff: Sarah Lee (NWCG Deputy Program Manager), Annie Benoit (Training Program Manager), Katy O'Hara (Coordinator), Carmen Thomason (Coordinator), Erica Lamb (Publications Manager), Toni Suminski (IPTM Project Manager), Omaira Falcon (Webmaster), Darci Drinkwater (Executive Secretary)

Committee Chairs/Reps: Carrie Bilbao (CEPC), Roshelle Pederson (DMC), Tyler McCowan (EMC), L.J Brown (ETC), Nick Nauslar (FENC), Robyn Heffernan (FENC), Marlene Eno-Hendren (IPSC), Joe Sean Kennedy (IPSC), Kelin Crill (IBC), Reeve Armstrong (IFPC), Patrick Morgan (LC), Sean Peterson (NCSC), Steve Griffin (NIMSIC), Richard Smith (RMC), Erin O'Conner (WUI), Kelly Woods (LLC)

Topic & Notes

NWCG coordinator reorganization:

- Analyzed committee stats and reorganized them under the coordinators based on the strengths and backgrounds of each coordinator.
 - Appropriate time with two new coordinators joining NWCG.
 - Will better distribute workload.
 - Coordinators will be able to better support committee needs.
 - Grouped committees who work together often under the same coordinator to increase collaboration.
- Committee transition to new coordinators will be November 6th.
 - Meeting next week to develop a transition plan.
 - New coordinators will start attending meetings in October as their schedules allow.
- O'Hara: Communication, Education, and Prevention Committee (CEPC), Emergency Medical Committee (EMC), Incident Business Committee (IBC), National Coordination System Committee (NCSC), Risk Management Committee (RMC), Wildland Urban Interface Mitigation Committee (WUIMC), and Executive Board facilitator.
- Thomason: Equipment Technology Committee (ETC), Incident and Position Standards Committee (IPSC), Leadership Committee (LC), National Incident Management System Integration Committee (NIMSIC), Training Development Committee (TDC), All-Hazards Incident Management Team Association and Federal Emergency Management Agency representative.
- Schultz: Data Management Committee (DMC), Fire Environment Committee (FENC), Fuels Management Committee (FMC), Interagency Fire Planning Committee (IFPC), National Interagency Aviation Committee, Smoke Committee (Smoc), Wildland Fire Information and Technology, and National Predictive Services Oversight Group representative.

Incident Performance and Training Modernization (IPTM) update:

- Matt Dunn started a month ago as the Subject Matter Expert (SME) Specialist.
 - SMEs are critical to this effort.
 - Recruiting representatives from a variety of geographical areas, agencies, and experience levels.
- Kicked off large contract and have completed phase 1 analysis on five of the ten positions for this year.
 - Helicopter Crewmember, Safety Officer Field, Equipment Time Recorder, Personnel Time Recorder, and Status/Check-In Recorder.

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Topic & Notes

- By end of November 2023, Phase 1 will be complete for remaining five positions: Firing Boss, Felling Boss, Aircraft Base Radio Operator, Expanded Dispatch Recorder, and Expanded Dispatch Support Dispatcher
- Have completed a modification to the contract to gain efficiencies.
- Current cost per position is \$280,000 based on current call order pricing
- Overarching blanket purchase agreement gives the ability to support other efforts in our environment.
 - S-130 Firefighter Training, basic and advanced Incident Management Team (IMT) courses.
- Increasing communication with the committees during the design and development phases.
- Will be sending out a new letter in 2024 outlining the next positions in the IPTM process for that year.
 - Currently prioritizing positions, considering availability of SMEs and committees.

Training update:

- S-290, Intermediate Wildland Fire Behavior:
 - Slated for completion in June 2024.
 - Under an agreement with University of Idaho.
- S-390 Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior Calculations, S-490, Advanced Fire Behavior Calculations:
 - These courses are critical for the field to be completed and are required for several positions.
 - Using Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funds on contract under the umbrella of IPTM.
- Crew Boss (CRWB):
 - First position to go through the IPTM process.
 - Just approved by IOSC.
 - Old materials will be available until six months after the certification date.
- RX-300, Prescribed Fire Burn Boss:
 - Merging RX-301, Prescribed Fire Implementation and RX-341, Prescribed Fire Plan Preparation.
 - FMC will be reviewing soon.
- S-130:
 - Instructor led course was certified in 2021.
 - Updating the online version from 2008 so the content matches.
- FI-110, Wildland Fire Observations and Origin Scene Protection for First Responders:
 - Testing the online course in the learning portal.
 - Working through edits.
- Medical Unit Leader:
 - Test course in December.
 - Certification this spring.
- Faller 3:

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- Certification this spring.
- New PTBs:
 - Testing formatting/content and requesting feedback.
 - Cohort of CRWB and RXB2s who have gone through the new course and are now using/testing the new associated position task books (PTBs).
 - Will release new PTBs as performance packages are completed.

Research to operations proposal:

- Needed a process to move research to operations within NWCG.
 - Checks and balances within the process.
- Proposal:
 - New science with anticipated implications for wildland fire is submitted to the Executive Board (EB) by a short briefing paper.
 - EB determines if the new science requires further investigation for a potential action and tasks the appropriate committee.
 - Avenues for feedback should be provided and then the steward committee will consolidate feedback before delivering to the scientist for a response.
 - The steward committee will recommend an action to the EB.
 - EB will make a final decision.
- Provides an opportunity for all agencies to be made aware of the impactful new science in wildland fire and establishes clarity of approach for NWCG to act as needed.
- Establish a two-way connection between research and operations.
- Ability to reverse the process for research that needs to be conducted.

Annual meeting:

- NIMSIC will be hosting the 2024 Annual Meeting February 21-22nd at the Idaho Office of Emergency Management.
- In-person only.
- Committee and Subcommittee chairs are invited.
- Two-day meeting focusing on NWCG process and making connections.
- Please send suggestions to Steve Griffin.

Committee Reports:

- CEPC:
 - In-person meeting in Fort Collins in October.
 - Recruiting for vice chair.
 - Fire reporting, user guide available.
 - Having issues with cause data.
 - Connecting with geographical areas to increase coordination.

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- Still working to develop a fire restrictions website.
- Fire Prevention Education Team went out on seven assignments.
 - Assignments were larger and more complex than previous years.
- Public Information Officer Subcommittee (PIOSC):
 - Recruiting a Fish and Wildlife representative.
 - Working with InciWeb lead on PIO needs weekly.
- Wildland Fire Investigation Subcommittee (WFISC):
 - Hosting an in-person meeting in October.
 - Updating training.
- National Fire Academy, hosted Wildfire Investigation courses through the academy last week.
- Concerns regarding complex incident management (CIM).
 - Drafting a memorandum, regarding bridging experience gaps.
- **DMC:**
 - Fall Data Summit:
 - Continues to be an important part of our interagency data governance efforts.
 - Provided the final report on our Data Architecture contract and proof of concepts that will be the basis of the Interagency Data Management Environment which will develop a more cohesive data and information environment.
 - Continue to work on establishing a national, interagency datasets for organizational data and frequencies.
 - Will result in changes to the Unit ID Board pending NWCG EB approval.
 - Have several meetings with U.S. Fire Administration to coordinate on the National Fire Incident Reporting System.
 - Replacement will ensure better data sharing between wildland fire and structural fire.
 - Geospatial Subcommittee:
 - Nominations for S-341, GIS Specialist for Incident Management is open through November 1st.
 - Two sessions- one in February/March and one in April.
- **EMC:**
 - Recruiting a Bureau of Indian Affairs member.
 - In-person meeting this winter.
 - Discussing first aid kits, belt kits, and Emergency medical service contracts in Viper.
 - Task group with FIRESCOPE developing national standards for rapid extraction modules.
- **ETC:**
 - New Subcommittee chairs:
 - Fire Shelter and Personal Protective Equipment Subcommittee, Yohn
 - Invasive Species Subcommittee, Stockmann



Topic & Notes

- National Fire Equipment System Subcommittee, Medina
- Wildland Fire Radio Standards and Use Subcommittee, Andersen
- Meeting quarterly now.
- Mobile Fire Equipment Subcommittee is looking to update the NWCG Standards for Wildland Fire Resource Typing, PMS 200 with utility task vehicle standards.
- Fire Shelter and Personal Protective Equipment Subcommittee is working with RMC on respirators for wildland firefighters.
- Invasive Species Subcommittee working to get 350 pumps included in the national cache system.
- Still waiting to fill the chair role behind Haston.
- **FENC:**
 - In-person meeting October/November in Boise.
 - Fire Weather Subcommittee:
 - In-person meeting next week.
 - Will be drafting an official request to the EB to remove Haines index from the fire weather.
 - Fire data environment map documents and clarification will be sent out to the field.
 - Fire Behavior Subcommittee:
 - Working on curriculum changes.
 - Fire Danger Subcommittee:
 - National Fire Danger Rating System version 4
 - Working on a webinar.
- **FMC:**
 - Presented alternative pathways to Burn Boss with proposal for prescribed fire practitioner without wildland fire background to EB.
 - EB attended last FMC meeting to provide leaders intent.
 - Prescribed Fire Burn Boss Type 2 close to certification.
- **IPSC:**
 - Discussing Operations Branch Directors transition to CIM.
 - Removing Logistics Branch Director positions in *NWCG Standards for Wildland Fire Position Qualifications*, PMS 310-1 January 2024.
 - Created IMT Course Steering Committee to produce basic and advanced IMT courses.
 - Basic release December 2024 and advanced release December 2025.
 - CIM after action review October 31st.
 - Approved new field evaluation course code (X-520) for Incident Qualification and Certification System and Incident Qualification System.
 - Incident Response Pocket Guide request for change is due October 31.

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- New version will be released January 2025.
- **IBC:**
 - Developing statement of work for new videos, logistics refresher, and *NWCG Standards for Interagency Business Management*, PMS 902 introduction.
 - Quarterly meeting in December.
 - Ready to publish Comps and Claims videos.
- **IFPC:**
 - Vice chair Bailey
 - Changed call format to monthly core calls and quarterly presentations from outside experts.
- **LC:**
 - Presented awards for the Paul Gleason Lead by Example.
 - Nominations for 2023 will be out soon.
 - Working with new media/communications person.
 - *NWCG Wildland Fire Staff Ride Guide*, PMS 470 posted on the website.
 - In-person meeting in December.
- **NCSC:**
 - Recruiting vice chair.
 - Presenting dispatch cost analysis tool to the Fire Management Board.
 - Rocky Mountain Geographic Area is currently using the tool.
 - National Dispatch Academy Task Group is meeting monthly.
 - D-310, Expanded Dispatch Support Dispatcher rewrite.
 - In-person meeting in February.
- **NIMSIC:**
 - New Department of Defense member Jewell.
 - Working on data standards and glossary terms.
- **RMC:**
 - In-person meeting in January.
 - Reworking SAFENET to show trends.
 - Updating *Agency Administrator's Guide to Critical Incident Management*, PMS 926.
 - RMC presented tasking to EB to task Medical and Wildland Fire Medical and Public Health Advisory Team to design a fatigue study.
 - Discussing the certification of a fatigue management guide.
 - Working on safety bulletin for respirators.
 - Safety officer toolkit posted to the website.

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- 6 Minutes for Safety Subcommittee (6MFS):
 - Working on new content.
- Mental Health Subcommittee (MHSC):
 - Released Suicide Prevention Week materials.
- Hazard Tree and Tree Felling Subcommittee (HTTFSC):
 - Working on next generation chainsaw training.
- **SmoC:**
 - Completing final edits on smoke video.
- **TDC:**
 - Revising *NWCG Standards for Course Delivery*, PMS 901-1.
- **WUIMC:**
 - New WUI Mitigation Standards and Guide publication posted to the website.
 - Finishing last round for edits for the new Field Guide publication.
 - Developing committee standard operating procedures.