NWCG CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT ISSUE PAPER #55
FUTURE OF THE S-245 DISPLAY PROCESSOR COURSE AND DPRO POSITION
February 9, 2004

BACKGROUND
The Display Processor (DPRO) position is an entry level, non-line qualified position, in the Planning Section. In 1996, the Training Working Team approved the development for an S-245 Display Processor course in lieu of the existing job aid. The 1997 S-245 Display Processor course is currently under revision.

CURRENT STATUS
The Subject Matter Experts for revising S-245 want to document their recommendations for the future of this course. The SMEs recommendations are based on the following information:

- **Use of the DPRO position.** The SMEs found the following:
    - The increased use of the Geographic Information System Technical Specialist (GIST) position has decreased the need for DPROs.
    - Some geographic areas tend to use DPROs while others don't, for example the Western Great Basin rarely uses DPROs while Northern and Southern California use them often.
    - Type 1 teams tend to use DPROs more than Type II and III teams.
    - If a SITL hand draws the maps then a DPRO is often not requested.
    - It is difficult it get a DPRO therefore they are sometimes not requested.

- **Relationship between DPRO and GIST.** The SMEs found that there are two different opinions on whether or not the DPRO position is still needed. Some believe the DPRO position is not needed anymore because the GIST has taken over the DPRO tasks, while others believe that there is still a need for the position because the tasks of the GIST and DPRO are different.
    - The primary job of the GIST is to produce GIS maps while the DPRO tasks are associated with gathering intelligence, hand-drawing maps, and creating and updating displays. The GIST does not replace the DPRO at this time because the tasks are different.
    - The GIST is tied to the production of GIS products and does not have the mobility on the incident to function well as the DPRO.
    - Even with GIS, there is still a need for the hand drawn maps that the DPRO produces because they (hand drawn maps) provide a safety net and backup. There are many examples of incidents where there has been a loss of power, computer viruses, poor quality GIS data, and lack of or malfunctioning equipment (such as a plotter) that impacts the availability of GIS produced maps. As technology improves, the need for hand drawn maps may no longer be needed. Note: Some SITL are hand drawing maps instead of the DPROs and the SME questioned whether this was the best use of the SITL time and skills.
    - Gathering of intelligence and creating and updating displays are an important role for the DPRO.
    - GISTs are generally not aware of DPROs duties and how DPROs can help them with their work load.
    - DPROs typically arrive on the incident during the initial phase (when the need for hand drawn maps is most important) and GISTs arrive later on.
    - DPRO is a good entry level position to the Planning Section and it provides real world skills that can applied at their home unit.

- **If GIST becomes a NWCG PMS 310-1 position**. The SMEs believe that the Information Resource Management Working Team may submit an Issue Paper in the near future requesting the inclusion of the GIST position into the PMS 310-1. If it becomes a NWCG PMS 310-1 position then the S-245 course could be a prerequisite training course for the GIST position. The course would help them understand the role of the DPRO and provide them with training (hand drawing maps) that many GISTs do not have.

- **Field Observer and Display Processor courses taught at same time**. GACCs typically offer both S-244 Field Observer (1997) and S-245 Display Processor (1997) as a joint course. The reason they are typically taught together is because the Field Observer course does not address mapping skills and FOBS/FEMO need those skills. A person who wants to become a DPRO would have to go through 20 hours of FOBS training to complete the Display Processor 6 hour course. The SME believe that offering S-244 and S-245 together has prevented individuals who just wanted DPRO training from taking the course.
  - Note: S-244 is currently being revised and mapping skills are being incorporated into the course.

RECOMMENDATION
Based on the information above, the SMEs for S-245 Display Processor make the following recommendations:
- The DPRO position and S-245 course are still needed at this time, however within 5 years the position and course should be revaluated.
- If the GIST position becomes a NWCG 310-1 position then S-245 should be considered as a prerequisite course.
- GACCs should no longer teach S-244 and S-245 as a joint course.

ACTION REQUIRED
Approval of this issue paper, indicating concurrence with SME recommendations.

APPROVED/DENIED
(circle one)

SIGNATURE

_____   ___2/25/04___
TWT Chair   Date

_____   ___2/25/04___
Bob Leaverton
IOSWT Chair   Date