PREDICTIVE SERVICES OVERSIGHT GROUP
MEETING MINUTES – April 18-19, 2019

Participants: Dan O'Brien, Nancy Ellsworth, Shane McDonald, Beth Lund, Kelly Castillo, Jarrod Simontacchi, Nate Benson, Brian Achziger, Billy Gardunio, Heidi Strader, GaBriella Branson (via phone).

PSOG Meeting:

- How best to communicate the FMB intent of the PSOG to the field and negotiate the conflict that it could create. What is the best way for folks to understand they are able to provide input and be listened to?

- Have someone with a communications background help with messaging and what gets put out. Important to think about how the message is packaged. Talking to individuals who have no guidance from a national level in 20 years … which could create conflict and trepidation. Have a lot more buy-in and better process to get messaging correct. Stay focused on the mission of the PSOG.

- PSOG is focus for the larger national program. What is the best way to conduct ourselves for the larger program and set the tempo? Steps for closing out the meeting to send to the field. Synthesize the key points and spread out that knowledge for transparency. The community will get a sense of the direction that the PSOG is moving. There is still not a clear understanding of the direction based on the written communications that has been done so far. What authority does PSOG have?

- Clarify what the PSOG is and how do we fit in the overall structure of Predictive Services. Clarify having a supervisor vs a board of directors. Need to understand how that works. Message this!!

- Identify the key concerns of the community. Try to address them. Adapting to change is difficult and there will be some at all levels. Buy-in is KEY. Recognize that will never make everyone happy, unrealistic goal. Need to make hard decisions and those that people don't agree with. Get management support and move forward. Goal is to have a productive, happy workforce. Do a better job up front and not be in reactive mode.

- Reviewed FMB Memo 18-001. Hasn't been well circulated and/or people didn't pay much attention to it. Keep bringing it up because it provides clarity. What happens at the GACC is up to them until it interferes with what happens at the national level.

- Sideboards are somewhere between alternative 1 and 3. Take the program as it is and make adjustments as outlined in the intent than the job is done. One size may not fit all and there are a lot of permutations within that. All PSOG members need to be on board and advocate for the program. Be clear with intent.

- What have been the challenges and what are we fixing? (Management input into the system) What are the products that are wanted/needed out of predictive services?

- o Group needs to speak as a cohesive voice to get away from the stigma that certain areas are pushing "their" agenda. Get away from the negative reaction.

- o There is a feeling of ownership to programs with people that have been around for 20 years.

- o Does the field feel like they were a part of the process? No. Include them in the process (e.g. survey monkey). What they want to see out of predictive services? How did we get from point A to point B in the Phase II report? Compile questions based on the Phase II report. Analyze answers that come in. Is there value in visiting the Phase II report or address the issues and move forward?

- o Define critical roles of the positions within the Predictive Services program. What is their overall role within that? How can we bring together each area of expertise to be more powerful and effective? The relationship between management will be indelible.

- o Unified agreed upon standards that cross geographic boundaries so there are no differences. The program was never given any directions (in the beginning).

- o Start talking about a unit vs the stovepipes. Get away from the labels and desperate memberships (e.g. analyst, MET, intel). The function is intel. Change the nomenclature of Predictive Services to mean more than the "METs". Have it include decision support. Empower GACCs to have this and also from a national level. Get back to a cohesive unit.

- Predictive Services is 3 functions. Maintain this title and start defining, pushing the mission and the expectations. Go back to the beginning, original meaning (?). Set timelines to keep moving. Come up with national products to use and aren't necessarily what is needed at the GACC's.

- Membership Roles = Make sure to include all members when communicating via email. Speak up if there is confusion and call a meeting together if it is needed. Being comfortable with the idea of a best/worst solution and talking about it together and with constituents. What avenues are there to set up to provide positive feedback to the group (e.g. google/change request form)? Don't put out before the PSOG is set on mission, roles, and problems.

- How to formalize feedback and communication from an agency perspective (e.g. management)? How best to capture the interagency piece? Funnel through CGAC.

- Action Item - Define: Predictive Services is a management group, pushing the boundaries of the mission to provide the best service. Roles as a stakeholder representative is to ensure the needs of your respective area are met while simultaneously meeting and supporting national protocols. Open communication up/down the chain of command. Solicit input from the field to provide cohesiveness where possible.

- Intel = See less time spent validating the data. Need to define what to analyze and products needed. For NICC, the stakeholder is NMAC. Sometimes the stakeholder can't articulate what

they want/need. Need a group that is forward thinking, outside of the box to come up with ideas. Requirement of intelligence is to "synthesize".

- Nice to have = Good long-term forecasting for weather, fuels, and resources. How to tie into information at local levels for draw down. How can the data be visible at a glance? Currently requires a lot of conversation to figure this out, could future from an intel perspective to gather this data (potential option). Change in 2020 for the availability of this data via IROC/IRWIN. Systems will be in place but it becomes an issue with how the individuals interact with the "system" (whatever that may be). Rules need to be defined and adhered to in order to get the data we want and is cleaner from the beginning (data standards).

- Predictive Services can help aid in the management of personnel, etc. throughout the fire season and maintaining a work/life balance. Leverage the information to maximize the efforts to mitigate numbers of days on vs. off for IMTs, IHCs, etc. There is a fine line between giving leaders intent and marching orders. How to view bigger picture to provide tighter perimeters on the guidance. Need to stop thinking of data as a "point" but as a "sideboard" and is capable of driving. Fire is not a quick culture to shift but cannot give up on the effort. We need to use intelligence in our decision-making across multiple platforms and areas. Always valid to ask "is this product helpful"?

- On the whole, what is the goal and what information is available to answer that goal. Goal = better manage resources and individuals.

- 7-Day Path Forward: Chuck is current Chair, RMC Steering Committee. Project is a next level project of current products. No clear plan for transition right now. Research project. Actions/Decisions: What is the relationship of the RMC Steering Committee to the PSOG? Scope of the steering committee should be much more broad than the 7-day. Need to follow the path forward document (Tim Sexton's direction). Ensure it is meeting all the needs and research to finalize a product. Is PSOG the group to engage/facilitate? Yes. This steering committee has been in existence for a while but not enacted until recently (within the last year).

  o Concern: We are going down one pathway with blinders on and not seeing other options. Should the researchers be running their own program? Is this a conflict of interest? How do you give $ when you don't have a vision for a final product?

  o Need to have a conversation about funding. Where the funding is coming from? How to program out the $ to start the work? Work would be on pause in order to go back down through the workflow process. If it is on hold, would still proceed with the obligation of funds. Complete work on a work item that would have more purposes.

  o Action: Relationship PSOG/RMC Steering Committee: Not ready to say PSOG is the owner. However, there should be an MOU in place that describes the nature of that relationship. Chuck and Dan will work together to create the document and share with everyone. Any outreach or networking for national predictive services products, PSOG to have a role/say in this. To be detailed out in the MOU.

- o Support of the PSOG to follow the workflow that is outlined in the 7-day path forward.

- Fire Environment Committee – Shared the PPT that Dan provided, laid out short-term and mid-term guidance with this. Interested in how they fit within PSOG. FENC would like a liaison from PSOG on their group. From a PSOG perspective, would like representatives on each of NWCG groups. Not necessarily. Is there value in a MET or Fire Environment specialist to be a member of the Intel Subcommittee? How best to facilitate communication between the functional areas of Predictive Services within the NWCG arena. Policy matters will fall to the PSOG.

- Meteorologist Functional Area: What to get out of the program? Short and long range forecasting. How is the best way to deliver this information? How to differentiate what they do vs. what the weather service does? Scope for this area is larger than local Weather Service offices. Broad area, big picture and presented in a way that everyone understands not just what is happening at your fire. Lightning, wind events, etc. Deliverables are a big deal. How is it communicated daily so that managers, field level individuals get the information and is accessible?

  - o Setting a baseline standard that allows flexibility but that the information is getting disseminated in some manner other than 7-typed paragraphs (e.g. bulletin, podcast). Meets the broad need from FFT2 up through management.

  - o Work with researchers to continue to move forward.

  - o Access to the right tools to do the job. IRWIN observer, EGP, FX, etc. Perhaps find other tools that can help synthesize the data.

  - o Ability and flexibility to take on the random/strange last minute asks. Be able to drop what they're doing to get an answer that's needed.

  - o Products that are specific to local GACCs.

  - o Expectation of field support for prescribed fire, etc.

- Program Manager Position: Is the Program Manager position something that the PSOG wants to see thrive in the future? Yes. But there are potentially GACCs that don't want this positon. Has the current use of program managers jaded the community? Yes. There will be hesitation and pushback on transitioning this way. The workload is currently falling to the center manager in some areas. Need to outline the duties and have the classifiers outline the grade.

  - o What do we require them to do to be a "section lead"? Would include the influx of people during fire season.

  - o Don't immediately assign to a position to get more buy-in. Someone with the skillset and knowledge in all 3 functions, has been a prior supervisor, communicator and leader, supervisory position vs. program lead = provide day-to-day oversight as opposed to supervision. Keep flexible enough to be able to open the candidate pool a bit broader

than would otherwise. Maintain span of control for staff by working with the Center Manager.

- o Team lead manage functional area if they had a basic understanding of the position and see the importance of the other positions. Enhance and emphasize unit cohesiveness.

- o Have not done a great job of educating people as there are not many people to fill those positions. Meteorologists are low and would come from the Weather Service. Intel positions are minimal. Not much of a career ladder and creates challenges.

- National/GACC Alignment: GA areas to coordinate with local areas for reports that can be synthesized and reported up to NICC. What is the best way to facilitate this? What does NMAC need to make decisions? What goes into this? Assess from Geographic Areas.

  - o Monthly seasonal assessment and 7-day are the two national products. Time allotted to each: Monthly assessment ¼ time over the entire year, 7-day 1hr or less/day.

  - o National Products = 25% of the time over the course of a year in support of this as an entire program. Most is in support of GACC products. Distinction between the program and not positions.

- Daily Summary:

  - o Communicate messages effectively.

  - o Details on PSOG governance: talking points, developing intent, conflict resolution for stakeholders and providing some resolve.

  - o Requirements for Fire Management Analyst, Intel, Meteorologist, and Program Manager.

  - o National product development for GACCs.

  - o MOU with RMRC steering committee for working relationship.

  - o Reviewed representation on committees under Fire Environment. Need to find representation for Fire Danger.

- Reviewed NRCC document titled *Predictive Services Phase II Report*. What are the issues at play?

  - o Alternative 1: Flexibility – program manager being flexible and not tied to a specific position, recognizing that GACCs may have other staffing priorities above a fire analyst; does not mean there isn't a desire for a fire analyst.

  - o Alternative 3: Don't consider it a viable model due to coverage, flexibility. Unknowns relative to what the agreement buys the group. Human factor. Discuss surge capacity. Perspective is in the "now" vs the future. Is that going to be the same?

- Draft reply to Kathy: Address that there is consensus at PSOG to allow managers to assign leadership role to the strongest individual in the office regardless of their position within the Predictive Services program. Understand concerns and it is still a concern with the PSOG, as process evolves will keep abreast of the progress.

- Reviewed *Alternative 5 document*: PS is fully integrated as a Functional Unit of National Coord System, but flexibility of mgmt. is allowed.

  o Similar to Alternative 1 but shows breakdown with national and local products. Funding for national products would come from a national level vs. geographic level. Biggest change is the staffing at the national level – added an IT analyst and/or programmer. Someone who can help answer questions for both the GACCs and National Level (e.g. understanding the 7-day). Scaling is important to consider. There is more value added for places with a larger program. From a communication standpoint, should retain the name *Alternative 1* just has been tweaked.

  o What are the key points within this document? Flexibility, good IT support, percent of workload at National level vs. GACC level, having a budget line item for project development is huge because it is currently missing (to stabilize the program).

  o What is different from what PS already has? Leadership having service first. If not present, encouraging how it works. High encouragement of fire analyst position. IT capability that can data analyze but that can also develop tools and interface with various programs. Show value added of GIS, FBAN, IT positions to the Predictive Services program. Well-rounded help that can provide assistance throughout the GACC but also in PS specifically.

  o Need to be aware of stove piping too much, even conceptually. GS-grade issue.

- Message: Appreciate response and they fall within the sideboards of the PSOGs mission. Pull out the critical talking points and move forward.

- Responses to *Phase I and II reports:*

  o Overall a great document with information presented, struggle to the way it was written made it sound like the alternatives were set in stone. Perhaps better viable options by merging alternatives. Struggle was with "you must choose an alternative and it'll be implemented as written." Value added to viewing the future with switching an in house MET with NWS (intriguing concept).

  o Report didn't explain much of the "why". Is there an assumption that NWS would not want money to be a collaborative partner? What are the options in this regard?

  o Would be nice to have the NWS as a "backup". Bridging the gap and it is important not to lose this option because they can be a great resource.

- o Pg. 5, Section 2: Provides the answer to emotional response. We need to build advocacy. Highlight this piece and make it stand out for communication.

- Communication to build advocacy: What you have now may not be the future? What is the workload that is expected? Focus on the end result, but don't be prescriptive in how to get there. Focus on requirements/guidance and solicit ideas from the GACCs. Ask them: How are you going to meet these? How are you going to fund them? Meet very specific programmatic goals that the PSOG has defined. Evaluate over the next few years.

- Produce a feedback system. Focus on wanting the program to adapt to the future and the complexity of the environment.

- **Messaging next steps:**

  - o Reaffirm the task of the PSOG and mission. Explain Predictive Services program (3 areas). Define program as a cohesive unit with all the necessary parts.

    - ▪ That there is flexibility to pick and choose in a very broad sense. Make the connection to the field. Rework sentence on pg. 5 of the Phase II report.

    - ▪ Talk about the program requirements. Define what "requirements" means by providing examples.

    - ▪ Explain PSOG value in assisting them from a national level from a product perspective (e.g. 7-day). Be open with discussions that have happened.

  - o Address key concerns that were associated with the discontent of the reports. Identify it is a long-term process and no large scale drastic changes to the organization will happen in the near term, if at all.

  - o Have received feedback, here are the message that we heard (e.g. flexibility, management). Details behind some of the decisions and key things that the PSOG feels are a necessary as part of a Predictive Services program. Define the Predictive Services program as a cohesive unit. Budget.

  - o Continue to solicit and utilize feedback as the process moves along.

  - o Staffing – Don't wait for PSOG.

- **PSOG Group Round Table:**

  - o Comfort level is higher as a result of being able to come together as a group to discuss the issues. Add to future meetings = align and update the FAQs. Address feedback in the charter in regard to the Rocky Mountain request.

  - o Productive meeting. Message moving forward is encouraging. Future meetings in general, useful to utilize camera to see remote individuals.

- o More comfortable than from the beginning. Productive and excited to move forward. There are things that are issues right now (national fuel model database) … is this something the PSOG can help fix? What is the mechanism to affect change in that regard?

- o Encouraged at how PSOG will delve into issues.

Supplemental Notes:
- Decision: Conflict Resolution – if this group cannot agree, it will go to FMB.
- Decision: Issues from the Predictive Services staff that need resolution will be presented to this group by preparing a formal Issue Paper. They will prepare the Issue paper and send it to PSOG through their rep.
  - o PSOG has decision authority to make decisions for Predictive Services and FMB.
- Decision: If PSOG makes a decision and the stakeholder does not agree, the stakeholder can take it to FMB. If they do not agree with the FMB decision, they can go through the FMB appeal process. Dan will work with FMB to identify what that process is and share that with the group.
- Decision: PSOG will make decisions through Consensus. Consensus means that member agree or can live with the outcome. If the group can not come to consensus, it will be brought to a vote.
  - o Consensus allows more time for the group to discuss and address concerns of the members.
  - o Quorum is defined in the PSOG charter. All agree that this is appropriate.
- FMB updates – will share information when decisions are made and additionally as needed.

PSOG Communication:

- If a member sends a message, it should go to all PSOG members. Limit one-on-one conversations that do not include all PSOG members.
- Meeting and call notes will be posted on the PSOG website.
- Dan or his designee will send an email to the entire PSOG when the notes are posted on the website so that all are informed when they are available.
- PSOG is a monthly topic for CGAC
- PSOG will be available for meeting/calling into Coordinating Groups for updates
- At this time, the notes from the Rocky Mountain Research Center Steering Committee meetings will not be posted on the PSOG website.
  - o PSOG will set up an area on the team drive (through firenet) for the notes.
  - o Jarrod will create a PSOG firenet account and email list.

Future conversation: Move Intel sub-committee from NCSC to PSOG?

Stakeholder Outreach:
- PSOG has a good handle on what people like, don't like and where they are on the fence
- Messaging will be important for the future
- Do not want to re-open Phase 2. It has been accepted.

- Will look at Phase 2, Rocky Mountain response and Alternative 5 to determine intent. Will use the intent to help develop the path forward. Once determine the path forward, will identify ways to get feedback.
- Will not conduct a survey at this time

When this group makes a decision, will get feedback.

Outreach frequency:
- Outreach when make decisions
- Will send out notes when PSOG has meetings or calls

Review of 2/21/2019 Memo – FMB Intent to PSOG
Requirements for Fire Behavior Analyst:
- Understanding NFDRS (NFDRS 2016) update and making it understandable to decision makers
- Synthesize weather, intelligence and fire behavior into products that can be used by MAC for resource allocation
- Synthesize long term forecasts with intel – be able to assess the next critical phase. Produce information for managers that can provide information for the next 3-6 months.
    - Develop products that provide "management implications for the next critical phase"'
- Bring ideas, products that you never knew that you could have or needed
- More Fire Analyst "products" – incorporate Fire Analyst products into weather briefings
- More long-term analysis available
- Show managers/decision makers "what this means"
- Collaborate with research to provide products that mean something
- Synthesize data that makes a product managers can use to make decisions
- Collaborator
- Assimilator
- Not jut provide the data, explain the implications
- Pulls together Intel and Weather information to help managers make a decision
- Provide collaborative products
- Bring together products to produce something than we can use to communicate and help managers make decisions
- Provide products for NICC that display what to expect and what happened last time
- May be able to take some work that MET's have been doing
- Must have an operational background so they can talk to managers/decision makers

Must be able to describe what a Fire Analyst "why" there is a need for a Fire Analyst

Predictive Services in the Coordination Center organization can create a conduit into strategic decision making.

Only 2 GACC's have Fire Analysts. There is a proposal for each GACC to have a Fire Analyst.

How do we get MET's involved with the Fire Behavior Analysts?
- Involve MET's in filling the jobs

PSOG needs to identify the roles for each of the positions in Predictive Services. Identify how they all fit into the big picture. What ties it all together. How to make the connections between all 3 legs of Predictive Services.

If PSOG has requirements, how do we determine if they have been met?
- Products
- Performance

The Fire Analyst is the "easy" way to provide the products.

May need to show different staffing models that meet the requirements. PSOG can provide those staffing models.

Expansion of Intelligence Function:
- Collection of data – how do we use it?
- Is there a way to analyze data that we already collect?
- "Drowning in data"
  - Trying to make it accessible
  - No time to focus on analyzing the data
- Need to learn how to analyze the data

Need to spend less time validating the data, then could do something with the data. Too much time spent cleaning up data. Need to determine and use ways that provide "clean" data.

Need to recognize data resolution. Need to understand trends at the strategic level.
Stakeholders may not be able to articulate what they want.
Need to move into positions where Predictive Services is providing products that decision makers want.

Requirements for the Intel Unit:
- Long term forecasting – beyond 3 days. Up to 3-4 months.
- Collect information on local draw down trends. This will help inform strategic decisions. Need to gather information and report upward.
- Need to identify business rules and data standards than need to be followed or created if they do not exist now,.
- Tracking human factors
- Synthesize the information and present it to decision makers in a manner that describes the "so what"/what does that mean to me on the ground>
- Collect information that is traditional as well as non-traditional
- Gather information that will be used to determine sideboards