

Incident Business Committee Meeting – Boise, ID

April 16-17

Present:

Ben McGrane, AQM
Sarah Fisher, FS
Christine Peters, NPS
Dave Burley, BLM
Robin White, BIA
Reah Reedy, FWS
Jamie Wade, AQM
Brenda Even, NASF
Robby Gross, NASF
Tim Blake, Branch Coordinator
Jeff Arnberger, Operations
Jill Leguineche, FS
Meg Geary, Executive Secretary

Others in Attendance:

Danielle Bohn
Mark Cantrell
Emily Harbo

Day One (Tuesday, April 16) - 0830

The IBC reviewed the agenda and made some additions. The added items will be discussed at the end of the meeting.

Introductions of IBC Members were conducted to introduce and welcome new member Brenda Even, NASF representative, who will replace Wendy Walter.

NRCG IBC Concerns: Sarah

Wendy Walter, NR IBC member, submitted items of concern from their committee meeting and requested reaction from NWCG IBC. IBC discussed the issues and made comments to each. Sarah will draft a response to the NR IBC and send it to Wendy Walter to share with their committee.

1. Defining the “fire line” and who is entitled to receive Hazard pay.

Response: The SIIBM and CFR were referenced and appraised. The Committee discussed the verbiage in both documents. Ultimately, it is Operations decision and those signing the CTRs as supervisors to make the clear determination from the guides; therefore, IBC determined hazard pay was sufficiently defined and no changes were necessary.

2. Medical Units
 - a. Is the medical supply order sample on the IMS website still current? NR-IBC requests the Med Unit list be reviewed.

Response: The Risk Management Committee is the principal lead on this subject and should be contacted concerning a review of the Medical Unit list.

3. MEDL's have direction to not dispense over the counter items
 - a. IMT's finding a workaround – leaving OTC items at a station outside of medical tent, available in the Supply Unit, etc.
 - b. Some IBA's authorized the purchase of OTC – should there be a list of approved items for IMT's to purchase?

Response: IBC will follow the possibility of a list(s) and any direction there may be on what MEDLs dispensing OTC and respond back to NR IBC at a later date.

4. NR-IBC requests a review of the cache Med Unit Kit contents.
 - a. The Med Kits changed this year. NRCG IBC would need to make the request to IEMS if they would like another review of the kits.

Response: Medical Kit were update in 2018. If NRCG IBC would like another review, they would need to contact the Equipment Technology Committee (ETC) for this.

5. HETS Position
 - a. This position was reclassified from an AD-K to an AD-L. This position is a subordinate/advisory position. The state of Montana is concerned with it being classified at the higher classification. Their concern:

- i. It was based on the fact that if we increased the pay that they would make more than a Type 2 operations section chief and that since they work for that position they should not really make more money. With the increase to an L, they would be paid the same as a type 1 but will probably work for Type 2's as well and should not be paid any higher than a Type 2.

Response: The leveling process for the AD Pay Plan positions takes place in October; however, IBC will review the position with consideration to the OSC2 position and its PD and determine if releveling is necessary for the 2020 Pay Plan.

6. USDA ratification process is no longer handled at the regional level; all ratifications now go to the WO. Requirements regarding unauthorized commitments and ratification process will be more stringent as a result.
 - a. How does this affect the IMT accountability issues now that it is going to the WO.

Response: Concerning IMT accountability, there would be no change. A more deliberate approach should be taken during trainings and IMT meeting to emphasize the seriousness of ratifications. This will continue to be a challenge for procurement during wildland fire and additional focus should be put on training all personnel on IMTs.

Action Item: Jamie and Ben will draft a response to Wendy on the ratification process and IMT accountability.

Service Animals – Christine.

IBC discussed the Service Animal handout. Changes to the document included formatting and a more generalized approach. It will be published to on the NWCG IBC under the Frequently Asked Questions section.

Action item: Jill Leguineche will submit the Service Animals document to NWCG for publishing under Frequently Asked Questions section of the IBC home page.

Reasonable Accommodations – Sarah

One of the regions inquired about reasonable accommodations and if there was specific guidance on the determination. A review of the policy was held. It was reiterated that the hiring unit is the authorizing party. Written approval was necessary for the reasonable accommodations from their home unit Human Resources or Civil Rights office prior to accepting the assignment.

Cooperative Fire Agreements - Sarah

A discussion was held on the payment mechanism used by Federal agencies and local fire departments in response to mutual aid. The local agreements being used references national mobilization and the Stafford Act, which according to the Office of General Council, OGC, and the DOI Solicitors Office, is an inappropriate use of the language. There is a significant number of agreements anticipated to expire soon. Consequently, the cooperative agreements will not be renewed upon the expiration date and a more appropriate model will be required. It was noted that some states are representing their local governments through state agreements and that those models are proving effective. Until this issue is resolved, counties should not be showing resources available nationally without a payment mechanism in place.

A conference call was held last week with the Solicitor, OGC, fire directors and fire business leads, to discuss the local agreement concern and to explore possible options both temporary and long term. Federal agencies and the NASF will continue to work with OGC to find a solution to this issue.

Sarah said this subject would be discussed with the Cost Recovery Task Group on their call next week.

Contract Equipment Liability – Ben/Jamie

Jamie gave an update to a claim made in 2018 on an EERA. The claim was originally denied because the equipment had been released from the incident. However, the equipment was still on site when the damage occurred so the decision was over turned because of the ‘under hire’ provision in the contract general clauses and the operated, un-operated definitions. The damage occurred after the equipment was releases but prior to arriving at point of hire.

A change in the EERA and VIPR templates are being considered with respect to ‘point of hire’ verbiage. More information is being gather for OGC to make a determination. The 2019 general contract clauses may have to be updated again to address this issue.

NERV Updates – Ben

Ben gave an update on the NERV program, which will be offered nationally starting May 1. A bulletin on the expansion and progress was shared and will be published on the IBC website. Other vendors have expressed interest and Ben will follow up on those leads this year.

Approval has been given for three, full time employee positions and 120-day details for the Coordinator and Support Coordinator positions.

Clarity was given to the overview of the NERV program and its intended uses. NERV is available for rentals nationwide but is intended for incident use only and requires a resource order. Each GACC may have different ordering and authorizing procedures, therefore, each GACCs' SOPs will be available on the NERV website. A matrix for the different GACCs procedures is being considered.

Some of the logistical items are obtaining a toll free number for ordering after hours or on weekends and working with US Bank to use Smart Pay 3

Action Item: Ben will forward the NERV IM to IBC to share within their agencies and to NWCG to publish on the IBC website.

MOU vs Interagency Agreement – Danielle Bohn, GNA

A discussion was held on the payment document that will be used to administer the NERV program between Federal agencies. Danielle Bohn, Grants and Agreements Specialist for the FS, shared her opinion with the IBC on what type of document should be used for this type of coordination. The Memorandum of Understanding, MOU, is the preferred document by the DOI for simplicity purposes but the MOU does not stipulate an obligation to pay vendors, according to Dani. Using an IA would add complexity to the process because of the signatures needed by the Agreements Specialists but the MOU only needs the signature of the Fire Directors. The document will describe the DOI and FS responsibilities separately with a section on mutually agreed upon items. State payments will be better defined as well. Ben made a draft document that Dani will review and determine the best option to use to make it as efficient as possible.

Hazard Pay for Low Level Flights - Ben

Brian Bitting asked about the Low Level Flight information document and where it stands in review. The document was finalized May 2018 with an IBC IM attached to clarify the changes. These documents will be posted on the NWCG IBC website under Guidance Documents and Correspondence. Review of the SIIBM for 2019 will include this information.

Action Item: Meg will update the Guidance Documents and Correspondence to include both attachments. Dave will reach out to Brian to explain the posting laps and the documents would now be posted to the NWCG IBC home page.

National Interagency Buying Team Guide – Jamie

Jamie surveyed buying team leads from all the regions for comments on the spreadsheet versus the database. There were many pros and cons for each option. One significant issue with the database is the Unique Record ID, which is required for each entry in the database. This means there could be multiple Unique Record IDs for one resource order. This number is not captured on the waybill or anywhere other than the database. There would need to be a tracking mechanism to link it to the specific resource order. All buying team leads preferred the spreadsheet versus the database. The process needs to be consistent and standardized. IBC agreed with the assessment and approved the spreadsheet as the document to use for national buying teams.

Jamie reviewed the Interagency Buying Team Guide with the Committee. Exhibits will contain standardized documents used by all to make it uniform. The guide specifies the difference

between National versus Geographic teams and summarizes their PMS 310.1 requirements. A summary of the comments to the guide was shared. Decisions requiring IBC approval were reviewed and concluded. Jamie will update the guide to include the changes and publish the guide on the NWCG IBC website.

Action Item: Jamie will respond to the SMES on the decisions and publish the Guide and Exhibit documents on the IBC website under Guidance by May 1.

Procurement Position Codes and Utilization - Jamie

Jamie reviewed the comments on the position codes and utilizations and shared as a handout with the IBC. Below are the recommendations.

Recommendations

1. Remove the position code PA10 as it is negated due to the change in the micro purchase threshold.
2. Determine if a warrant differentiation (level or dollar amount) is needed among agencies for ordering resources. If warrant differentiation is not needed, consolidate CONO, PA10, PA25, and PA50 into a single procurement item code.
3. Consolidate Buying Team Leader Geographic and National position descriptions.
4. Differentiate between a buying team member with and without a warrant.
5. Update the buying team member task book to include contract related tasks to better prepare trainees for the positions.

IBC unanimously agreed with the recommendations. Jamie and Ben will send a memo out to the National Training Committee and IQCS to request changes be made per the recommendations. The next step will be to examine the task books and consider putting the positions in the PMS 310.1.

Action Item: Jamie and Ben will submit a memo to the National Training Committee and IQCS to request the recommended changes. A review of the new buying team member task book would be conducted at a later date to consider PMS 310.1 inclusion.

NWCG IBC Performance Package – Robby

Robby reviewed the progress on the Performance Package Phase One. Robby, IBC coordinator for the Performance Package, is working with Mark Cantrell on the two task items formed to create 'how to' modules for CTRs and Analysis Cost Breakdown. Randy Olson and Mariah Morris are the SMEs for the modules respectively. The deadline for the initial contract is the end of June. The CTR module is the first module constructed. Mark would like recommendations from the IBC on the next modules to be created. IBC recommended the following items in the order of importance; OF288, OF286, fuel/oil ticket and shift ticket.

Robby repeated the end project goal is to use the training modules in the SIIMB to make it an interactive training tool for S260/S261 and other trainings as well. A review process will be determined and a review team identified for the draft product before publishing. Time and efficiency are key issues. Tim suggested using an interactive comment link on the website to allow for comments on the modules once published. This will help maintain the accuracy of the document.

S-260 Final Exam Review – Sarah

Sarah was asked to review the S260 Final Exam and Final Exam Answer Key because of questions from one region on some of the content. Sarah ask Brenda Deburg, BLM Fire Business State Lead, to review the documents. Brenda submitted her comments back to Sarah to share with the IBC. A discussion and review of the documents were held and a thorough examination was conducted.

A change to the Final Exam document to remove language regarding the ‘Answer Key’ was approved. Changes to the Answer Key document were approved as well.

Action Item: Sarah will submit changes to Leanne Squires and report back to the IBC at the next meeting.

Day Two (Wednesday, April 17) – 0830

IBC Fall/Spring Meeting Logistics

The dates and location for the NWCG IBC fall meeting and the 2020 spring meeting were discussed. The date was tentatively set for the fall meeting to be the week of **October 28-30, 2019**, and possible locations being Redding, Santa Monica or Grand Teton NP. Several guest speakers were suggested. The spring meeting was tentatively set for the week of **April 21-23, 2020**, in Boise, Idaho. IBC members will confirm their ability to travel for the fall meeting and give a report at the next meeting.

Action Item: Christine will inquire into NPS options; Redding, Santa Monica or Grand Teton for the fall meeting and Brenda Even will contact the Anthony Schultz WY State FMO on availability to present. Both will report at the next IBC meeting.

USGS BOR Agreements - Christine

Christine attended by phone the RM IBC meet conducted in March. A discussion was held on organizing a recruitment fair for fire personnel in Denver in October. The intention would be to recruit federal employees, in addition to FS and DOI. An Interagency Agreement would need to be in place with other federal partners because USGS does not have a suppression allocation. Christine told RM IBC she would share this info with the IBC to examine the possibility. Sarah said this should be discussed with National Leadership to seek their support.

Action Item: Christine and Sarah will discuss this issue with respective leadership and give a report to IBC at the next meeting.

S-260 Performance Package Update – Robby & Mark Cantrell

Mark gave an overview of the Performance Package. The package is broken out into three phases but they are not sequential.

- 1) **Phase 1 – IBC Modules:** Research was performed on Ss60/S261 and SIIBM to select key topics pertaining to all IC positions and then develop how-to modules for those topics. The first two modules, CTR and Analyzing Breakdown Costs are in production.
- 2) **Phase 2 – Yellow Book (Customized Table of Contents):** The SIIBM will be divided into sections that will be linked to the Position Pages on the NWCG website. The position pages will contain Incident Position Description (IPD) tasks that will have a link to the how-to modules. The modules will also have a link to SIIBM. There will be three links from each appropriate position task: 1) how-to module 2) direct section in the SIIBM and 3) the entire SIIBM.

3) **Phase 3 – Entry level Finance Position Specific:** This phase focuses on updating the required training for Finance Positions. The result would be the removal of S-260 and S-261 as it is currently. The new training will be required for all entry-level Finance positions and it would be a blended course. There would be two options for the new entry level finance training online portion:

a. **Prescriptive Learning Examination:** Student would take an exam that covers all aspects of what a position in Finance would need to know. Questions marked correctly would not need to take any how-to modules. Questions marked incorrectly, would need to take how-to module with supplemental material added. Once they pass the ‘examination’, they can proceed to the Instructor Lead Training (ILT) portion.

OR

b. **Online portion:** All how-to modules with additional content added

c. **ILT portion:** This would be an application-based instruction. Students would work on real-world complex scenarios. The ILT portion may be online or in-person.

Mark stated it was imperative to review thoroughly the current modules to make any timely changes within the scope of the agreement. He also requested IBC submit three to four task orders for modules to begin, with additional task orders ready when these are completed. The outline of the task order should be detailed enough to be able to accurately gage the period of performance.

The modification of Operation IPDs is almost complete. The Finance positions are next in line. Each committee will oversee their own positions and IPDs and review them annually. In addition, the new IPD process will eventually change the look of Position Task books in the future.

Mark and Robby presented the visual product on CTR and Analyzing Breakdown Costs training modules.

Action Item: Robby will compile a list of five to six task orders with detail information, and submit it to the IBC and Mark for review. IBC will recruit SMEs from each agency for a focus group for the CTR module by next meeting.

AMAC – Acquisition Mission Area Consolidation - Ben

Ben reported on the Acquisition Mission Area Consolidation or AMAC reorganization process within USDA. GNA is still undefined but for COs and purchasers this process of realignment is moving forward. Regarding wildland fire, the national contract model will remain the same. The regional contracting offices and VIPR COs will also be realigned under a single national organization. Ben said the recommendation would be to recommend a more proactive approach by implementing permanent purchasing staff available for incident support as well as preseason support. This may be a virtual option where there is a core procurement group that could be

mobilized when and were needed. Ben asked the DOI members if this would be worth incorporating DOI with FS to have a more interagency makeup. Christine thought this would definitely be of interest especially if it were virtual. It would help the NPS with purchasing especially when dealing with All Hazard and the difficulty in finding procurement assistance.

FS ASC Reviewing Payment Processes - Ben

Ben discussed ASC payment process on invoices from incidents. Invoices are submitted electronically via e-Isuite. This will be fully implemented starting this year. No paper invoices will be sent in for review. ASC has policy in place for auditing but it is a random sampling and only after payment has already been made. ASC said it is the responsibility of the IMT Finance to audit for accuracy but FS procurement has serious concerns. Sarah agrees with the electronic procedure and believes it simplifies the payments process. The errors are not big enough to warrant paper documents to be submitted and audited numerous times prior to payment. It is the host unit's responsibility to manage the auditing and accuracy of its packages and they should be aware of the new payment procedures. A discussion was held on options to assist with errors found after the invoices have been submitted electronically. Sarah suggested it is a FS payment procedure and FS needs to address this issue in the ASC Payment Procedure Guidelines.

Action Item: Ben will follow up with ASC on their process of corrected invoices after payment has been made electronically and report to IBC at the next meeting.

Emergency Lodging - Ben

Ben was asked to share with the IBC, GSA lodging is still an option for wildland fire incidents to consider. The program is very broad and would better benefit long term situations such as FEMA incidents

IPDs and AD leveling - Sarah

Sarah reported that finance positions are next in line to be modified. Sarah suggested AD leveling should be done at the same time. This is expected to be a lengthy process. Sarah will reach out to NWCG Training to see if they can provide tools to assist with this review. A separate meeting may be necessary to accomplish both tasks.

Action Items: The May 8 meeting start time was moved to 1000 and the meeting will be devoted to the SIIBM review and AD PD releveling process. Sarah will have a report on the IPD plan.

Coordination Center Representative – Sarah

Sarah shared with the IBC the need to fill the GACC Coordinator representative position. Ben will contact Kathy Pipkin at NCSC to seek the best process for recruiting Coordination Center Rep. Sarah suggested IBC members submit nominees from their agencies dispatch center as possible candidates.

Data Committee Request – Tim

Emily Harbo (via phone) reviewed the Data Elements with the IBC. Tim facilitated the presentation and projected the handouts on the screen for discussion. Emily reported there were 18 data elements, six of which will need to be validate only and the other 12 will need to have input from the IBC for short description, sensitivity and business rules.

Action Item: Rhea, Dave and Christine will review data elements due by May 31 to Emily. The Task group will submit the review data elements to NWCG IBC mid-May for input with a due date of May 31 to Emily.

NWCG IBC website review – Sarah

Action Item: This topic will be added to the June call. IBC will review the website and comment at that time.

Round Robin

Ben – none

Sarah – Annual IAC meeting next week; other agencies are invited to discuss agreements and doc package; Deputy Position is being advertised.

Christine – Fuel and Oil Standards - will there be one way to process and why can't it be consistent. AD hiring and career seasonals is still an issue; service year is a concern, consequently AD hiring may be suspended to gain control of issue. Emergency option on charge card issue is going to be reviewed with coordinator.

Dave – none

Robin – none

Reah – FWS Deputy hired; other positions are open currently as well; Reorganizing admin divisions virtual and potential in the future. Some key positions retiring.

Jamie – Finish procurement courses; doing rewrite on courses; Department of Labor has been asked to clarify interpretation. Buying Team Guide out May 1

Benda – Interested in the pay rates for counties that are not all consistent. Counties want workman's comp and OT and are not accepting on rate from State. State using AD pay plan to reimburse but consistency needs to be in place.

Robby – State Business lead contact sent to IBC.

Tim – none

Jeff – none

Next Conference Call Meeting is May 8, 2019