

NWCG Incident Business Committee Meeting Minutes

February 14, 2023 (1400 MST)

1. Topic: Work/Rest and IBC tasking to review

Chair of the Risk Management Committee: Edward Fransted

A group has been working for about a year on the work rest (days off). The USFS changed their policy to three mandatory days off a few years back and the DOI stayed at two mandatory days off after assignment. There is potentially new guidance coming out to reduce firefighter fatigue that is currently being worked on, but we need to do something now for the near term.

Lots of research was completed and the incident business committee was requested to be reached out to because the IBC is the experts on the policy for days off. How can we updated, modernize, and critique the days off policy in modern times to reduce firefighter fatigue. Not much changed in about twenty years so it has been a while. There are some changes coming from OPM and OMB relating to the firefighter series which could change things, but we need to do something now.

Look at the current work/rest guidelines to try and better define work/rest. 16 hours of work and then they are rested or 8 hours of work and then rest. Showering, eating, and other activities are included many times, but can the definition be clarified. The intent is for firefighters to get more sleep during the 8 hours of rest of there continues to be sixteen-hour shifts. Should these be fifteen and a half hours due to the lunch break? Even if changes are not made, the spotlight needs to be put on this topic to ensure we are doing what is best for the firefighters and rest/safety.

From Jeff Arnberger: How does the daily rate come in if that is a rule past? This will cease the 2:1 work/rest ratio. When the 2:1 policy or guidelines was established, the repository was in the Yellow Book and coming from NWCG and the IBC. Eventually, this got separated out to FMB as it was not in the wheelhouse of the originators. Pay regulations are policy topic in the Agency lines and NWCG does not make policy. We need to step lightly while navigating through this.

What is quality rest or fatigue management: invest some time, energy, and money to some great research to allow us to stop speculating what work/rest really is. Sixteen on and eight off sounded good be a huge component is to have research done. Not sure where our efforts will lead us or if the juice is worth the squeeze with forthcoming changes and lack of research.

Edward provided a briefing paper that discusses days off and possibly NWCG can close the loophole of is it 2 mandatory days off or 3 mandatory days off. NWCG could put out an interagency standard to get rid of the wide range interpretation. If an employee works 21 days on the home unit while doing prescribed fire, do they need days off or a reset day? Most would say yes but based on policy one could burn for 21 days and then take a 14-day fire assignment without a reset day.

From Dave Burley: The request is for the Risk Management group to present the request for how the IBC can review and make suggestions on potential changes to the work rest guidelines. Then the IBC can present back suggestions. The IBC will review the email the that was sent out and it can be further discussed during the IBC face to face in April.

2. Electronic File Structure and Naming Conventions

Tasking has been officially assigned for the group to reconvene to look at the COST and COMP electronic file structures.

Julie Bennett indicated that 79 total comments from 40 plus participants have provided feedback. Request the National leads provide any inputs if possible. The main focus is COST and COMP and a report out will be available from the group at the beginning of March and finalized by April 3rd, 2023. Can discuss this further at the April face-to-face meeting.

Heather Good requested the tasking MEMO for the COST/COMP electronic guidelines. Dave will send out the MEMO again to ensure everyone gets it.

3. Two Task Groups: TIME/PROC IPDs and Task book reviews:

Dave Burley: Names have been identified for the groups, but the official tasking is not completed yet. A DRAFT task MEMO is completed which will be for the OF-297 revision. The goal is to get this out and to get the revised version done so it can be sent to GSA for official revision and release. Need a lead for each of the task groups and someone from the IBC will be asked. Looking for feedback if folks disagree with having the lead but the help is needed. More to follow on how this leader and group looks for both categories.

4. COMP and CLAIMS Performance Video

Dave Burley: It was agreed to keep moving forward with the COMP video but step away from the CLAIMS side where we were going to try and cover a broad session of types of claims. Feedback and pushback from Agencies caused us to step back on this one. The group will refocus on the OF-289 and explain how to fill out this form accurately and correctly but not the broad range of claim types. From Dave Burley to Julie Bennett, Jennifer Hebbeler, and Kelin Crill: Are we close enough to display and show it to the group for approval by tomorrow afternoon. Per Jennifer we are in a place to present at a meeting soon. Looking for photos from contacts for the video but there is a great path towards completing the video.

The script was shared with the IBC and emailed to the group for members to review. There are many photos available on a site recommended by Jeff Arnberger. In addition to pictures there is another need for fire jargon as this cannot be included on the CA-1 form. A list of fire jargon to keep off of the CA-1 is needed; ICP, DOC in a box etc.... Also, need a list of medical terms to avoid such as medical diagnosis in box 14. The group will refer to the SMEs for specific medical terms and jargon to avoid. 90 Percent or more of the document included SMEs to get where the current product is at. Jennifer was looking for IBC buy-off as a task for comments so Dave will run it by the IBC and Jennifer will run it by the SMEs for finalizing. If by tomorrow we have good enough feedback then we can proceed to the next steps. Jennifer will get an email out today to the SMEs which should be a cursory review since they already assisted with the current DRAFT. A response is requested ASAP to not drag this out. Dave will send the current version out to the IBC and members can also review and provide feedback by tomorrow. April 6, 2023 is the deadline (end of the period of performance) to get this tasking completed. As a last resort we can ask for an extension but the CO said to hold off making the extension to see how far we can get prior to the April 6 deadline.

5. NEW SCRIBE NEEDED – THANK YOU MEG for all you did!

Meg has been serving as the scribe for a long time is stepping down due to home unit workload and people departing her office. Looking for a scribe to take on the role in the future. Members to ask around to see if there is an interested candidate to take on the role. Dave is hoping that Meg can make the face-to-face meeting in Boise from April 18-20.

6. NWCG Standards for Interagency Incident Business Management (Yellow Book)

- a. Need to get this finalized
- b. Law Enforcement weapon storage/lodging update with Kelin Crill
- c. Kelin Crill reached out to HR regarding Onsite, Virtual, and Remote but still looking for a response from NIFC. Jamie Wade is also reaching out to USFS HR / LE folks to get a response. Need to close-out this update.

Dave Burley (IBC Chair): Welcome to Yolanda Thomas who is the Vice Sarah Fisher and is the new USFS representative.

Heather Good (USFS): Dave and Heather talked about a proposal from the USFS for changes to the AD Pay plan in relation to expanding its use for prescribed fire centering around the 24-hour language. Will meet with Yolanda Thomas on any changes as it falls on this office authority. Provided Dave with information on the IBPAs for the Contract caterers and showers for prescribed fire. The DOI Bureaus (at least the BLM) will not be participating in the IBPAs per Jeff Worthley and his communications with the Washington Office. The reason has something to do with them not being an emergency and recompeting requirements. Heather was told it is not just the BLM but all of DOI.

Tony Beard (BLM): Planning for the upcoming BLM National Fire Business Management Group in Phoenix, AZ from March 13-17, 2023. Will have a site visit to Yarnell for a 10-year anniversary visit. Lots of finance training taking place throughout the BLM.

Julie Bennet (NPS): Nothing specific to share. Has all CIMT position PDs available to look at leveling and moving forward with reviewing them. She will send a note to the group looking for volunteers to assist.

Jennifer Hebbeler (BIA): Business as usual and nothing specific to report. Getting ready for fire season

Kelin Crill: (USFWS): Nothing to report

Amy Lancaster (Dispatch): Nothing to report

NEXT Meeting: March 8, 2023