

Public Information Officer Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes: 5/23/2024

Attendees:

Chris Barth (BLM – Chairperson), Kerry Greene (USFS – Vice Chairperson), Candice Stevenson (NPS Rep.), Catherine Koele (NASF – Rep.), Sean Collins (IAFC – Rep.), Brian Harris (USFS Rep.), Adrienne Freeman (USFS), Lessa Peter (BIA – Rep.), Jenner Harsha (USFWS – Rep.)

Also in Attendance:

Angie Lane (WA-DNR – CEPC Liaison), Steph Bishop (Associate Member)

Committee Business:

- The PIOSC welcomed Jenner Harsha as the US Fish and Wildlife Service agency representative to the subcommittee.
- The backlog of PIOSC meeting notes (minutes) have been posted to the new NWCG website – posting was suspended during website platform migration.
- PIOSC Chairperson role transition – Kerry Greene has transitioned with Chris Barth as the subcommittee Chairperson. Catherine Koele was voted in as the Vice-Chairperson on a one-year term. The PIOSC also discussed updates to the subcommittee Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) regarding Chairperson rotation responsibility.

New Business:

- Incident Performance and Training Modernization (IPTM) position review for PIOT and PIO3 is underway.
 - The Subject Matter Expert (SME) group met in Boise, ID in April. Group roster:
 - Mike Johnson
 - Kristen Corkins
 - Catherine Koele
 - Carol Connelly
 - Michelle Fiddler
 - Lara McConnell
 - Kirk Sturm
 - Mike Johnson and Kristen Corkins attended the PIOSC meeting and provided an update from the kick-off IPTM session.
 - The SME position review will continue in July with training recommendations, draft copies of the Position Descriptions, and drafts of position competencies due back to the NWCG Coordinator by July 26th.
 - The PIO positions are the first Command and General (C&G) staff positions to undergo IPTM review process.
 - The IPTM position review will yield a Performance Support Package for each position. The package includes an Incident Position Description (IPD) (what the job is), Incident Position Standards (IPS) (how to perform the job), a Next Generation Position Task Book (PTB)

- (evaluation tool), and any relevant training or developmental tools (training courses, job aides, modules, etc.)
- The SME group discussed training courses and (potential) job aids to be included with each position's Performance Support Package. Specifically, S-103, I-110, IS-29A, S-320, and PIO Masters were discussed, as well as FEMA courses. Position specific discussion points:
 - PIOT (Public Information Officer, Technician)
 - Will require a self-paced online training course (OLT), no PTB, and remove RT-130 requirement.
 - Position name changed due to National Incident Management System (NIMS)/Incident Command System (ICS) terminology.
 - Will not be a pre-requisite qualification for PIO3 (reference similar position pathway for Display Processor [DPRO] in the Planning Section).
 - Position duties (i.e. branches) were added to the position standards to introduce terminology.
 - PIO3 (Public Information Officer Type 3)
 - Position to include more C&G supervision responsibility.
 - Position duties (i.e. branches) were added to the position standards to further detail position responsibilities.
 - PTB task breakdown: two "WF" (Wildfire) tasks, three "WF/RX" (Wildfire/Prescribed Fire), and the remainder are "O" (Other) tasks to increase opportunities to complete PTB.
 - The PIO SME group and the PIOSC expect that training courses that are currently being reviewed at NWCG will impact the S-320 course.
 - As the PIOSC liaison in the SME group, Catherine provided resources that the PIOSC had created to assist in development of the Performance Support Packages. The PIOSC had developed revised IPD's and a PIO specific training matrix crosswalk. Catherine reported that the two groups are aligned in their views and recommendations.
 - Future of PIOSC – The group discussed the history of PIOSC being a subcommittee under CEPC, and whether that was still the best fit. Discussed what other scenarios could exist – one being becoming a standalone committee, and the other potentially being a subcommittee within the Incident Position Standards Committee (IPSC) to be more closely aligned with other command functions such as the Incident Command Subcommittee.
 - Communication, Education, and Prevention Committee (CEPC) update –
 - The Joint Fire Science Program (JFSP) made a presentation at the CEPC meeting and shared some of the projects they are working on relevant to CEPC issues:
 - Community wildfire defense plans
 - Human-ignited fires and effectiveness of various prevention measures
 - Literature review and best practices on public communication strategies regarding wildland fire
 - CEPC held discussion regarding Work Capacity Test standards for Public Information Officer positions. There is variation in the standard between organizations and Incident Management Teams – the PIOSC discussed this issue further. It was determined that for this field season the decision rests on the individual's Incident Qualification Certification System (IQCS) certifying official. There may be 2025 guidance to select a standard for PIOT and PIO3 positions.

Old Business:

- PIOSC SOP document – Finalization of PIOSC SOP will continue in future meetings. Chris will begin filling out an NWCG SOP template to work from in the June PIOSC meeting.
- NWCG website migration – NWCG has reported known issues resulting from the recent website platform migration but encouraged feedback from the field. If the PIO community identifies any broken links or content/continuity issues, please pass them up respective communication chains.
- National Lead PIO Teams Channel – The group is planning to set up quarterly meetings on the newly repurposed Microsoft Teams channel for PIO team leads. Meeting schedule will be discussed at next month's PIOSC meeting.

Action Items:

- Update to PIO social media guidance (Candice and Catherine).
- Creation of "What Kind of PIO Am I?" document for NWCG web posting (Adrienne).
- NWCG Executive Board tasking: Creation of SOP document for PIOSC.
 - Template available at <https://www.nwcg.gov/communications-templates>.
 - Chris will create draft from template for the June PIOSC meeting. Will highlight divergence from standard language and refer to past meeting notes for historical perspective.

Next Call: June 27 2024: 1330 ET, 1230 CT, 1130 MT, 1030 PT.