

Public Information Officer Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes: 1/23/2025

Attendees:

Kerry Greene (USFS – Chair), Candice Stevenson (NPS – Rep.), Lessa Peter (BIA – Rep.), Jenner Harsha (USFWS – Rep.), Lisa Wilkolak (BLM – Rep.), Sean Collins (IAFC – Rep.), Chris Barth (USFS – Rep.), Elaina LaPaz (BIA – Alt. Rep.)

Also in Attendance:

Angie Lane (WA-DNR – CEPC Liaison), Nick Terrell (BLM – Admin), Brian Harrison (NWCG Training Specialist)

Committee Business:

- Brian Harris has retired his position with the US Forest Service (USFS) and Chris Barth will take his spot as the USFS representative on the PIOSC.
- There were no meeting notes to approve for web posting this meeting.
- Communication, Education, and Prevention Committee (CEPC) update – No updates this meeting from the CEPC Liaison. PIOSC members discussed potential funding requests for the next budget cycle. Currently the PIOSC does not have a funding request submitted with CEPC.
- NWCG update – No updates.
- Agency updates –
 - BLM – No updates.
 - BIA – Elaina will be looking for a first PIO assignment this season.
 - NPS – Hosting an S-203, *Introduction to Incident Information* session in March at Lake Meade National Recreation Area.
 - IAFC – Sean is working to identify an alternate IAFC representative.
 - USFS – The agency has a series of meetings next week to interpret the new administration's guidance. Fielding numerous inquiries on the Los Angeles/Angeles National Forest fires.
 - NASF – No update.
- Incident Management Response Roundtable (IMRR) update –
 - Jesse Bender will be speaking at the Feb 5th IMRR meeting from the Incident Workforce Development Group standpoint.
 - The IMRR core group (representatives from other command and general staff [C&G] IMRR groups) met recently to identify throughline issues across functional areas in effort to be more intentional with agenda items. This effort will hopefully create crossover of topics amongst IMRR groups to build consistency.

New Business:

- Incident Performance and Training Modernization (IPTM) position review updates –
 - Brian Harrison has replaced Kevin Maier as the NWCG Training Specialist project lead for the IPTM position reviews for Public Information Officer Technician (PIOT), and Public Information Officer Type 3 (PIO3).
 - The Training Development Plan (TDP) documents were sent to the contractor for review on Jan. 21. After they finish their revisions, the TDP will come back to the PIOSC to review.
 - The PIOSC discussed their recommended changes to the S-203, *Introduction to Incident Information* course revision. Recommendations included to add a simulation, to add digital/social media guidance, and to increase leadership content.
 - PIOSC members discussed need to compare S-203 revision with other relevant course curriculum revisions underway - primarily the S-320, *Introduction to Incident Management Teams*, and S-420, *Basic Incident Management Teams* courses. The intent would be to make sure that the PIOSC is creating a logical knowledge progression in the S-203 revision with respect to the greater curriculum as an individual advances in the PIO field.
- Yearly review of Position Descriptions (PDs) and Qualifications Requirement Sheets for steward positions per PIOSC Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) – Agenda item pushed to next meeting. Members still reviewing position documents.

Old Business:

- PIOSC Reorganization in NWCG Committee Structure – Committee members decided on option to establish a liaison between the PIOSC and the Incident Command Subcommittee (ICSC) to improve communication on C&G staff position matters. Chris will continue to draft a white paper summarizing the needed action to pass up to CEPC. Kerry will reach out to the chairperson of ICSC to request someone from their committee sit in on a PIOSC meeting to discuss.
- National Lead PIO Teams Channel – Agenda item pushed to next meeting. Need to schedule a meeting with the national team leads that the PIOSC will host.
- Annual Incident Management Teams Meetings – Chris has updated IMT rosters in the PIO toolbox (Teams site). As PIOSC members hear about regional IMT meeting dates they are encouraged to update the rosters page with info.
 - PIOSC members took “point of contact” roles for each geographic area for future information transfer:
 - Lessa will cover Alaska and the Southwest.
 - Chris will cover the Northwest, Rocky Mountain, and Northern Rockies.
 - Kerry will cover Northern and Southern California.
 - Jenner will cover the Great Basin.
 - Candice will cover the Southern Area.
 - Catherine will cover the Eastern Area.
 - **New Action Item:** Lisa will start putting together some talking points from the PIOSC perspective for annual IMT meetings.
- InciWeb Working Group updates – Kerry attended the working group’s last meeting in December.

- **Pending Action Item:** “What Kind of PIO am I?” Document – Jenner has received working files and is creating the updated document. Question posed to the PIOSC of whether to keep PIO1/2 qualifications on the list. Decision to keep these qualifications because the positions are still used in some geographic areas. Jenner will send the completed document to the PIOSC for review when completed.
- **Pending Action Item:** Update to PIO Social Media Guidance – The draft document is complete, and Candice and Catherine are working on 508 compliance.

Action Items:

- New: Lisa to draft talking points for annual IMT meetings.
- Pending: Jenner to finalize the “What Kind of PIO am I” document.
- Pending: Candice and Catherine to finalize the updated PIO social media guidance.
- Pending: Chris to draft white paper for CEPC summarizing need for improved communication between PIOSC and ICSC.

Next Call: February 27th, 2025 – 1330 ET, 1230 CT, 1130, MT, 1030 PT.