

Public Information Officer Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes: 5/22/2025

Attendees:

Kerry Greene (USFS – Chair), Catherine Koele (NASF – Vice Chair), Candace Stevenson (NPS- Rep), Lessa Peter (BIA – Rep), Lisa Wilkoalk (BLM – Rep)

Also in Attendance:

Angie Lane (WA-DNR – CEPC Liaison), Steph Bishop (Advisor), Sarah Lee (NWCG Coordinator), Brian Harrison (NWCG Training Specialist)

Committee Business:

- Agency updates –
 - BLM – Not present
 - BIA – Lessa last day with BIA was May 22nd, and Elena will be a temporary representative. It is unknown who will be long term.
 - NPS – The national communications shop has been consolidating and currently trying to learn when the regional personnel will consolidate to DOI. I still have the NPS email address, unknown when it will change to DOI.
 - IAFC – Not present.
 - USFS – Starting to see some consolidation on a regional level and reworking on a national level. As personnel are leaving, they are doing an internal reorganization. The chief and secretary letters came out, and the link to them is shared.
 - USFWS – Not present.
 - NASF – Watching the funding sources as the states rely heavy on federal funds. This will affect training, while mitigation and suppression seem to be okay. States run on a 3-year grant cycle and concerns are will the funds dry up.
- Communication, Education, and Prevention Committee (CEPC) update –
 - The last meeting was with a presenter from the spark arrester team. The group walked through the program and changes. They had concerns regarding how to communicate the changes to the field since no manual is being put in the field. CEPC members tied them in with the fire investigation team and looking to possible try in with prevention and information teams.
- NWCG update –
 - Reviewing plans on how they can or need to readjust.
 - The Incident Management Team Association is a new member now, unknown to whether they will become a member of this subcommittee.
 - Have been looking at committee reorganization for a few years now. Currently over 1200 people on these committees and looking how they can operate the committees better.
 - Will meet with parent committees to see how they can function more effectively and get to core values.
 - Looking to mimic and ICS structure.

- This adjustment will be implemented sometime early next year.
- Incident Management Response Roundtable (IMRR) update –
 - IMRR has been working to bring the calls back online, possible in June. Looking for directions on how they will operate the calls.
- IPTM Updates – (J. Mike; Kristen; Catherine)
 - The PIOT position has been sent to NWCG for final approval.
 - S-203 curriculum is still being reviewed – every SME is taking a chapter and reviewing it closely. There will be a couple more months of review to look at the material but look to be on track for August. As a not the review process of every aspect of the courses such as handouts, PowerPoints, course materials, and scenario take a lot of time.
 - Some of the more challenging parts have been deciding on terminology (i.e., Information strategy vs Communication Strategy)
 - Also looking to flag other areas that affect other C&G positions (i.e., executive summary is highlighted as a document that is controlled and put together by plans, so when plans do their revisions and template, the PIOs need to go back and update the S-203 materials).
 - Continuing to build upon scenarios for the S-203 training – it will be like walking through a real type 3 incident.
 - The Alpha Test – Brian will be getting with ICF to see when the material will be ready for a test course. May need to be creative on a test date unless someone knows of a S203 course being held during fire season.
 - It was suggested that maybe hold one in Shasta County, CA. There is a PIO group there who expressed interest in being a student. Many are PIOs within the local government and since it would be during fire season it doesn't affect them.
 - Concern expressed that the typical audience is more than those without PIO experience. So may be good to have a mix of attendees with and without.
 - Will there be a cadre though?
 - Might need to push to October or after fire season. But we need to ask the contractor if we are on schedule.
 - Brian advised the unit 5 media video for S-203 is an old video and is no longer our content, so we do not have ownership of it. The material can still be used for the older S-203 course if you have it, but any new S-203 material needs a new video.
 - SMEs need to validate the content in the video on the new course.
 - It has been encouraged for ICF to incorporate.
 - There is a forest where the PAO is doing media training on unit 5 in the districts. Can we make sure the new media unit can be pulled out and used as standalone training? The answer is yes so, a request will be sent to to pull that unit out as standalone training.
 - The pocket organizer is in discussion with ICF to make a slim downed version. The organizer will still be in the PIO toolbox and stewarded by Michelle who will revise it. There were questions about who will keep this document if Michelle leaves?

- Day in Life video - NIFC external affairs is still on board to help with it. A meeting was done, and a script was laid out with a shot list for the script. As soon as this is completed the PIOSC will review.
 - Will need to ask PIOs in the field on incident this year to gather footage to use for the video. Footage similar to check-in and demob etc. NWCG will take that footage and edit it to create the video.
 - Maybe a file can be made in the PIO toolbox for submissions.

New Business:

- Team Leads meeting occurred May 9th.
 - Very productive with all the IMT PIO leads and there is a recording here: [Recap: PIO Sub-Committee meeting with Team Lead PIOs Friday, May 9](#)
 - Meeting was held sooner as contract specifications are being built for production companies. Wanted to gather information from team leaders on how they order production teams.
 - Participants were asked to put in the chat what their biggest concerns were. The following topics are below: (to be utilized to build an agenda on for future meeting)
 - Watch Duty
 - AI
 - Losing PIOs till end of September due to DRP/VERA
 - Training gap from PIO3 to PIOC
 - PIOs working remotely from home a go or no go. If so, they are not eligible for IRPP (incident response premium pay).
 - Loss of AAs due to DRP/VERA
 - Ability to have enough staff for meaningful on incident training.
 - Host units without PAOs – affects the ability to do job.
 - Job vacancies
 - The requirements for type 3 teams to mobilize – many times show up with a PIO3t or no PIO at all.

Old Business:

- PIOSC organization with in the NWCG committee organization.
 - Chris will reach out to the ICSC for liaison.
- IMT Meetings (Item ties into next item “IMT roster maintenance”)
 - Kerry supporting R5 Virtual meeting May 14 – **VIRTUAL ONLY**
 - **Slide show was used and successful with giving updates.**
 - Candice supporting the SE Meeting –
 - Occurred in February – no questions or confusion of the PIO graphic or positions. Candice will continue to communicate with the area and send updates.
 - Lisa: Great Basin there was only one group for breakouts and did not have anyone signed up for PIOs. There was not an official meeting, and not all the teams were there.

- IMT Roster Maintenance (PIO Toolbox in FireNet)
 - File is located [here](#). IMT rosters are beginning to come in. Spreadsheet is being updated. Please validate.
 - It was asked if this file should move to the PIO Lead Teams?
 - Chris works with NIFC EA on identifying points of contact.
- PIOSC representation on the Incident Management Team Course Steering Committee (IMTCSC).
 - S-320 Charlie at Truckee Meadows Community College June 3-5.
- InciWeb Working Group.
 - It has been downsized, especially on the development side.
 - Not focusing on changes but their focus is on problems and issues.
 - InciWeb Tips and Tricks Spreadsheet are still being kept, and the developers will still be looking to review issues.

Pending Action Items:

- **Pending Action Item:** When will the Alpha Testing occur?
 - Kerry or Catherine will coordinate with Brian.
- **Pending Action Item:** PIOSC organization within NWCG Committee Org Chart
 - Chris will reach out to the ICSC for liaison on this.

Other Information:

Next Call: June 26, 2025 – 1330 ET, 1230 CT, 1130, MT, 1030 PT.