



ROCKY MOUNTAIN COORDINATING GROUP

Bureau of Indian Affairs (Southwest, Rocky Mountain and Great Plains Regions)
Bureau of Land Management (Colorado and Wyoming)
Fish and Wildlife Service (Mountain/Prairie Region)
Forest Service (Rocky Mountain Region)
National Park Service (Intermountain and Midwest Regions)
State Agencies in Colorado, Wyoming, South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas

Minutes of Winter Meeting January 18-19, 2012 Lakewood, Colorado

In Attendance:

Facilitator Jim Fletcher
Business Manager Brooke Malcolm

Members:

Chair Bob Jones
Vice Chair Ken Kerr
Joe Lowe (for Blair Dunn)
Rich Homann
Jeff Fedrizzi
Bill Ott
Mike Davin
David Carter
Ron Graham
Cal Pino
Mark Boche
Dave Hall (by Telephone)
Blair Dunn (by Telephone)

Guests:

Jesse Duhnkrack
J. Kent Hamilton
Andy Bundshuh
Elise Bowne
Lynn Barclay (by Telephone)
David Lucas
Ron Simpson (by Telephone)
Kelly Kane
Glenn Bartter

Unavailable:

Ross Hauck
Dan Smith
Don Westover

Committee Report-Outs

1. Fire Program Analysis Committee

Jesse Duhnkrack

- FPA is a priority for OMB and other agencies as a tool for budget development.
- Outputs from 2011 are being used in development of 2013 appropriations models and defend preparedness investments.
- Formed national Support Working Team of 12 technical analysts. USFS has not stated whether they will fund SWT in 2013.
 - 2012 analysis currently underway.
 - Kelley Mellot is SWT Point of Contact for the Rocky Mountain Area.
 - Applying complex model in consistent way for first time.
 - Regular contact with Fire Planning Units in RMA.
 - Finalizing calibration for each FPU.
- Most FPUs calibrated easily due to the SWT work in 2010.
 - Jeff Whitney now executive director of national oversight group.
- 2012 wrap-up April 1.

- Fuels piece still there but may be obsolete.
 - FPA not sophisticated enough to forecast benefits of fuels treatments, etc.
- How much longer needed? Shouldn't be long—no change in budget numbers; no change in other options for FPU. Minimal work once system is calibrated—just simple corrections. Most FPUs should be able to just press “go”.
- FPA may be future tool for budget planning and allocation—big leap from tool to inform budget.
- Analysis may be skewed if it doesn't incorporate local FD engines, etc. as preparedness resources.
- The FPA committee continues to facilitate completion of the 2012 analysis by direct contact with FPU personnel and regular conference calls.

2. Aviation Committee

J. Kent Hamilton

- Presented new committee charter for approval.
 - Discussion included concerns that Aviation and Operations Committees need to interact closely, but charter doesn't address coordination with Operations.
 - Recommend chartering Aviation Committee as standing subcommittee under Operations.
- Argument for separate aviation & operations committees presented, including:
 - Operations Committee already has large workload, and
 - Aviation has specialized concerns that should be handled separately.
- Consensus reached that Aviation Committee should be created, with changes to charter reflecting coordination with Operations Committee.
 - Charter was re-presented with requested changes.
 - Signed by Chair on 1/23/12.
- Retardant avoidance areas updated with ROD from USFS this year.
 - Perennial streams (only when water in stream)
 - Creeks
 - Avoidance areas can be excepted in cases when life is in danger only.
 - May need to work with GIS to clarify the maps for better depiction of avoidance areas.
 - Not a large departure from previous way of doing business.
 - Responsibility will initially lie with IA dispatch, FMO, line officers, etc. to recognize restricted areas.

3. Fuels Management & Prescribed Fire Committee

Andy Bundshuh

- Committee has been stagnant—hasn't accomplished much in past couple of years.
- Did not accomplish coordination of Rx Burn Boss refresher this year.
- Presented Issue Paper addressing functionality of committee.
 - Consistency of participation very poor.
 - Program of work not enough to keep members interested.
 - Fuels coordination & communication lacking.
 - State of Colorado Rx Council very active and achieving some of the objective, but not all states have councils.
 - Annual workshop objective not being met.
- All committees should be involved with each other. Integration not happening now.

- State Rx councils might be better way to go. Could link to RMCG through state reps on RMCG.
- Downfall seems to be linked to discontinuation of Fire Use in 2008.
- Kerr recommended disbanding committee.
 - Davin suggested committee members could be used as SMEs during fire season.
 - Homann agreed that RMCG can coordinate with state Rx Fire Councils via RMCG members and subordinates without formalizing an arrangement (i.e. committee). Possible to ask CO Rx Council to come to RMCG for report-outs a couple times per year.
 - Graham raised issue that state groups are starting to act as lobbying entities—may be difficult to bring them under RMCG. Better just to coordinate with them in parallel.
 - Fedrizzi suggested that RMCG write letter of support encouraging each agency's involvement with state Rx councils.
- Consensus reached to disband committee with acknowledgement of commitment of individuals.
 - Action for Issue Paper: Approve alternative to disband committee.

4. Geospatial Technology Committee

Elise Bowne

- Regular committee meetings each month, alternating in person & conference calls.
- New member in Wyoming to replace outgoing Wyoming BLM representative.
- WFDSS/GIS data committee
 - Data consolidation to improve accessibility across agencies.
 - Slow process to change.
- Provide support for RMACC/RMCG/MAC.
 - Assisted with MAC activation in Sept.
- Evaluating proposed wildfire perimeter standards to create interchange wherever possible.
- Participated in Boulder County IMT3 meeting.
 - Gave introduction to GIS standards to assist with team transitions.
 - Gave introduction to national IR operations.
- Revision of incident GIS Standard Operating Procedures
 - NWCG project—committee is providing feedback and input for revisions being made.
 - Most changes made necessary by changes in technology.
- Fletcher commented that coordinated decision support with regard to WFDSS is needed.
 - RMACC Intel coordinator (Marco Perea) will be lead on the decision support function.
 - **TASKING: Fletcher to work with Intel Coordinator on wording to be added to Committee's plan regarding responsibility for decision support functions.**

5. Information & Education Committee

Lynn Barclay

- Application and review process in place for Fire Prevention & Education Teams.
 - Recommendations from RMCG followed.
 - Subcommittee (Hartman, Page, Peters) formed to develop application materials, which were posted on website.
 - No selections have been announced by subcommittee yet.
 - Process will help coordinate selections in RMA and bring consistency to securing team members.
- Revision of Rocky Mountain Wildland Fire Information regional website
 - Searchable grants database.

- CSFS has carried workload until now.
- Agreed on mission statement: "A center for wildland fire prevention and education related information, materials and resources."
- Committee has revised logo, purchased domain names, changed URL, and updated format and content.
- Will continue to work on opportunities for marketing website.
- Added PIOs to advisory list and will continue to interface with USFS regional prevention committee.
- Katherine Timm incoming chair, David Acker incoming vice chair.
- Incoming chair has been instructed to present an issue paper for next RMCG meeting re: approval of FPET rosters.
- Appreciate being included with Operations Committee on team selection for PIO positions. Comfortable with level of current involvement.

6. Rocky Mountain Incident Business Committee

David Lucas

- Beverly Derringer incoming chair.
- Rocky Mountain half of committee was split from Great Basin after an internal movement and consensus by GBCG.
- Proposed chartering of RMCG Incident Business Committee.
 - Properly formatted charter presented for consideration & approval.
 - Still need to include liaison functions with Great Basin IBC, due to shared BUYTs and contracting personnel.
 - Added Secretary position to relieve some burden for the chair & vice chair.
 - Membership allows for representative from State of Nebraska. BLM will have a combined position for Colorado & Wyoming.
 - Committee will hold Spring & Fall meeting every year. Next meeting in February in Manhattan, KS.
- Rewrite of IIBMH this year will add to workload. Draft due in January 2013.
- Workload for refresher courses will increase, as those were handled by Great Basin side previously.
- All BUYTs were very busy and went out on multiple assignments in 2011 season.
 - BUYT selection process has merged with IMT selections
- Currently finalizing BUYTs. Selected Coordinator Barbara Eschels (NPS Lake Mead).
 - Hope to emulate BUYT rotation that previous coordinator was following.
- Concern raised that charter says majority vote can be used.
 - Kerr recommended re-wording to adhere to RMCG Consensus Model on website.
 - Corrected charter will be re-submitted for signature.
- Charter should also include Conflict of Interest verbiage as approved by RMCG.
- Consensus reached to charter committee with changes as noted.

7. Training Committee

Ron Simpson

- Committee continuing to work within small task group led by Steve Ellis to formalize process for MOUs with training providers.
 - Will be working on gathering old templates and white papers to bring forward to RMCG.
 - Some concerns from USFS regarding RMCG signing authority for MOUs.
- Priority training spreadsheet was in test phase in 2011.

- Still in process of being populated. Some data made available for team selection.
- Final version will be available April 1, 2012.
- Draft version was utilized by Operations Committee during team selection process this year.
- Agencies being asked to coordinate with zone training reps to ensure correctness of spreadsheet.
- By May 1, committee will provide written report of findings and recommendations to RMCG for approval of process.
- Travel restrictions hampering training efforts.
 - Widespread student cancellations/smaller classes impacting cost efficiency for course hosting.
 - Exploring need to teach more locally to avoid/minimize travel whenever necessary.
- 300 & 400 level course request process approved through RMCG.
 - Some 300-level courses delegated to local units outside process.
 - Course request forms available on Training Committee website.
 - Deadline September 1 for requests to be submitted for approval.
 - Have been some issues with following process in past.
 - Particular course (S-372) being put on in Wyoming despite being denied approval.
 - Graham explained problem:
 - WY Div. of Forestry submitted course request late with approval of zone training coordinator.
 - Course was denied because of the approved S-372 course in Grand Junction.
 - State of Wyoming was told by Cody training coordinator that Federal students would not receive NWCG credit for course.
 - All students but one enrolled in course are Federal agency personnel.
 - RMCG may not have authority to deny courses that meet instructor and course requirements put on by states or other cooperators.
 - Apparent that communication may have been lacking on committee in this case.
 - Chair, co-chair were not involved in decision as process directs.
 - May need to institute a training working committee to address procedures and processes.
 - Homann suggested that process may benefit from incorporating some more flexibility.
 - **TASKING – Due Feb. 2: Review current process allowing for extenuating circumstances and future travel caps, budgetary issues, class sizes, etc.**
 - Make clear that process is supported by RMCG, just need to re-examine application of process.
 - Chair will contact Ross Hauck to request he direct Training Committee to resolve current conflict over S-372 within Training Committee, including report of pros/cons & final disposition.

8. Operations Committee

Kelly Kane/Jeff Fedrizzi

- Developed Letter to Agency Administrators encouraging participation in Spring Team Meeting.
 - Suggest not specifying only C&G and new members in letter. Better to emphasize ALL team members need to be there.

- Letter should emphasize team cohesion and succession rather than economic/fiscal concerns.
- Overview of April meeting agenda.
 - 2-day meeting instead of 3 days to reduce expense of travel, etc.
 - Suggestion was made to make live streaming available for team members who cannot attend. No money left in budget to pay for live streaming, but ICs could set up on their own if they like.
- Some feedback received in the past that breakouts were not well-organized. Suggest clarifying leaders' intent & plans for sessions with ICs.
- Fletcher requested approval to invite representatives from BP to observe team meetings.
 - In order to facilitate their own internal development program for disaster response.
 - RMCG members expressed no opposition.
 - Agreed that USFS ethics coordinator will need to give ok.
- Fund raiser for Wildland Firefighter Foundation will be game of chance in evening. Confirmed that there is a clear separation between the meeting and the Foundation's activities. Should not pose an ethics problem, but any members in doubt should check with their ethics coordinators to be sure.
- Need to finalize letter & agenda and get out at least 2 months in advance. Kelly will finalize and get to Brooke by Friday for signature. ****Letter was revised and signed by Chair. All RMCG members were asked to distribute it to their respective agency administrators.****
- **Issue Paper: "Providing Equity for IMT2 Assignments in the Rocky Mountain Geographic Area"**
 - Ops committee recommends support by RMCG.
 - Ops Committee does not recommend change of rotation. RMACC will coordinate if/when necessary. Mob Guide will denote that RMACC will change rotation if there is a 2-assignment disparity between Type 2 teams until disparity equalized.
 - Some concern raised that formally documenting the rule may tie the hands of decision makers and ignore common sense.
 - Emphasis on importance of keeping all teams exercised as equally as possible.
 - Consensus reached to approve proposal with refined Mob Guide language to be forthcoming. Chair will approve Mob Guide language.
- **Issue Paper: "Type I Team Lack of Mobilizations"**
 - Ops Committee does not feel this proposal is in best interest of all teams.
 - Issue of confusion in legalities behind complexity analysis.
 - IC wants to work with agency administrators to promote buy-in for ordering Type 1 teams in some cases where Type 2 team is being considered.
 - Ops Committee recommends allowing Type 2 teams to continue rotation and encourage continued Type 1 participation in Rocky-Basin rotation.
 - If Type 1 team withdraws from Rocky-Basin rotation, would be on call 24/7/365.
 - Ops Committee has committed to Hahnenberg that they will examine all opportunities as they present themselves.
 - Committed to supporting Type 1 mobilizations and working with agency administrators and line officers to promote the use of Type 1 teams over NIMO teams, etc.
 - Should not have been an issue paper to RMCG—was brought to inform RMCG from Ops Committee.

- RMCG will support Ops Committee recommendation to reject Hahnenberg's Issue Paper and support their commitment to help the Type 1 Team retain currency.
- **Executive Time requested by Chair (all team members on RMCG asked to abstain). Attendees: Homann, Ott, Boche, Graham, Pino, Jones, Kerr.**
- Boche, Kerr, Ott & Jones (by conference call) will meet with Kelly Kane & Hahnenberg to reaffirm decision to support Ops recommendations.
- Issue paper reformatted and presented for approval.
 - Consensus reached to approve as modified.
- Question as to whether or not RMA can continue to support 4 teams still being discussed.
- Award nominations being prepared and will be submitted to Business Manager for processing and approval by Chair.
- ICs presented proposal to Ops Committee not to rotate deputies. Issue tabled for further discussion.
- Validation of applications slowed team selection process this year.
 - Emphasize need for validation prior to applications being submitted.
 - In the future, aim to provide ICs with a list of valid applications instead of validating after rosters have been submitted.
 - Validating applications requires each Ops Committee agency rep to encourage review and catch mistakes before they get submitted.
 - Electronic process should help with this.
- Training priority process
 - Training Committee/Ops Committee came together to set priorities for trainees during team selection.
 - Concern raised that decision process not fully understood and process was not communicated well between all Training Committee members.
 - From Ops Committee perspective: was a very valuable tool for IMT selection.
 - Objective, transparent and avoided favoritism in process.
- Request faster turn-around from RMCG in the future.
 - Believe Chair should delegate authority when unavailable for extended periods.
 - Inability to receive response from Chair caused delays in performing Ops Committee business in 2011.
- Request that RMCG follow meeting calendar.
 - Changing meeting dates caused problems for coordinating Ops Committee activities.
- Question raised: are there too many teams in RMA?
 - Suggest surveying to find out people's feelings about being on a team to identify why shortage of applicants for critical positions. Some possibilities:
 - Budget concerns
 - 3-year time commitment
 - Supervisory decisions
 - Need to look into getting some help analyzing & researching.
 - Explore possibility of offering shorter time commitments for some positions.
- IMT Selection and Roster Ratification
 - Team selection meeting was one of the best so far.
 - Created rationale sheets for each team for all positions filled outside of compliance with set order of priority.

- Extended veteran team members with a trainee waiting will sunset when trainee is fully qualified to take over.
- Unassigned personnel will be listed as priorities for future openings on teams.
- Coordination between Training Committee and Operations Committee will be emphasized earlier in the process for future selections.
- High priority to document a process for IMT selection for inclusion in Operations Guide.
- Type 1 Team
 - Hahnenberg very concerned over position shortages.
 - Allowed extensions for people who have been in position for a long time.
 - No deputy assigned to team.
 - Ops Committee and IC did not discuss stand-down.
 - Summerfelt could not commit to filling in as needed.
 - Trainee ICT1 (Blume) prioritized to get qualified to become deputy.
- Type 2 Teams
 - Three ICs worked through most issues prior to meeting.
 - All brought a trainee IC to participate in the discussion.
 - Initially had a plan to have rotating deputies
 - ICs prefer not to have rotation in deputies for team cohesion and consistency.
 - Understand that opportunities for trainees need to be honored.
- Some corrections made to unassigned personnel list.
- Minor changes to Type 1 Team Roster
- Team A Roster approved
- Team B Roster approved
- Team C Roster
 - Brenda Wilmore SOPL – Listed on unassigned list, but Team C would like to use her.
 - Dick Terry OSC2 – Job Share with Ed Waggoner.
 - Tom Camino DIVS – Application pending signature. Graham checking status.
- Fletcher will look at vacancies in rosters and check against resources available.
 - List will be sent to each RMCG rep for their area.
- Consensus reached to approve all rosters as modified.

9. Ethical Conduct

Dunn/Boche

- Dunn: Follow-up on Fall Meeting tasking.
 - Revision of language for Mob Guide p. 38, lines 3-15.
- Ethical conduct language should also be included in IC Expectations Letter.
- Boche: RMCG Operating Plan, p. 11 revision.
 - OAG reviewed & drafted language which matches Mob Guide and IC Letter language.
- Consensus reached to approve all revisions.

10. RMA Zone Team Feasibility Tasking

All

- Definition of "Zone Team": Zone team comprised of people within the zone, primarily operate in given zone, on closest forces concept, managed by zone BOD or GACC.
 - Able to transition more quickly.
 - Familiar with local area & politics.
 - Weather patterns, fuels, fire behavior, etc.
 - May experience high or low activity depending on fire season in their zone.

- What are the limitations of zone teams to be available to rest of GACC?
- What is the typing for a zone team?
- Begin by looking at strong Type 3 organizations to determine where needs and capabilities are.
- Executive Committee tasking: "A proposal for policy change on this matter is highly recommended to take account for on the next RMCG meeting to begin analyzing the feasibility of three zone teams, one zone and two GACC or all GACC teams."
 - Conclusion: "Consensus was made by the Executive Group that directing the RMCG to discuss on the issue on hand and put the report in play to move forward. A projected date of May 1, 2012 is the recommended timeframe the group agreed on to hear back the decision that was made by RMCG about this issue."
- Requested clarification on issue from Bill Crapser. Per Crapser's e-mail:
 - Task 1: RMCG should assess the process used for selecting ICs, and team members, to better ensure that nominees are qualified, properly sponsored, assigned to the proper team (location of personnel), and consider utilizing a interview process for ICs.
 - Task 2: RMCG should develop a report to the Execs by May 1, 2012 assessing team structure (ie GAC teams versus zone teams), numbers (how many Type 1, Type 2, and/or GACC supported Type 3) teams should the RMA have. RMCG members should develop this report and not staff it."
- Agreed that all need to understand tasking, develop roadmap for production of deliverable, and assign duties.
- Moving forward with understanding that current configuration will be in place for this team rotation.
- Task group assigned: Jones, Dunn, Pino, Boche, Hall, Carter. Fletcher facilitating with GeoTech coordination.
 - Narrow focus on zone team study:
 - Problem statement: Will the zone team model work in the RMA?
 - Purpose statement: Should the RMA move its Type 2 Teams to a zone concept?
 - Will the zone team model work best in the RMA?
 - Briefly address other Crapser points in context of past, present, future.
- Business Manager will compile possible meeting dates by email & set meeting for sometime in first two weeks of Feb.
- Draft recommendation due by Spring Meeting.
- Fletcher will work with GeoTech to pull data on:
 - Master roster of qualified personnel in RMA
 - Fire/complexity load in RMA
 - Fire risk assessment for RMA

11. Operating Plan

Davin

- Still draft form, so needs review and formatting.
- Will include the revisions re: ethical conduct.
- Still needs clarification on process for Issue Paper presentation and processing.
- Accreditation & training section needs to be followed-up with Ross Hauck for status.
- New Consensus Model link needs to be added.
- Carter will review first, then Bill Ott.
- Business Manager will look over and edit (particularly parts relating to position).

12. Platte Canyon IHC

Homann

- The Platte Canyon Fire Department wanted to stand up an IHC. CSFS agreed to sponsor.
- Have met all of the criteria for IHC status, operating for 3 years as a Type 1 trainee crew.
- Issue paper recommending certification as Type 1 IHC.
 - Presented with letter from Dave Hamrick & process for Ops Committee.
- Process needs to be Ops Committee approval > RMCG. Wasn't followed.
- Can be brought before Ops Committee at next meeting. Consensus to defer to Ops Committee for approval.
- Fedrizzi will follow up with Kane. RMCG can review at Feb. 2 Conference Call.

13. Wyoming Dispatch Review

Fedrizzi

- Overview of timeline for review process.
- Decision criteria for future configurations: recruitment, retention, available facilities, workload, staffing, etc.
 - Recruitment & retention in Casper and Rawlins have been difficult and expensive.
 - Facilities are not capable of supporting interagency dispatch center in either location.
- Decision to reduce to 2 centers in WY.
- 8 alternatives originally considered.
 - 2 choices: dispatch in Laramie or Cheyenne.
 - Will need new facility.
- HR feasibility studies slated to be conducted with USFS & BLM.

14. FAST Mobilization

Fedrizzi/Fletcher/Barter/Graham

- Issues Identified:
 - Poor and/or no vetting of Agency Administrator contact list. Did not contact BLM AA prior to arriving at BLM.
 - No input into delegation from "host" agencies—too broad, not signed.
 - No notification that Fedrizzi was FAST contact in WY until 2300 night before. Ron Graham and Paul Hohn verified by indicating they were not aware of FAST details either.
 - Fedrizzi asked by USFS to help find staffing for FAST before being notified of activation—still looking for members within organization. Was told by Boche that Greer was part of FAST.
 - Per Red Book, FAST Lead must have experience.
 - FAST arrived with no IT capabilities, which then created difficulties for the host unit.
 - Poor representation of affected agencies (USFS) with FAST activation.
 - Discussions at RMACC didn't make it to WY Reps.
- Solutions Presented:
 - Ensure AA contact list is provided to FAST. Ensure FAST Team Lead and RMCG rep. conference with AA prior to traveling to field unit.
 - Ensure Host RMCG rep. either helps draft or reviews delegation.
 - Identify an appropriate RMCG rep. to be point of contact for AA and FAST, preferably a neutral RMCG member.
 - Recommend RMCG DO, RMACC CM and, if activated, MACG Coordinator conference/coordinate to ensure effective mob and coordination of FAST with field unit and AA.

- Just as we do in IMTs, ensure FAST Members are qualified for their respective positions, especially Team Lead with prior experience.
- Require approval and pre-order for cell phone and laptop with wireless/aircard/internet capability to be provided by FAST members.
- RMCG Representatives need to convey message to their respective units on needs and reasons for FAST engagements.
- Need to add to MAC plan.
- Request adding responsibility for RMCG Duty Officer in Mob Guide Ch. 10.
- Bartter will work to finalize Mob Guide language to clarify roles & responsibilities for process.

15. All-Hazard Teams

Fletcher

- Looking to be involved in Spring Meeting to:
 - Give overview of all-risk team activities.
 - Ask for opportunity to go out on assignments to get task book items completed.
- Kerr: Need to begin discussions and start regular communication to stay informed and learn.
 - Could be seed bed for succession
 - Should start working together, because it's the way of the future.
- Consensus to invite to make presentation and begin open dialogue to begin collaboration at Spring Meeting.
 - Chair will make direct contact with Dwight Henninger to extend invitation for 1400-1500 Monday, April 2.

16. Housekeeping

Malcolm

- Calendar updates almost completed. Just need inputs from committees on planned meeting schedules, then will be posted to web.
- Action Log reviewed and brought up to date.
- Updated 2012 contact information requested by end of January for all committee chairs and dispatch zone boards. New contacts will be posted to web in February.