

SOUTHWEST COORDINATING GROUP (SWCG)

Meeting Minutes – May 6-7, 2003

Coordinating Group Members Present:

Kirk Rowdabaugh, Bill Waterbury, Willie Begay, Bob Lee, Pam McAlpin, Bob Lee, Jeff Whitney, Nancy Neskauskas, Bryan Swift, Dugger Hughes (Non-Voting member)

Guests:

Jim Payne, John Kwait, Art Morrison, Richard Nieto, Rauls Williams, Suzanne Romero, Rich Wooley, Chuck Maxwell, and Glenda Womack

The meeting was called to order at 1000.

Type 2 Teams (John Kwait)

John Kwait voiced concerns on behalf of the NM Type 2 Team:

- Complexity analysis leads to Type 1 teams not Type 2
- Two AD's on Command and General Staff for NM Type 2 teams
- The Type 2 team is concerned about the number of people Type 1 teams are carrying: Oltrogge 45 primary and 16 tainees, and Humphrey 47 primary and 18 trainees
- Concerned that nomination process isn't getting sent out
- Kwait suggested mentoring and outreach for S-490 to get more FBAN's
- FBAN's needed because Fire Use Teams are taking away from the teams.

Suggestions from the CG:

- Kirk suggested reaffirming what the minutes from the last meeting state with regards to the number of people the Type 1 teams are carrying.
- Bill – We need to market team applications better.
- Bob asked John K. to send out draft material for FBAN's

The discussion ended with a statement that the CG is not responsible for Type 2 teams. The CG would like all teams to operate under the same configuration as stated in the mob guide (SW Area and National). Kirk suggested that SWCC not mob a team unless they meet the guidelines. It was noted that Type 2 Teams do not adhere to SW mob guideline. Type 1 teams will conform to Mob guideline and anything above that will need approval.

The mob guide should read: Type 2 teams requested through SWCC will be configured according to Chapter 60, Section 68.2 in mob guide. This will go out in a letter for the CG Chair to sign.

Type 1 Team Discussion:

- Type 1 teams will conform to Mob guideline and anything above that will need approval.
- Overhead Team- All team members will get an O#
- Concern voiced regarding password to access team rosters.
 - Suggestion was made to remove password for team rosters.

- Suggestion was made to make two rosters; one with only names for the public and one w/all information.
- Type 1 Team roster will reflect National Standard: 37 + 10 more trainees if authorized in GACC.
- Jeff suggested the Chair call IC's and notify them of the decision.
- Bill Waterbury –Forests are developing forest draw down levels to deal with being short on management and IA forces.
- Pam would like to see a signature line for Line Officers on nomination form.
- Bill recommended applications for teams come be sent to the CG.
- Team applications need to include All Risk
- National policy can't be violated regarding the number of people teams carry
- Suggestion - when order is placed ask for more THSP's
- Show list in components for roster – 37 C & G, 6 Nationally accepted, 10 Geographic accepted and ? of thsp's.
- Kirk will call IC's and let them make the decision. Jeff was ok with this idea.

Type 1 and Type 2 Team Decisions:

1. Type 1 Team roster will reflect National Standards of 37 and 10 trainees authorized in GACC
2. John Kwait will prepare recruitment material for S-490/590.
3. Mob Guide will be changed to reflect that mobs through SWCC will conform w/60.68.2 plus additional trainees within GACC.

3 Tier Dispatching in a 4-Tier System (Bob Lineback)

- The review of Lessons Learned stated that SWCC should review the coordination system by winter 2003/2004.
- Have SWCC canvas the zones to list their concerns on how they dispatch within the zones.
- Have SWCC evaluate how other zones in other GACC's handle their dispatching (3-Tier, 4-Tier).
- Bob Lee voiced concern over smaller and/or remote units that may not be able to fit into the 3-Tier system.
- Bob recommended that Dugger research all historical studies on the 3 Tier and 4 Tier dispatch System.
- Bill suggested reviewing the prior studies to determine what we are trying to solve.
- Kirk asked the question – Do we have the option to say we want to stay w/ 4 Tier? The CG was not sure.
- The CGs needs to review to make sure that we have mitigated any safety issued related to 3 and 4 Tier Dispatching.
- BIA's response to Southwest Strategies has been nonchalant. The decisions of Southwest Strategies may not affect BIA as much as other agencies.
- Jeff asked the questions is it actually operable to go to 3 Tie
- Kirk stated that SW Strategies want a Cost and Implementation Schedule.

News Media on Fire Guidelines (Jim Payne/Regional Media Advisor)

- Jim Payne is part of the working group that is trying to get uniform direction for the media on fires.
- The group is currently dealing with the “embedded issue”.
- The media’s expectation is that they won’t be allowed on fires this year because of the Rodeo-Chediski Incident last year.
- Lawsuits have been threatened....but have been dropped due to the working group dealing with the problem.
- The group is working on a Southwest Area Agency Administrator’s/Incident Mgmt guidelines for working with the media.
- Jim suggested that we need more IOF’s, or at least people who can escort media on the line.

The CG decided on a short meeting to re-work the “Guidelines for Working With The News Media” document. Standardization for Protocol needs to be addressed. Bill, Kirk, and Jim will work on the document and meet on **May 27th at the Land Dept, 1616 /W. Adams in Phoenix**. Jeff suggested inviting Humphrey and Oltrogge. Jim will give them a call. No other issues will be discussed at this meeting. Jim Payne will provide comments from everyone.

Red Card Issue-

- Concerns were voiced regarding the red card policy for the media folks.
- Kirk has notified Scott Hunt that the Fire Dept. will not issue red cards.
- Red card policy needs to be consistent w/ all agency’s.
- Jeff stated that if you are assigned to an incident you will go through the system. Jeff also concerned that if an AA says let the media in.....the IC has to honor it.
- Jim says all agency’s agreed that they would not issue Media Red Cards.
- Bob addressed the requirements for pack test – light refresher is needed to be line qualified. Jim also, added that it is critical to have some fire experience.

Jeff – We want to get the word out and keep the public informed. We have the responsibility to keep the public informed.

Fire Prevention (Suzanne Romero, Coordinator)

- Suzanne handed out a copy of the Prevention Charter and not much had changed only the word-smithing.
- Prevention and Qualifications Standards all look good beginning with the GS-5 level.
- Suzanne has final package for Standards and Guidelines.
- People from the forest level have been calling for a copy of the PD’s.
- Bob suggested sending it to OPM.
- Jay will be asked to find all committee charters from the past
- Suzanne will give Bill a copy of all PD’s.

Action Item:

Prevention committee will send the CG a copy of the PD's for consideration and distribution.

Mutual Assistance With PNM (Jeff Whitney)

Jeff met with PNM at their meeting on April 24. At the meeting PNM gave SWCC a map with the locations of all major utilities in NM and AZ. PNM has a group in Colorado that coordinates the location of all these utilities. They are willing to give us info on the owner of power lines and what power company to contact in the area of a wildfire. PNM also suggested that they could notify SWCC early of downed power lines. Kirk suggested giving PNM the phone numbers of all zones offices. Dugger suggested the info go to SWCC and SWCC will disseminate the info. It was agreed that Dugger would be the key contact for SWCC. Key contact for PNM is Ron Bell: 505-241-3644 or rbell@pnm.com.

Action Item: Dugger will mail copies of SWA Mob Guides to key utility companies. He will send out an addendum to the SWA Mob Guide regarding agreement w/PNM.

SWCC Center Director position (Bob Lee)

- BIA won't be able to contribute to the Center Director position; the money isn't there. Money is already earmarked for other things. BIA feels that they have contributed enough with FUTA and Ron and Willie's positions.
- Bill says this surfaces a bigger problem: BIA contributes \$250,000; of this amount, they thought \$130,000 was going to SWCC, but in reality it's split with the Columbia Building, FUTA, and SWCC. Bill stated that the most important thing we do as a CG is SWCC. SWCC is our # 1 priority for funding and FUTA is secondary.
- Kirk suggested reconstructing the BIA agreement.
- The original agreement with BIA was for telecommunications, printing, and maintenance. Willie will provide a copy to the Group.
- The CG should have some say as to what happens with the \$130,000.
- Willie asked if the CG could identify interagency team cost.

The CG agreed that if Dugger has questions or concern, he can find one of the CG members (closest one available), just keep everyone informed and remember we are interagency. Dugger will manage time and travel for SWCC staff.

Dugger's concerns:

- Budget Process - He suggested each agency come in and talk with him to discuss spending.
- Delegation (Coordination Duties) - The Operations Guide list his duties and the MAC Group sets the priorities. If Dugger feels he needs to have a conference call then just notify the CG. Dugger stated he is committed to keep the CG informed.
- Dugger held a conference call with all Zone Coordinators and they had a couple of concerns – (1) SWCC never open when they need them and (2) no out of regions detailers for the Coordinator positions.

SWCC Positions:

- BLM position is going to management on Monday, possibly GS-9/11.
- FS position – KSA's need to be written
- Dugger will be involved with the selections.

2003 Work Rest Guidelines

- There are two parts to the work/rest ratio
- All lengths of assignments are exclusive to travel
- Extensions – you can be extended five days; exclusive of travel
- Can be extended back to back in planning levels 4 and 5.
- One paid admin day for every 7 you work. Still trying to manage chronic fatigue.
- Bill will make contact with Tory at NICC and get clear info. On work/rest guidelines.
- Kirk will talk with Tory on changes 4C –delete, 4D – not consistent with previous page, delete second bullet, 3 should say two days off.
- Dugger will deal directly with local zone managers w/guidance from the CG on work/rest.
- Bill handed out the Emergency Incident Hours Of Driving proposal – This is a proposal for NWCG – (1) It limits hours on equipment (2) Emphasized 0500-2200 for moving teams, crews, and engines.

BIA Fire Restrictions & Closures

- Willie suggested that the CG come up w/ a common protocol.
- The BIA will go through the zones and the zones will coordinate with SWCC.
- Four levels for Restrictions 1. Public notification 2. Closures and Restrictions 3. Agency/Municipal Guidelines and Process Coordination 4. Agency/Municipal rules and regulations
- The "Toolbox for the Forest Service" is to bring rules and regulations into compliance.
- Kirk – We need to put guidelines in place so we can coordinate on closures.
- Bob will approach Ed Singleton and see where we are with implementing guideline on restrictions and closures.
- Willie will check with tribes in the Parks.
- We need to coordinate with partners as well as zones.
- Closures should coordinate w/ neighboring forces.

BIA Funding

Discussion returned to BIA funding for SWCC:

- Kirk and Jeff said the Forest Service is doing what they are supposed to with BIA money.
- Kirk suggested renegotiating the agreement between the FS and the BIA.
- The CG prefers the money to be used for SWCC not FUTA and the Columbia Building. The primary concern is SWCC not FUTA.

- Bill will draft a letter regarding the shared position in SWCC and have funding identified for this position

Smoke Mgmt. Direction, Rules, etc. (Rich Woolley)

- New Mexico is re-writing their smoke program; they are currently putting together draft and will have it completed by next fire season. The draft is currently at the state level for re-write

Engine Contractor in NM (Nancy Neskauskas)

- FS is requiring contractors to meet National Contract Standards
- The State of NM will no longer Red Card contractors.
- The State Office is issuing a 60 day Red Card for prior Red Carded AD's.
- Bill is currently working on a draft MOU regarding Red Cards.

CREP/CRWB (Willie Begay)

- There is a lack of CREP and CRWB in the SW.
- SW is the only region that requires CREP – can we re-visit this issue?
- CREP can come from anywhere; not just the home unit.
- We need to facilitate getting more CREP's
- There are a total of 93 crews in SWA. Willie suggested getting more people qualified or do not sponsor so many crews.
- Bill suggested reaffirming the number of CREP's and IARR from a SWCC standpoint.
- Future topic – IARR's should be CREP – Bob suggested taking it to the Type 2 crew committee.

CG Decision: CREP's will continue to be required; this will not change.

Next Meeting: June 24-25, 2003 in Flagstaff.
The meeting will start at 1000.

/s/ Kirk Rowdabaugh

Chair

Southwest Coordinating Group

GW