

Northern Rockies Dispatcher Workshop – Summarized Notes

Best Western – Grant Creek, Missoula, Montana

March 5-7, 2013

All referenced handouts are posted at the Dispatch Steering Committee Website:

<http://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/dispatch/nrdsc/nrdsc.htm>

Tuesday, March 5, 2013

0845 - 0900 Dispatch Center Synopsis Overview – Alyssa Stewart

If you have comments on how to improve the Dispatch Center Synopsis, please get them to Alyssa Stewart, astewart@mt.gov

0900 – 0930 Predictive Services – Bryan Henry

Predicting ENSO neutral conditions throughout the first half of summer. Snowpack is at near normal across GACC. Factors that will influence the coming fire season now are snowpack runoff timing, spring precipitation, and July temperatures & precip & convection throughout the summer. Expecting a normal to above normal fire season, will update outlook in April.

0930 – 0945 Northern Rockies Mobilization Guide Update – Pam Jolly

- Mob Guide - All comments & updates (except Chapter 50) are due by April 1:
 - Equipment/supply updates to Kelly (kforthofer@fs.fed.us)
 - Updates on crews to Roy (rorobinson@mt.gov)
 - Aircraft updates to Kim (kthomas@fs.fed.us)
 - Intel updates to Julie (jpolutnik@fs.fed.us)
 - Everything else to Pam (pjolly@fs.fed.us)
 - Chapter 50 updates due to Roy Robinson (rorobinson@mt.gov) by April 15th
- Possible changes to wildland fire modules, Pam will let us know when/if they go into effect.
- Centers with 4th tiers will need to get ROSS data steward and administrator info to NRCC in anticipation of the data conversion.

0945 – 0950 DNRC Update – Roy Robinson

- Continue to send in Appendix S.
- Sheet of many colors posted at <http://dnrc.mt.gov/Forestry/Fire/Business/Documents/2013FireNumbers.pdf>

0950 - 1015 NRCC Updates – Kathy Pipkin and NRCC

Kathy

- The Northern Rockies Dispatcher of the Year is Gary Weber, from Coeur d'Alene Dispatch. Congrats & thanks for all you do, Gary!
- Kathy will continue to share information on evolving IMT stuff.
- Some NRCG committees are accepting nominations for members, apply if interested:
http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/fire/nrcg/committees_index.htm
- NRCC staffing changes for 2013: Barb will be assistant aircraft, Kelly will be equipment, Roy will take over crews, Pam will stay as overhead. Julie stays at intel, Rosie is her backup. Ray's position has closed hope to announce by end of March.

Julie

- 209s are due daily, by 1900 MDT or close of business, May-October. Nothing new.
- Possible changes to the way we report privately protected fires. More info to come. Get unit identifier changes into Judy Heintz (jheintz@fs.fed.us) ASAP.
- New Sit/209 implementation planned for 2014.
- Julie is the GACC business lead for ROSS reports. If you have issues or want to see a new report in the system submit a change request and cc Julie. Report index: http://ross.nwcg.gov/RRMB/ROSS_Reports_Index.pdf.

- Julie will offer ROSS reports training June 3-7. Info was sent out via email March 13. For info, contact Julie (jpolutnik@fs.fed.us).
- FTP site for hosting IAP and access to IAPs doc posted on NRDCS website. Sent out by Julie 3/14.
- Looking at 2014 for an intel course.

Kim

- Check <http://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/dispatch/aviation/aviation.htm> for updated tickler list and airtanker release handouts.
- Air attack refresher April 23-25 at the AFD in Missoula, asking aircraft dispatchers to be involved in person and electronically. More information forthcoming.
- New version of AFF in beta, link: www.aff.gov/development/maps.asp

Kelly

- New water handling solicitation this year. Centers need to do performance evaluations of vendors who are not meeting agreed upon needed date/times. The correct eval form is posted at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/fire/nrcg/agree-contract/performance-eval.pdf>.
- They are projecting over 530 pieces of equipment for water handling.
- Will practice manifesting contract equipment personnel during ROSS practice – not required, just an option.
- There is a rating scale on the performance eval. At times the comments didn't match the rating that was given. Do not give them a good rating if they aren't earning it.
- Hope to have NR Contracted Resources SOP out by June.
- Hoping to have a 2-day IARR workshop at the end of May, more info forthcoming from NRCC.

1100 – 1115 ITEAMS – Kelly Forthofer

The ITEAMS portal link can be found on the Northern Rockies website under equipment/supplies.

http://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/dispatch/equipment_supplies/equipment_supplies.htm. Check handout for instructions. Good tool to use as backup to hard-copy forms or vpr.

1115 – 1145 NRCG Committee Reps

- Training – Fonda, no report
 - Doug Caffee, course coordinator for D-311: Have 23 folks, have room for a few more. Have all cadre and coaches so unless something happens with the budget it is still a go for the 22nd.
 - **Update 3/19 – We still have space! Contact Doug (daffee@blm.gov) if you have students!**
- Aviation – Gary Weber: no report
- Equipment – Ann Speer
 - More issues with rental cars during 2012. If you have suggestions on how to track them better, contact Pam Okon (pokon@mt.gov).
 - Need new inspectors, if you have any pass names to Kevin Erickson (kerickson@fs.fed.us).
- Prevention – Shannon Bonney
 - There was an October meeting.
 - Training: P-301 to be held in Boise April 26 and 27; S-203 to be held in California 4/29-5/3.
- NAC – Kevin Weaver
 - Some NAC plan changes: The BIA will no longer pay for drug testing, will come out of tribe's preparedness funds. Arduous firefighters who haven't had a medical exam in 3 years must have one. Tribes & BIA are working on if tribes have authority to hire ADs. This may affect # of crews available.
- Business – Tony Lubke
 - Looking for input on how to better in-brief buying teams, suggestions to Tony (tlubke@fs.fed.us).
 - Short buying teams proposed – more below.
- Operations – Mark Heppler
 - Teams are same as last year.
 - Will revisit the letter Northern Rockies sent out to NWCG to come up with a non-operational path for Planning Section Chief and Logistics Section Chief as well.
 - Will need a new dispatch rep after December 2014.

1300 – 1340 NICC Update

Jarrold Simontacchi: National Mob Guide Updates:

- Chapter 20, the gallon breakdown on air tankers changed to illustrate the new VLAT contract, which is 8,000 and up. Updated what FS would provide if MAFFS was activated by the governor. Updated the assignment extension request form to include statement that GACC signatures are not required for single resource OH.
- Chapter 30, updated names on NMAC chart to update current membership.
- Chapter 60, smokejumper numbers updated. Removed crew qualification typing because they are already in the blue book and red book. Added language to clarify IMT availability when members of C&G are not available.

Aviation Section - Scott Fisher

- Legacy airtanker contract (9 tankers) is in extension, should be resolved by April. Next-gen contract is in Washington DC for review, 7 line items designated for reward.
- Discussion on airtanker strategy in the next 5-7 years taking place. Evaluation currently on scoopers.
- Looking at lead plane use after both T-11 and MAFFS 7 crashed while in line behind a lead plane.
- Aerial supervision – There is an effort to look at how we transform the program. Over 50% of ATGS are ADs.
- Have fewer lead planes. There were 38-40 in the '90s and now we're down to 25-26. Trainees are important.
- HLN is the approved operating base for MAFFs in the Northern Rockies.
- CWN contract for VLAT, 8,000 gallons. HLN is approved for use.
- Helicopters – 34 large fire support were awarded, 33 IA were awarded.

Bill Fletcher

- Critical to use correct food service request form: http://www.nifc.gov/nicc/logistics/coord_forms.htm
- NICC has several positions open or to be filled in the coming months.
- Review new Red Book Chapter 19, Dispatcher Coordination. Use the appropriate channels identified in the front cover of the red book to make comments.
- Alyssa asked for and Jarrod said he had fill-able pdf forms that they would post to the above website.

1340 – 1410 NIRSC Update – Jose Lopez

Jose is our GACC rep. Feel free to contact him with questions anytime.

- Must have COML or COMT assigned to incident in order to receive anything but handheld radios.
- We lose frequencies every year, meaning everyone needs to coordinate more.
- Discrete air to airs are only good for 30 days and for 20 nautical miles and 5,000 feet AGL from the incident. Could take as much as 48 hours to get an AM frequency so the faster we know the faster it will get filled. Extensions should be requested at least 5 days prior to expiration date.
- Order early.
- Assigned air to air frequencies out for GACC as of 3/13.
- Assigned air to grounds are out as well.
- Zone boundary changes need to go through approval and can take 1 year or more.
- Comments - With the lag time for discreet air to air frequencies, TFRs with discrete frequencies could be delayed for 48 hours. Order air to air frequencies early, even if there is just potential. Jose confirmed not to worry about ordering one and not needing it in the end, better to be extra cautious.

1420 – 1530 IRWIN Update – Chris Markle

- Lively discussion on the dispatch environment, our CAD system, and the need for data to populate other systems to prevent entering it again and again. IRWIN is a process to populate that data across systems once it's been entered into an access point.
- This has been tried before and failed, difference this time is secretary-level buy in from NWCG agencies and authorization to move forward.
- The focus is on five systems first: WildCAD, WFDS, EGP, FireCode and Sit209. The desire is that it all starts with CAD, if CAD is determined to be the standard starting point. Data is first entered into CAD and it then propagates to

the other systems that need it. Currently scheduled for the five systems this year, and then 1 out every year after that, including ROSS. Testing by Fall 2013.

- Group asked for it to be marketed better, for more information to be put out there. Chris invited anyone to send emails to him (christopher_markle@ios.doi.gov) and Rochelle (kimber_pederson@ios.doi.gov) regarding what your needs are.

1540 – 1600 Fire Incident Retention Guidance – Karen Rheinhardt - FS

Records management, both incident and day-to-day.

- If you created information, it is likely a record.
- There are permanent records (20 years), temporary records (7 years) and non-record copies. Separate your permanent from your temporary records, maintain the incident file for 3 years then send records to Federal Records Center. FRC manages records for you though they are still under agency control. More information is available on the NWCG site: www.nwcg.gov/policies/records/index.html.
- We should not have to maintain duplicate records. If the incident is on DNRC protection, they keep the fire record.

1600 – 1755 Center Manager's Meeting

See full meeting notes for center manager meeting info.

Wednesday, March 6th

0800 – 0830 National Weather Service Update – Jenn Kitsmiller

Jenn is the fire Weather Program Manager for western Montana and north central Idaho. Here to talk to you about some shifts of focus on priorities at the NWS and introduce you to some products.

- NWS is focusing on helping people understand the weather and how it will affect them. New products:
 - Facebook, each NWS office has one. Addresses longer-term weather stories.
 - Twitter, @NWSMissoula, etc., each office has one. Used for short-term, real-time info.
 - Weather Stories, available on the NWS website. Graphic/map-based.
 - Recorded briefings, available twice weekly or so on the website and YouTube.
- This fall/next spring new spot weather request form, will use google maps.
- Keep open communication between you and your weather office. You can contact Jenn at Jennifer.kittsmiller@noaa.gov.

0830 - 0905 Mobile Technologies/IT Support Update – Tyler Hackney

- iPads for FS personnel have been put on hold indefinitely due to sequestration.
- There is an interagency (DOI & FS) beta test of a mobile fire size up app on iPads this summer. The DNRC is developing a fire size up application for iPad use as well but as of 3/19 they have decided to postpone the beta until Spring 2014 to allow more time for development.
- Tyler may have ViaSat Satellite Systems available for team use.
- Tyler is attending the WildCAD conference in Reno and would like questions and comments to him (thackney@fs.fed.us) prior to then as it relates to IRWIN.

0905 – 0910 IT Support Update – Tyler Hackney

Expanded dispatch laptop kits are pre-setup with profiles and can be shipped to you or brought to you. Once you're setup for the season, you can leave it that way. Please keep track of profiles to ensure we can continue to use them.

0930 – 1110 Contracting Issues and Updates/Best Value, DPL, RL, Choose by Advantage Contracting Panel - Debby Wesselius, Tim Murphy, Kevin Erickson, Shay Clark, Pam Okon

Tim Murphy (timmurphy@fs.fed.us)

- 2013 Contracting Updates, new Solicitations & FAQs are on the website <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/fire/nrcg/agree-contract/index.html>.
- Inspections by the three MOU holders continue this spring, are due by mid-May.
- 50 training providers

- As of January 1, 2014, contractors are required to have P25 compliant radios. We've been assured this won't present a problem.
- Current DPLs will be in place until we transition to new agreements. Still on vipr: <http://www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/vipr/permissions.php>
- If someone has to stay in fire camp, they need RT130.
- Vendor's responsibility to have personnel verification forms with them at time of inspection, can use iteams as backup.
- Inspector-type positions, all hired as EFFs by DNRC (or agency people):
 - NRCG Equipment Inspector-EQPI.
 - NRCG Lead Equipment Inspector. Kevin and Tim maintain the list of who is qualified
 - The EQPI and lead inspector work for dispatch or ground support.
 - NWCG ICPI.
 - They work for Kevin, Tim, and Gilman and go throughout the GACC helping with contract administration issues, or they work for finance.
 - HETS, Heavy Equipment Technical Specialist.
 - They work for ops out on the line to determine capabilities or limitations of equipment for the job.

Pam Okon (pokon@mt.gov)

- Not a lot of changes on DNRC solicitations.
 - Rental Vehicles –eliminated the mileage rate so it is included in the daily rate and fueling/cleaning are included.
 - Changed the vehicle release form, this year it's required for every vehicle.
 - Porta potties – for this year we added 2 rates. One is an unserviced toilet rate for when you don't need service every day.

Shay Clark (mtclark@blm.gov)

- Potable water solicitation - 3 years still, due May 13. Type 3 Caterer - all vendors must have RT-130. They will be on the Resource List due May 20. Fuel tender – pretty much the same thing. Inspections to be done by May 6.

Debby Wesselius (dwesselius@fs.fed.us)

- This year is our 3rd go at water handling. Not a whole lot of changes though some changes for dispatch. Vendors are able to change dispatch centers. Will be interesting how they choose their dispatch center this year. It is the first time we did 100% rollover. Everyone was required to respond. You may see a reduction in vendors.
- I think we're still on schedule to meet our June first deadline for posting. The DPL's will give you assurance – as they will have passed inspection. Part of the specification requirement is past performance.
- Can no longer require vendors to locate equipment in our dispatch zones. When you see the DPL in June you likely will have resources that are not in the jurisdictional boundary of your center. It should be a list of folks who can logically meet requirements for incidents on your jurisdiction. Dispatch needs to set the time to report for inspection and hold the vendor to it, report non-compliance.
- If there are performance or behavior issues with contractors, contact Tim, Kevin or Debby. Document thoroughly. It's best to snail mail or fax in documentation.

Kevin Erickson (kerickson@fs.fed.us)

- BIA took on weed washer this year.
- In the solicitations, D.6.5 is the dispatch procedures. This gives you the teeth, and outlines what we're looking for. We need to weed out the habitual offenders. D.19 is workmanship. That is the teeth in our solicitation for performance. D21.8.1 Driver time limitations is 10 hours. Make it clear to receiving dispatch if someone likely won't make it.
- Tactical water tenders on resource list.

1120 – 1130 Agency Aviation – Maggie Doherty for FS, Mark Heppler for BLM

- See website for handout on BLM aviation for 2013. Billings' airport runway will be undergoing rehab from July 12 – August 18. On weekends we will not have access to our runway. We'll have to depend on neighbors. May work SEATs out of Laurel. Bob Flesch is working with FS and OAS on getting approval letters for using DNRC ships.
- Maggie – Regional updates - A lot of contracts are in the works for both helos and air tankers. With the sequestration, a lot will be awarded only by periods we have the money for.
- Regional assets – This year we'll have T2 on the Beaverhead-Deerlodge and Lolo, as well as the Gallatin rappel ship. For T3, still have the Bitterroot ship, Panhandle, Clear-Nez, Flathead, Kootenai, Helena and shared with the tribe. Rappel capabilities still on the Gallatin, and there is a request for the Kootenai to start their program again. Hopefully set up by 2014.
- CL-215's are a part of the large fire support in the big 34 thru the interior contract. After they are finished in Alaska they work their way down to the lower 48 and depending on fire activity will go into R5, R6 and R1.

1255 – 1325 Bob Roth – Aerial Firefighting Use & Effectiveness Study

- Aerial Firefighting Use & Effectiveness Study - This is not limited to chemical drops or large air tankers. It is a broad look at the way we use aerial suppressants and ways to document effective use.
- Studied on the ground in ID, UT, MT, and in MN in 2012. Will be on the ground again this year and deploying an online form for reporting. More info forthcoming. Bob's email: broth@fs.fed.us

1325 -1400 CL-215 Operations & Logistics, Large Air Tanker Operation – Maggie Doherty

Loren Crea – Neptune Aviation

- 2 tankers on contract at the moment. Offering five P2's this year and two BAE146s, tanker 40 and 41, still on interim approval. New BAE-146, T-10, being worked on currently. Hope to have two new BAE's on by end of year.
- Issues from their side are making sure they can have hotel accommodations where they get dispatched to.
- Crews should communicate and share with dispatch centers and ATBMs why they made decisions.

Mike VanderPas – regional ATGS coordinator (mvanderpas@fs.fed.us)

- Aircraft come on June 1 in R3 then move north as needed. Need to get trainees out. We are down to 7 agency ATGS's and 13 ADs for the region. There are about 25 trainees. We want trainees on every flight. Contact Mike, Ken Wabaunsee (kwabaunsee@fs.fed.us) or Kim Thomas to coordinate.

1400 – 1435 NW Compact & Aircraft – John Monzie

- Northwest Compact between Alberta, British Columbia, Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan, Yukon, Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington. Types of resources shared include aircraft, overhead, equipment, and crews. Member agencies accept standards established by the sending organization. Always a liaison assigned for dispatch to contact. The caveats to use of NW compact resources will be clear when they are in the area.
- Ray's position was flown and has closed. Hope to have someone in there by the end of March.

1435 – 1440 IDL update – Gary Weber

Aircraft plans for IDL – Haven't heard anything different. The plan is still to contract for four SEATs (802s) and one fire boss; the boss and one SEAT in Coeur d'Alene, others in McCall. They are available to other places. There are no issues helping neighbors and going into other states. They can go, depending on the situation. Have 2 helos on contract as well.

1440 – 1500 Smokejumper Operations Update – Tory Kendrick

- Link to new video: <http://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/dispatch/overhead/UsersGuideSMKJ2.mp4>
- The DC3 is up and running again this year. It holds 16 jumpers.
- We'll start rostering our jump loads so we can go straight from an A number to an O number. We'll catch up after the fact with that as we won't know until after who went.
- If you know you need overhead positions, ask for it up front. We'll change the load for specific needs.

1515 – 1600 Incident Business Panel – Tracey Nimlos, Pam Okon

- Unoperated equipment and rental cars have to have inspections every time. No exceptions.

- Rental car companies need the last 6 digits of the VIN number in ROSS. You can reassign rental cars but must close out the package, reassign, and start a new package.
- Inspections – The inspection at the airport with the agent is better than nothing and a copy of that inspection needs to be in the packet.
- Closing out after each fire ensures the correct agency is paying. The shift ticket should be used to document it. If sending one of our rentals out of the GACC, don't be surprised if packages come back not completed.
- We had some issues with our EFFs/ADs getting dispatched to other regions and didn't have a gov't procurement card for the rental car. They were not being supported by the host side. Tracey will submit the issue to the national buying team meeting coming up.
 - Applicable to FS employees – when you rent a car with a gov't card, insurance applies. If you have employees that do not have a gov't card, they need to tell the vendor they want to pay the GARS fee then they will be covered under the national contract. Remember, it still doesn't cover them for off road use.
- Vipr agreements in relation to fireline rehab – They can be used for rehab but cannot be used for BAER work. If they are not in Vipr you can use a local agreement. Or if they cannot meet the date/time needed you can use a local agreement. The DNRC can deviate from the DPL.
- Dispatcher charging base time and over time –
 - **Update 3/19** – The letter lining out dispatcher overtime was issued by NRCC on 3/18. Dispatcher time is not reimbursable between agencies, so FS employees should continue to charge overtime worked on state fires to the code in that letter. Tracey clarified her remarks at the workshop in an email on 3/14, and it is OK for FS dispatchers to charge base time to a p-code as directed by their fire staff even if they are not assigned to a fire.
- It costs money to set up a job code. Don't automatically check FS assist box. Think about it.
- Tactical tenders will be in chapter 50, maybe in chapter 20. Since you cannot multi type, you'll probably have a resource list of tactical tenders.
- Northern Rockies will have one national buying team this year.
- Will hopefully form 4 short buying teams for use in GACC. Will be hosted by Northern Rockies.
- Gaylen is working with a BUYT member to work on the issue of how to keep fills updated in ROSS.

Thursday, March 7, 2013

0800 – 0815 Northern Rockies Dispatch Steering Committee

– Carol Bienhold, Alyssa Stewart, Tony Lubke, Amanda Hamman, Amy Lancaster, Doug Caffee, Cobey Williamson

- The Steering Committee is looking for ways to improve and get more involved throughout the year, other than organizing the workshop. Our task order activity has tapered off. The committee will identify things that were discussed this week and bring it back to you to see if we need to set up specific tasks.
- It is Carol's last stint with the committee.
- Alyssa is our Chair. Amy is our new Co-Chair.
- Task order to get dispatch zones & contact information into AFF – passed from Tony to Cobey.
- Task order regarding ROSS Supply resource orders is finished. Products posted on website.
- Doug – D311 is coming up and we still have room. Hope everyone can stay committed to that.
- Cobey will work with Tyler on IT stuff and be a POC for us for mobile technology, IRWIN, etc.
- Kim, Task Order #1, Dispatcher stress study – in progress still, more info forthcoming.

0815 – 0830 WildCAD Update – Kara Stringer

- Kara is passing the baton as GACC wildcad rep to Mark DeCaria. They will both attend the workshop in Reno.

0830 – 0930 Northern Rockies Cache Update – Patrick Nooney

- From cache standpoint ROSS is the best way to order cache items. More accurate & readable.
- Cache has the ability to view the special needs in ROSS orders but they do not come up automatically in our database.
- If there is frustration with the ordering process, talk to the cache.
- Website at: www.fs.usda.gov/goto/r1/cache
- Comment –If something is not available it would be nice to get a phone call from the cache to let us know.

- Comment – With later season incidents, we need access to cold weather items.
- Discussion on getting ordering managers schooled up in ROSS. Kathy Pipkin (kipkin@fs.fed.us) will be contact for comments.

0900 – 0915 IMT Update – Mark Heppler

Northern Rockies team update.

- We have two T1 teams (Poncin/Turman), five T2 teams (Kusicko, Pearson, Fry, Benes, Heintz), and two Wildland Fire Management teams: Hutton/McBratney. There were 560 position applicants. All those that were non-selected are now in a pool that can be selected by a team. All trainees were selected except for 3 agency DIVS.
 - **Update 3/19 – the rosters have all been mailed out.**
- The team plan is due by April 1. Team meetings will be held April 16-18. The
- The CAT team has met. The roster will be finalized in next month or two.
 - ROSS orders – some DNRC team members may or may not have red card qualifications in the IQS system. We need to make sure they are in the IQS system and have them notify dispatch when they travel.

Meeting end.