



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

Federal, State, and Local Government Agencies Working Together in Emergency Response Management

Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda

Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Participants:

Board Members: Ray Hart, Bryce Rogers, Aaron Thompson, Jim “James” Forsythe, Josh Harvey – Chair, Jake Ganieany, Rich Cowger – Vice Chair, Patrick Lonergan, Ryan Melin, Dan Warthin, Ralph Rau

Deputies and Others: Bob Jones, Andrew Schell, John Monzie, Jason Jarrett, Corey Buhl – Detailer, Kathy Pipkin, Aitor Bidaburu, Jordan McKnight, Coleen Haskell, Jeni Jeresek, Melissa Wegner, Tara Dana, Dave Williams, Tracey Nimlos, Pam Jolly

Purpose: Welcome and a reminder that this is a public meeting for the purpose of conducting government business.

NWCG/NMAC Update: (Aitor Bidaburu)

- Nationally are at PL2.
- ESF4 in support of Covid and FEMA is beginning to scale back. FEMA is standing up its own internal contracting ability.
- MPHAT group is studying the new CDC guidance; will be more to come.
- NMAC is working on some draft memos regarding recommendations from IMMR. Particularly regarding providing remote IMT support, NWCG glossary of terms library, FMB items and some IROC virtual availability capabilities. Also, there is a large greening initiative.

Northern Rockies GACC and Operational Updates:

NRCG Operations (Corey Buhl - Detailer)

- Lolo IHC is in Minnesota; one IHC crew left to come on.
- Smokejumper operations are going well; do have a coordination meeting tomorrow.
- MAC Exercise Update – unable to go through prioritization exercise due to technical glitches on program that were going to utilize. Could proceed with a two-hour preparedness discussion regarding MAC activation.
- Ralph Rau - Noted that BOD never received a calendar invitation for Thursday’s MAC Exercise.
- Note: Ray Hart, Jim Forsythe and Ralph Rau are unavailable for meeting on Thursday.
- Dan Warthin – Noted the importance of this preseason exercise. Time is already set aside for this Thursday. Would like to see that time utilized and addressed in some format.
- Aaron Thompson – Request agenda in advance, as Agency Administrators may not need to be involved now.
- Ralph Rau – Agree with Aaron Thompson’s agenda statement above.
- Corey Buhl – Request BOD send in email items they would like to see discussed on an agenda.
- **Action Item: Corey Buhl will compile and agenda for Thursday’s meeting and send to Pam Jolly for BOD distribution.**

NRCC Update (Kathy Pipkin)

- Working on the east side dispatch program review revealed some items that would impact all dispatch centers. Working on a staffing analysis for future presentation. Also looking at definition of baseline staffing in relation to complexity levels. The latter was accomplished in the Northwest.
- Detail outreach for several NRCC positions has closed. Will be reaching out to involved agencies.
- Have begun publishing the Morning Report that is posted on the [Intelligence Page](#) of the NRCC website.



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- NRCC is staffing Monday – Friday from 07300 – 1600; NICC is currently in seven day a week staffing.
- Concerns over NRCC staffing for the upcoming season. Acknowledged that NRCC dispatch is not the only dispatch center, nor programmatic area experiencing staffing concerns.

OLD BUSINESS

Clarification - Annual Agency Commitment of IMT Funds – Josh Harvey

- At the end of the Spring NRCG call there was a brief discussion regarding IMT funds that are provided and which agencies are responsible. Prior to making any commitments it appears there is a need to have some discussion and clarification provided as to previous funds were one time or on going. At this point it needs to be clear there has not been a commitment made by all the participating agencies for annual ongoing funding.
- Josh Harvey - IDL would be willing to support one team with \$2000 per year.
- Aaron Thompson – Need to support IMTs. Concern if \$2000 is adequate. Recommendation to add to the Northern Rockies Financial Plan as a fair share cost.
- Ralph Rau – Already arranged for this year for Team 1; funded for \$2000. Not appropriate for the cost share. Would not be able to implement differently for this year.
- Rich Cowger – Acknowledge are not a fiscal contributor. Noted funding mechanism support for IMTs is crucial.
- Aaron Thompson – Have provided Team 7 funding for this year. Feel as an interagency board, have a need to support interagency NRCC and IMTs. Would like to see it in the financial plan in the future.
- Ralph Rau – Agency is doing the very best it can to provide support at the highest level possible given operational budget. Any participating agency is welcome to step up and fund additional positions at the NRCC.
- Aaron Thompson – Appreciate the importance of agency specific issues. Noted importance of staffing level discussion and continuing to address issues for the future.
- Josh Harvey – No proposed solution today. Would like for any BOD that have any thoughts or ideas to please send those to the Chair.
- John Monzie – DNRC will provide this funding for this year.
- Dan Warthin – Challenge for agency is the exchange of funds.
- Action Item: Address again in the fall with intent to identify common solution.

Northern Rockies Pre-use Inspection Procedures – Informational Topic – Andy Schell

- Last draft review spurred more questions and in depth thinking.
- Attempting to decipher what are the respective NRCG procedures, as opposed to issues with Missoula Dispatch or DNRC contracting.
- More information to come.

Support for NRCG Operations Position – Decisional Topic – Corey Buhl

- Current delegation covers what was intended with bullet #11.
- No modification to Delegation of Authority (DoA) is needed.
- Do still need names from each agency of support individuals to attach to DoA.
- Action Item: Corey Buhl will compose an email requesting names and send to Pam Jolly for distribution to BOD with a requested reply due date.



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Covid Coordination Update – Informational Topic – Corey Buhl

- Reached out to individuals from last year's task group.
- Recommendation is that full stand up is not necessary currently. Could reach out to certain elements of the task group if implementation is needed this year.
- Ralph Rau – Request a small write up that explains what will be done this year for reference and sharing purposes.
- **Action Item: Corey Buhl will compile a small, explanatory write up and send to Pam Jolly for distribution by due May 26th.**
- Vote on above Recommendation:
 - BIA GP – Concur.
 - BIA RM – Support.
 - BLM – Support.
 - FWS – Support.
 - IDL – Support.
 - MT DES – Support.
 - MT DNRC – Support.
 - MT SFCA – Support.
 - MT CFWA – Support.
 - MT S&POA – Support.
 - ND FS – Support.
 - NPS – Support.
 - USFS – Support.
- **Vote Approved – unanimous consent.**

IC Path Forward Memo – Decisional Topic – Josh Harvey

- Ralph Rau – Important to keep document whole and noted importance of inclusion of the announcement and having roles outlined.
- Dan Warthin – New verbiage reflects email dialog.
- Patrick Lonergan – Application portion references Trainee ICs, that verbiage may need to be removed.
- Aaron Thompson – Will NRCG selection criteria be for trainees in the future?
- Ralph Rau – Agencies need to do due diligence coordinating with all entities when opening task books. It is an agency roll to open task books. Question is, does there need to be a step on whether or not to approve a trainee for a NR IMT.
- Josh Harvey – Do see role as NRCG BOD as checking in with ICs regarding IC trainee progression.
- Patrick Lonergan – If authority does not reside with the NRCG BOD, then probably are better off not having a review process step.
- Jim Forsythe – Is there a step where the NRCG BOD is involved with assigning individual IC trainees with particular ICs?
- Ralph Rau – Suggestion to add verbiage to assign a BOD as a contact or mentor.
- Aaron Thompson – Will the NRCG be approving trainees for the Northern Rockies IMTs?
- Dan Warthin – Opening a task book and performing as an IC trainee for a specific region are two separate items. Noted internal agency depth building that occurs.
- Proposed revised language provided by Dan Warthin:



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- Replace the following verbiage:
 - **Application to the NRCG Board**
The NRCG Board is delegated by the agency line officers to select ICs for the Northern Rockies Incident Management Teams. Board members have numerous opportunities to interact with IC trainees while they work on their task books. Board members have a responsibility to bring any concerns forward or training focus that they believe an IC trainee may need while working on their task book to contribute to the trainee's success. Board members should recall that the purpose of the task book is to train the individual to become an IC.
- With the following suggested verbiage:
 - *"The Northern Rockies Wildland Fire Agency Administrators have delegated the NRCG Board selection of IC's for the Northern Rockies Incident Management Teams. The Board entrusts the IC's/IC Committee as very experienced, capable, and savvy folks to responsibly train and promote current IC trainees to the Board so all parties involved can discuss issues and concerns early and as needed in the trainee process. The Board will take trainee development/qualification attainment and IC role suitability under advisement from the IC's/IC Committee for informed decision making. The Board has the sole authority to choose the individuals who will lead the teams that represent the Northern Rockies."*
- Vote on proposed verbiage:
 - BIA GP – Support.
 - BIA RM – Support.
 - BLM – Support.
 - FWS – Support.
 - IDL – Support.
 - MT DES – (Had to drop off meeting.)
 - MT DNRC – Support.
 - MT SFCA – (Had to drop off meeting.)
 - MT CFWA – Does not support.
 - MT S&POA – Does not support.
 - ND FS – Support.
 - NPS – Support.
 - USFS – Support.
- **Vote Approved – majority vote.**
- **Action Item: Draft will be revised to include above verbiage and additional suggested verbiage to assign a BOD as an IC trainee contact or mentor. Revised draft will then be distributed for BOD review and time will be allotted to this topic on the June agenda.**

NEW BUSINESS

NR Fire Support Cost Share Agreement – Decisional Topic – Tracey Nimlos

- (See pre-reading materials)
- Reviewed agreement specifics.
- Vote of Signatories:
 - BIA – Support.



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- BLM – Support.
- FWS – Support.
- IDL – Support.
- DNRC – Support.
- ND FS – Support.
- NPS – Abstain (Jeremy Lusher will need to review and decide.)
- USFS – Support.
- Vote Approved - unanimous consent.
- Action Item: Tracey Nimlos will finalize agreement and send to Pam Jolly for pdf signature conversion and routing.

Differed to the June Meeting:

- SIM Card Activation – Tara Dana
- Dispatch Improvement Tasking – Josh Harvey

Review of Action Items: (Josh Harvey)

- Differed in the interest of time.

The next scheduled NRCG Monthly Team Meeting will be held June 15th, 2021 at 1000 hours, Mountain Time.