

Monday, November 13 – MAC AAR

The purpose of this AAR was to learn from the 2017 NRMAC experience in four key areas; achieve consensus around key learning and solutions that we want to move forward on (both sustain and improve) in the next six months and focus on organizational learning and continuous organizational improvement.

Under the four key areas, there were sub-topics to be covered. The format of each discussion focused on **what was planned, what actually happened, why it happened and what we will do in the future**. Some sub-topic discussions were very brief and, as such, did not address all four statements above (in bold). If this was the case, a brief synopsis is provided under the respective heading.

Topic #1 – MAC Plan/MAC Operating Handbook

NRCG/MAC Relationship

What was planned?

- Convene MAC Group separate from NRCG.

What actually happened?

- Roles and responsibilities were unclear (NRCG vs MAC).
- Ordering of MAC representative created confusion.
- Unclear who was in charge.
- Convening MAC proved to be difficult.
- NRCG BOD decisions vs. MAC decisions unclear.
- Not clear to all when MAC was actually convened.

Why did it happen?

- The plan does not identify WHO.

What will we do in the future?

- Review current plan and update.
- Reference WHO the MAC chair is (if there should be one) in the plan, and if it stays, define the role.
- Include an Appendix with MAC members in the plan.
- Clarify NRCG BOD decision vs. MAC decisions.
- Clarify ordering process (i.e. using THSP vs. MAC Coordinator qualification).
- Establish and articulate to agencies that MAC has been convened.

MAC Roles & Responsibilities (including IMT in-briefs, closeouts, etc.)

Discussion note: MAC is a function of NRCG, Delegation of Authority is to MAC from Agency Administrators once MAC has convened.

- Short discussion regarding the plan to have an NRCG BOD member at each in-brief/closeout; this did not always happen. In the future, be more strategic about which incidents to attend and focus on specific topics/issues.

Engaging Agency Administrators

- It seemed to be unclear when the MAC had actually convened during the season. In the future, will be more engaged with Line Officers, have clearer structure and leader's intent. Also need to re-visit periodic communication with Line Officers and Agency Administrators (pre, post and mid-season).

Staffing the MAC

What was planned?

- Some staffing identified in plan (Plans, Logistics, Public Affairs).

What actually happened?

- Duties were unclear; Plans Chief was ordered, Logistics Chief identified, but never given clear briefing.
- The Decision Support Center was initially under the FS, created confusion when it was moved under the MAC.
- Plans and Logistics functions identified in plan, but not utilized soon enough.

Why did it happen?

- Plans Chief ordered too late.
- Delegation of Authority was unclear.

What will we do in the future?

- Review MAC organization chart.
- Identify personnel need for staffing MAC as activity increases and decreases.
- MAC representative and MAC coordinator need to discuss what positions are needed to support MAC.
- Discuss Public Affairs function and opportunity to utilize and communicate what the group does.

Topic #2 – Facilities and Logistics

What was planned?

- Bob Marshall Room designated for MAC use, Pintler Room reserved for briefings and Missouri Room used for Expanded Dispatch/other briefings.

What actually happened?

- When MAC representative activated, they were not set up for long-term in the Bob Marshall Room; Decision Support Center set up in same room.
- Selway Room was used for meetings, conference calls, other needs.
- There were technical difficulties in the Pintler and Bob Marshall Rooms using the conference call system.

Why did it happen?

- DS Center and Remote Situation Unit were not accounted for long-term
- Fire situation ramped up faster than facilities needs/issues could be addressed.

What will we do in the future?

- Task AFD Space Committee with looking at facilities and what can be done in the future to meet the needs identified above, without impacting normal business operations.
- Keep all the groups on the same campus, if at all possible.
- Keep MAC/Operations Specialist/NRCC in close proximity.
- Request each function/group to outline expectations ahead of time (IT Support, etc.).
- Have a planned activation of space; look at other options, such as office trailers.
- Look at other functions that can be moved off the AFD campus (in-briefings, IMT staging).
- Include physical plan in MAC Operating Guide and share with all personnel on AFD Campus.

Topic #3 – Mobilization Guide and MAC Operating Handbook Guidance

MAC Representative

Most of this discussion was covered in Topic #1; need to clean up language on roles/responsibilities in Handbook. Full review of document to clean up inconsistencies.

Conference Calls

What was planned?

- Schedule conference calls as necessary.

What actually happened?

- Reluctance to schedule calls.
- Numerous calls scheduled from various functions (i.e. IC call).

Why did it happen?

- No established schedule for ramping up conference calls.
- Fear of committing to face-to-face meetings

What will we do in the future?

- Identify purpose, information flow and schedule (reference NR Mobilization Guide and pull into MAC Plan).
- Improve/add specifics to Appendix in Operating Handbook.

Face-to-Face/MAC Representation***What was planned?***

- Nothing firm in MAC Plan, but Mobilization Guide states that at PL5, MAC will be activated. Discussions that took place after the 2015 state a face-to-face will be initiated at PL5; this is in the NR Strategic Plan.

What actually happened?

- At initial PL5 designation, MOST members were present, but no consistency.
- Situation got past the point of needing to be engaged/communicating.

Why did it happen?

- Reluctance/fear about coming together.

What will we do in the future?

- When resources are being re-allocated across the agencies, consider as a trigger point for face-to-face representation.
- Look at previously identified triggers from MAC group.

Planned Escalation***What was planned?***

- Be proactive, have discussions at PL5.

What actually happened?

- Key products (outlooks, intelligence) were not available early enough.

Why did it happen?

What will we do in the future?

- Spend more time on shoulder season products.
- Add this component early on in the season (i.e. fire analysis, fuels); could be virtual.
- Plan to have MAC group come together pre-season, make this part of the process.

Topic #4 – Decision Support***What was planned?***

- Decision Support Center was initially set up for WFDSS support (FS).

What actually happened?

- Evolved into other functions: in-briefings, air resource entities (smoke monitoring, air quality), long-term fire behavior, story maps, integrated with IMTs that were open to the products.
- Products were utilized consistently
- Decision Support “Cookbook” produced – how to stand the center up, address the needs, what went well, what needed improvement.
- 61 personnel rotated through the Decision Support Center.
- Provided significant value to IMTs/agencies, positive feedback received from the field.

Why did it happen?

- Able to pull in expertise from other GACCs.
- Offered help across the agencies from the beginning.

What will we do in the future?

- NRCC will utilize positions ahead of time (prior to MAC) because of products they provided; can be rolled into the Decision Support Center when stood up.
- Utilize public relations component to promote the work done by the team.

Other Considerations & Points

- Be more prescriptive in MAC Plan; use bullet points/action items.
- Cross-reference other plans that may have some of the same information for consistency.
- Need to include record-keeping and decision documentation protocol.
- Allow for flexibility with the different agencies when considering face-to-face meeting
- Define protocol for MAC involvement in various conference calls.
- What does an ‘average day’ for MAC look like? Make it consistent, identify who is involved in what, maximize efficiency.

Next Steps

An editing group was assigned to review the MAC Plan. This group consists of Mike Granger, Bob Habeck, DNRC Representative TBD and Pam Jolly. The group is tasked with cleaning up the language, and making it consistent across all 3 documents that talk about MAC. The group will have a draft ready for review by the February 2018 NRCG conference call. Intent will be to finalize by the Spring NRCG Meeting.

Tuesday, November 14

National Report – Aitor Bidaburu

On January 1, Dan Smith will be taking over as the NMAC Chair. The new incoming BIA Director (TBD) will be the new NWCG Chair.

NWCG was requested to look at combining the PMS 310-1 and the Forest Service Fire and Aviation Qualifications Guide (FSFAQG). The Operations/Training Committee (OTC) will be looking at this as an interagency group. The desired outcome is for all agencies to have one pathway (FS adopting 310-1).

The Military Use Handbook has historically been maintained by the NICC staff and other members of NMAC. It is not an NWCG document, so trying to work toward that and get a PMS number assigned.

NIAC is making progress on an interagency aviation strategy. One of the immediate tasks to the group is to develop a report of ALL aerial firefighting capability nationally. The intent is to develop a “catalog” of all aviation assets, including the National Guard, which will then help guide a strategy for future capability.

NIAC was approved to form a subcommittee: Interagency Cooperator and Aircraft Pilot Standards (ICAPS). Important for all Aviation Managers to be involved.

Communication, Education & Prevention Committee (CEPC) is forming a PIO subcommittee; this will be an opportunity for PIO involvement.

FEMA is looking at identifying/typing Fire Officer positions; trying to steer them towards using NWCG/FPA requirements rather than creating something new.

Type 3 All Hazard team came from VA this summer, was a very good assignment and hosted in NR. No cost to the incidents for hosting those teams, FEMA covers the bill, they are fire personnel from major metropolitan areas. Networking possibility for shortage positions. Team provides a report after shadow assignment – Aitor will send out.

NR EOY Report – Kathy Pipkin

Kathy handed out and went over the NRCC Cost Share document.

Staffing during 2017: down 2 positions (Meteorologist and Floor Coordinator). 52 personnel came through NRCC to help staff during the season. As a comparison, in 2015, NRCC was short 3-4 positions, which were mostly Assistant Coordinator spots.

The Floor Coordinator (DNRC) position is still vacant. Roy Robinson detailed in this summer, and other detailers filled in behind Roy. As long as the budget allows, the position will be advertised; the whole process will take approximately 2 months (*Monzie*).

The national group will be taking the report on predictive services and looking at those positions and what products should be coming out of them. Would like to explore other options, does not anticipate filling the position anytime soon (*Schmid*).

Northern Rockies does not have a representative to the new National Dispatch Committee.

New IDIP program will have cost-share component (*Bidaburu*).

The Dispatch Steering Committee supports sharing the general session with the Dispatcher's Workshop/IMT Meeting, and then attending breakouts.

IT Update – Patrick Murphy

Put 12 students through new NWCG sponsored course for the ITSS position, which also has a taskbook. There were a couple more that could not attend the class, but were able to still go out as trainees. There was at least 1 trainee with each IMT this year. 7 trainees completed their taskbooks, and were certified or in the process of being certified.

The course scheduled for Spring 2018 was cancelled due to low numbers. It is not required for the position. 1-on-1 training is available, and the training is geared towards all the partners. There is also a Spring Workshop, which will target individuals already qualified.

IMT's have been traveling with 2 plotters; the older ones are being excessed as the support for them is diminishing. For future seasons, the goal will be to have each IMT travel with 1 owned plotter and supplement with commercial rentals. IT group will be working with the Contracting/Business groups to come up with a way to rent as a commercial product.

There was extensive testing with wireless equipment this year to increase range throughout ICP. It was relatively low cost and seemed to work very well. There will be a more streamlined approach to wireless in camps in the future. Newer servers will take up less space, and can be shipped. The TA and acquisition process takes some time, but hope is to have a couple by the spring. Priority for new servers will be for the 3 IMT's that do not have any, followed by the 2 IMT's with aging servers, then the final 3 IMT's with newer models. 3-year timeline to replace all. Network attached storage has helped setting up storage quicker, as they are non-agency devices.

Brought in public internet service from a phone company for NRTC this summer, it did not perform at a high level. Would like to look at something like Spectrum for a commercial service to provide support to MAC, Decision Support and other groups that utilize the space in the future. Estimate is \$100/month. Would put one unit in the NRTC building and one in the NRCC building. It could be activated and deactivated as activity dictates or left active all year long, in which case could be utilized by those attending training or meetings during the year. Patrick will provide research information on next conference call.

IT trailer maintenance costs approximately \$2,000/year (total for ALL the trailers). Would like to request funding and add to Operating Plan. Cost will be covered with what is already in Operating Plan for NRCC (**Pipkin**).

How do we plan for a season like 2017, where ICP is established and utilized long-term, but IMT's set up and take down equipment inconsistently (i.e. equipment is set up and taken down with each IMT transition)? Is there input on what model works best (set up and take down with each transition, or bringing in rental equipment upon initial set up and leaving for the duration)? Bringing in rental equipment and leaving for the duration seems to be the better option (**Connell/Granger**).

Is there discussion among the other Geographic Area counterparts on standardizing this type of thing (**Bidaburu**)? IT position is somewhat unique in NR and how it functions; equipment is not managed consistently in other GA's (**P. Murphy**).

All IMT's have some tablets, which have been deployed with different levels of success. Will be evaluating what can be done to streamline geospatial process.

NR Operations Update – Greg Archie/Tim Murphy

Relationship with NRCG BOD and Operations position is an area that could use some improvement. As experience level with MAC increases among the group, it will get better. Did not feel like there was a lot of guidance from the BOD, so need to continue dialogue and clarify/solidify roles and responsibilities.

Interactions with IMT's also needs to be worked on. The volume of calls was so great, and it was hard to figure out how to get the right information that is needed from the various calls. Ended up having 3 people working in the Operations group, which was necessary to manage days off and maintain situational awareness.

Interaction with NRCC/floor is crucial to the position. Need to continue that relationship and make sure they are working together in the future.

Medical program was a big issue this year. Need to identify what level of service we need and what that looks like in terms of numbers.

National Guard was used heavily this year; question came up about what we can do to standardize logistics/training/physical fitness. Greg Morris is in Tucson discussing this, and John Monzie will be working with the national group to help sort some of the details out.

Contracting Update – Tim Murphy and Bryan Lorengo

Tim presented statistics for 2017 in a Power Point and handed out 2018 solicitation plan for NRCG approval (no objections).

Medical solicitation will be expanded to North Idaho this year, will do another 1-year agreement in Montana, and then move into a 3-year cycle for both.

DNRC will not pursue competitive solicitations for Crews/Modules, will keep current agreements.

Heavy Equipment Task Force/Montana Logging Association

Discussion and Power Point presentation on heavy equipment turnovers in 2017.

Issue of contract equipment supervision (lack of) on incidents was brought up; more equipment was mobilized than could be managed. Need to continue dialogue with different groups (Business, Operations, Equipment Committees) to ensure we are addressing this. Working with MLA to find individuals that don't have equipment or agreements, but may have experience as a Heavy Equipment Technical Specialist or prior fireline experience, that could be utilized.

2018 Action Plan:

Industry and operational personnel don't have good grasp on what you can and cannot do with heavy equipment; would like to increase awareness in NR. At NRU, will be putting on specialized class focusing on heavy equipment. Also pushing HEQB training (S-236), including MLA cadre and field day. One scheduled in SWZ and possibly two in NWZ.

HEQB was a shortage position and was added late to the Priority Trainee list in 2017. With 227 trainees in the NR, need to make sure people are getting on the PT list so they can move through the position. Some concern that even current qualified HEQB's lack experience with the variety of equipment that is out there (**MLA**).

Request for NRCG BOD: working with MLA, would like NRCG to sponsor 10-15 video that focuses on heavy equipment task forces, capabilities, limitation, operational windows. Video could be used by a variety of individuals, including Agency Administrators, Operations, IMT's, HEQB's, Contracting, and IBAs. **Estimate is \$10,000 to \$18, 000 for production, and would like to have in NRCG Financial Plan.** Timeline would be completion by the Spring IMT Meeting.

Northern Rockies Cache Update – Anthony Krause

Anthony handed out a document with statistics for 2017 and reviewed briefly.

Had to lease a 15,000 square foot warehouse this year because of space issues. The NRK handles the medical kits for the nation and will be working towards expanding that capacity by 20-30%. Vacant positions in the NRK are not primary or secondary firefighter, so due to the hiring freeze, they are unable to hire and running very short on staffing. May increase sprinklers, plastic spheres, tents. Pre-positioned some tents to Billings early in the season which helped. Added the oil program in 2017,

which has helped with the pump destruction rate. Anthony is on the Kit Committee, so please provide recommendations to him if there are any.

Safety – Steve Zachry (Absent/Handout)

Steve provided a handout to the group, as he could not be in attendance. The group had a short discussion on each bullet point, any action items are identified below. The handout is attached at the end of this document.

Contractor Care

Action Item -> Tim Murphy/Steve Zachry: develop white paper providing guidance to assist fire managers, AAs, and IMTs in navigating post-incident processes and procedures involving contractor accidents and loss of equipment.

Zone Reports

North Idaho – Kevin Benton (Phone)

2017 Fire season activity for the North Idaho Zone was moderate with majority of the activity occurring on the Clear Nez NF. The Zone experience a few IMT fires such as Corral Creek/ Powerline, Hanover, Buck, Strychnine and North Hughes. However the Zone was successful in managing resources to keep emerging Type 3 fires from going to Type 2 given the limited available resources. The Zone MAC group experience limited activation specifically to help coordinate Fire Restrictions within the Zone where the CDA Restrictions Zone experienced Stage 2 Fire Restrictions for 34 days.

Agencies within the Zone continue to facilitate support for the North Idaho Type 2 IMT succession management needs. Positive outcome this year was that all agencies were actively engaged in supporting these teams with agency personnel. However, shortages still remain.

The Zone members have agreed to initiate an effort to stand up another Type 3 IMT to service NIZ needs for emerging fires.

Zone Chair has been turned over to IPF -Mike Behrens and Vice Chair will be NPC - Mark DeCaria for next two years.

Northwest Montana – Rick Connell

Zone met last week. Felt things worked well within the Zone, were able to move resources based on priorities. Would like to see something on NRCC website identifying acting Operations Specialist and/or MAC Coordinator for the day; this was not always communicated to Zones. Had some questions on moving national resources between fires in the Park. Need to clarify how GMAC works with Zone MACs in the MAC Plan. Decided that at PL4 or 5, they will have a dedicated Zone MAC Coordinator instead of having it as a collateral duty, and will bring in support as needed. Correspondence from NRCG didn't always get passed on consistently, would like to see that improved. Worked with Canadians quite a bit. Will be hosting an Agency Administrator Workshop in the spring.

Southwest Montana – Kate Holsapple

SW Zone had 333 fires total, for 390,000 acres. Mobilized 35 IMTs, 2 line of duty fatalities on incidents. Skipped Stage 1 restrictions, went straight to Stage 2 on July 27 and remained in restrictions for 56 days.

Lolo NF FAO job is open, panel has been put together. The Bitterroot Dispatch Center Manager position will be open.

The Anaconda Unit transitioned this spring, was dispatched out of Dillon. Felt like this was a smooth transition.

Central Montana – Greg Archie

Have not met yet as a Zone. Good year of coordination on Central Zone. No structured time for calls, ad-hoc, but communicating when necessary. Within divisions, worked well together, and with Zone neighbors. Will be talking about how Zone is formatted (footprint), will look to make recommendation on different format of Central Zone. Struggle with how large the Zone is, when it gets busy, working across that area and getting together.

South Central Montana – No Report

Eastern Montana – Scott Schuster

Have not met yet. Smaller groups meeting Thursday, talking about Crow Agency being fully integrated into Billings Dispatch. Irv Leach retiring.

Need to have better set of backups when chair is gone for Zone MAC. Rapid ramp up and ramp down in Eastern MT – continuity issues when standing up actual MAC. Need to talk about east side and how we want to use that – communication does not always go through MAC, issues were getting resolved directly with Operations.

Need to have some training within ALL Zone MACs (**Granger**). Also try and coordinate GMAC and Zone MAC exercises (**Archie**).

North Dakota – Michael O'Dell

Met on November 3, Ryan Melin is current chair, Ray Hart will be taking over January 1. Brought in Type 2 IMT for Magpie, last IMT above a Type 3 was in 2004. Emergency declaration on June 26, finalized State AOP last year, doing another review to look at verbage. Some talk about standing up Type 3 IMT within zone.

NRTC Update & Priority Trainees – Melissa Wegner

Melissa handed out statistics for the NRTC for the 2016-2017 training season (attached at the end of this document).

Mobile GIS going on this week – 9 remote locations, all being managed from NRTC.

Emphasized need to fill out per diem form, even if instructors are local. Important for instructor data/agencies and tracking.

Satellite session of FLA course was successful last year; will not be having remotely this year due to IT upgrades at NAFRI and compatibility with NRTC. Still having sessions in physical locations (Tucson, etc.)

YWNSA course is under NAFRI now – may be hosted in NR late in spring 2018 by NAFRI Cadre – hope is to build up cadre in NR to aid in putting course on in 2019.

S420 course was beta in 2017 – working with OTC, not sure if course is going to be certified this year, but will be putting another on in 2018, beta OR certified, depending on status.

No dispatch classes on the schedule, but recognize that the need is out there. Needs Analysis is used to schedule courses for the training season. Will be working with Kathy to get courses on the schedule.

Priority Trainees

Melissa was on detail, but brought in people to help with the PT list. Was able to get out with IMT to work as a Training Specialist – also saw a lack of understanding of the various qualifications manuals (i.e. AD TNSP's) and incorrect information being communicated. TNSP Workshop will be put on this spring at NRTC to help facilitate getting people trained.

PT nomination period was open a bit longer for ICs to get team trainees on list for ease of mobilization. ICs were very receptive.

TNSP reports may or may not have included PT's – 144 mobilizations of PT's from NR, ~661 trainees total through IMTs on NR incidents. Finance had the lowest numbers.

Request for INVf to get added to PT list (**Chris Barth**).

2017 Fire Season Recognition – Mike Granger

Group discussion on how to recognize individuals for 2017 fire season. Those individuals were submitted at the Executive Session, and tasks given to respective board members to follow up on.

Committee Reports

Aviation – Bob Flesch (Phone)

Need to encourage participation, only 5 people on committee call.

AIS letter this spring from Equipment/Aviation Committee was completed.

Northern Rockies Aviation AAR was hosted at NRTC, included both agency and vendor personnel. Gives platform for vendors to bring up any issues/concerns. Retardant misapplication was brought up – needs to get reported properly. In some instances, there are circumstances that warrant, but still needs to be reported. Concern about transfer of risk to aviation resources was brought up by vendors.

Sharing of resources – IMT's not having dedicated Air Attacks, resource shortage and moving across the GACC all summer.

Lack of qualified ACDP's – but there is a general lack of aviation management across the board.

Airtanker rotation – incidents requesting large tanker, ending up with VLAT without knowing, just needs to be communicated better.

Issue with getting people carded on helicopter side by FAA, “self-carding” led to falsification of qualifications. FAA bottleneck, but will affect resources available to agencies.

Sharing of resources during IA worked well.

SharePoint for QR codes for Retardant avoidance areas was brought up – “one-stop shopping”.

AIS – RO only received one review on AIS mitigation, not much feedback.

DOI SEAT’s – for 2018, working on different options, maybe variable term contracts. FAR regulations that limit dollar amount are limiting options for 2018.

UAS used on limited basis – looking at severity of burns, etc., can see increased use in 2018. BLM will be hosting a UAS pilot course, June 4-15, 2018. Encourage aviation managers to attend.

ASAT – stood up, delegated from MAC group. Final write-up has not been distributed.

Business Committee – Tracey Nimlos

Chair will transition to Sarah Lee in 2018. Committee met last month.

Hosted GA IBS conference calls 3 times/week during fire season; all around, though to be very valuable.

Will be working with National Business Committee on using gmail accounts.

Would like to propose to NRCG board to have a team feedback form that would go to IC’s, done by incident agency, rather than a finance/logistics evaluation form. Meant to be an awareness for the IC’s. IF approved would do away with finance/logistics form, and just have the one team feedback form – **BIN item**.

Some critical finance trainee positions get signed off, still have 4 FSC2 trainees and one FSC1 trainee.

Tracey highlighted the NRCG Action Items from the spring and went over tasks assigned and completions.

Full suite of finance courses in 2018 at NRTC.

Finance/Logistics had a lot of issues with transitions (i.e. tracking un-operated equipment). Suggestion when we know incidents will be long-term duration – should we focus on in-briefings/closeouts or concentrate on transitions? Need to involve line officers – **BIN Item**.

Passed out GB UTV guidance – has order form to help in the process and tracking. Also includes inspection form. UTV use has increased, and end up spending quite a bit on renting, and claims for extensive damage. Not a lot of accountability when it comes to damage. Operations Committee is in support of this – Corey has not had a lot of feedback yet. **Action Item -> Corey/Operations Committee**. Would like dispatch to be involved in this guidance too (*Pipkin*).

Medical/Paramedics – huge quantities of OTC meds purchased that got turned back to the home agency, lot of issues with this.

Would like to propose letter reminding IMT's about documentation and legacy record standards – **BIN Item**. Accident and claims documentation seems to be lacking quite a bit. NRCG would draft letter if BOD is willing to send out.

Numerous cases of paying entities for services that were within their normal jurisdiction – tied to LOFR positions. Could be discussed at IMT meetings?

Closeout summaries that are produced by IMT's – don't need to be full color, heavy glossy paper, spending a lot of money unnecessarily to make it look nice, violates federal. Content is what is important. Requesting letter from BOD to highlight this – **BIN Item**.

Dispatch Steering – Mark DeCaria

CM meeting and DSC conference call – many discussions that mirror discussions that have already taken place.

Difficulties staffing expanded dispatch, shortage of aircraft dispatchers. A lot of offices are run with a shorter staff, so when it gets busy, people have to be brought in. Dependent on AD/militia. A lot of the qualified ACDP/EDSD types are Assistants, Leads, those who can't get away easily.

Need 300 level courses – they are fairly hard to get into and need to include AD's within the GACC since they are a big part of the staffing.

Concern is that opening up dispatch courses to AD's would bring in more requests for AD's for other courses. This would be a unique situation – feedback from Operations Committee is that it is a critical need to train these people.

EDSP and CORD positions have no real refresher requirement – a lot of these individuals are AD's, and in some instances, they are not being supported to attend Dispatch, IB Workshops which could benefit them. Would like to encourage attendance and support for these individuals.

Will be holding GA Dispatch Workshop at the same time as the IMT Meetings.

NICC is sponsoring CDAT in Reno in March – hoping to have several reps from GA/Centers to bring back.

Business Committee brought up issue of Expanded Dispatch SOP's – all centers have them, but they are not standard.

Takes time to get Expanded dispatch set up, white paper that DSC put together to address having dispatch teams respond immediately to set up, those individuals would then be freed up within 3-4 days to go back to home units - **BIN Item**.

Jamey Graham from the Kootenai NF will be taking over as chair, this is Mark's last year.

Equipment/Logistics – Warren Appelhans (Phone)

Had quick conference call – couple people attended AAR, will be working with Operations Committee on HETF, will be reviewing specifications in solicitation.

Mary Fields/Roylene/Dan looking at BLM trailer/tents.

Put out a request to agencies through reps to support HEQB classes.

Carryover from last year – AIS direction, will meet during week of Jan 8 with proper representatives (scientists, researchers) and have document lining out options/solutions for IMT meeting for education. Feedback at the beginning was to not be so restrictive, towards the end there was more of a demand for more clear, firm direction, and still a lot of concern with chemical disposal.

Hope to have draft charter for combined Equipment/Logistics Committee early next year.

Fuels – Kevin Beck

Committee has 2 conference calls each year – spring and fall to share info across agencies.

Follow up on spring action items:

- Tracking resources across the state for prescribed fire help? Might be able to utilize seasonal dispatcher at NRCC who could help track resources. Would have to work like a wildfire assignment, working through ROSS (**Pipkin**). Could use name request process – committee to work with Kathy to work across agencies to help facilitate.

Any way to plug in state resources to help with prescribed fire? No firm resolution, still working on it.

Last year as chair, Ryan Melin will be taking over.

Incident Commander – Joe Sampson

First meeting as a committee held on 11/13; reviewed final charter and IMT Operating Guide Draft, discussed IMT capacities, received updated from Business Committee, elected Chair/Vice-Chair and representatives. Chair will be Joe Sampson, Vice-Chair will be Joe Brabender.

In 2017, Mike Goicoechea was signed off as an ICT1, Bob Habeck and Joe Sampson were signed off as ICT2. There are no IC trainees identified within the region.

There was some confusion about the communication between the MAC and Operations; as it got busier, it appeared that there was less communication with the ICs.

ICs felt that Area Command caused more work, less help – is it necessary? Unsure of their role and how to use – was there a better tool to support the unit that needed help? Took workload off of some of the forests.

RMAT – were assigning tasks to IMT members while they were assigned to an incident.

Did not feel IC calls were effective, would like to see time changed (to AM instead of PM). Prior to other calls, and is a lull in the day.

Would like to see a discussion on how to invest in more resources, seemed to be a lot of resources held at home units (for IA).

IC and IBA relationship – feel that there is no consistency with IBAs within the region. Will establish meeting with IC and IBA group to help improve communication and relationships.

Medical issues – consensus seems to be role is extraction to definitive care, not definitive care on site.

Cache boundaries – do the boundaries make sense when resources/supplies are needed?

Type 3 IMT plans – 4 total in NR. No governance or operating plan for those teams – Operating Guide does not include the Type 3. Will invite established ICs from these teams to be a part of the committee.

Native American – Bryce Rogers

NAC Plan draft out, to follow Red Book, added new verbage. Aiming for March 2018 to have final out for signature. There are still units that utilize those crews, Fort Belknap, Lame Deer, Crow, Browning had crews out this year. 6 total crews this year.

Vehicles/coordination/purchasing support make it difficult for organizing Type 2IA crew.

Talking about Crow becoming fuels crew – could work into a Type 2IA.

Prevention & Education – Crystal Beckman

As of January 1, Rita Chandler will be Chair, Chris Barth will be Vice-Chair.

Met mid-October – good representation, missed Central/SC Zones.

Had quite a few new agency and zone reps, a lot of the meeting was review, going over charter, and what the purpose of the group is. Identified 2018 priorities:

- Restrictions Review (task from spring meeting). Are restrictions working? Do they prevent fires? Are we restricting the right things at the right time?
- Platform to share electronic files.

PSA's were broadcast across MT into ND/WY through Northern Ag network – took turn between agencies to pay for PSA's to be broadcast.

BLM worked with MT DOT on reader boards; will work to make them more accurate per area, but still raised awareness.

PET ordered – ran into some issues/confusion when ordering. Most success with local/regional team members. Information sharing with zones complicated things during season, advise to wait until after season to share to avoid complication.

Would like just one agency rep for the team.

NRCG website – working to get information on there.

Fire restrictions survey and data analysis – would hope to have information together, and report out to board by January. Move forward with an action item by next season. Survey does break out what area

the responder is in to help identify improvements in one area vs. another. There is nothing in the survey about enforcement, will get that added. Also nothing in the survey about the Fire Restrictions website, so will also add that.

Did identify potential future tasks – need to address firerestrictions.us website – presented issues for some people, need to improve upon how it serves the public.

Training – Jesse Best

Met last week, Melissa covered a lot with NRTC/PT program.

Schedule is set, nominations in for 2018, OGA/NAFRI have been prioritized. A lot of nominations for RX courses, cancelled S490 (waiting for better course material). All zones have robust training plan for 200 level courses, requests for S236 course well received. Zone representative for Central MT Zone will be Maria Helterline next year.

A lot of personnel going through courses, but not seeing the number of personnel finishing task books (i.e. HEQB).

Operations Committee – Corey Buhl

Kevin Benton will be new Vice-Chair.

7 applicants for S520, 5 selected, and got priorities from IC's.

Greg Archie did a “day in the life” presentation of the Operations position at meeting – encourage zones to bring back from field what they want to see from the NR Operations position.

Need to redo charter, with IC Committee forming and IMTs under BOD. Request BOD to refine role of Operations Committee with all the changes.

East Zone brought up the size of the zone – becomes cumbersome when it comes to training, priorities, restrictions. Operations Committee will help bring that to light.

Geographic Area IHC group brought up that S336 has gone away, they would like to look at revamping the training and making it more useful. Saw a lack of supervision.

Equipment Committee requested input from Operations Committee as to what LCES looks like for heavy equipment.

Action Item -> Operations Committee: UTV guidance.

Business Committee requested Operation representative(s) at Finance workshops, and someone with chainsaw expertise to also be present. Fred Thompson volunteered, Corey will follow up with him.

Type 2 and 2IA crews have been showing up in buses, thus leaving them unable to break down. **Action Item -> Granger:** take this issue to CGAC to help refine NWCG standards.

IC Reports

Thompson

Assigned to 4 incidents this summer.

Challenges

- Decision processes related to complexing fires created operational issues
- Some incidents spanned a very large area; populations were quite diverse, challenges in communication based on the customer
- Transfer of command times; questions about why it was being done at 1800
- Transitions – small details got missed which turned into bigger issues
- Key personnel from previous team demobilized early, right information was not getting passed
- Tracking crew swaps, R&R, especially contract resources
- Fire camps located near railroad tracks
- Financial databases
- Area Command doing briefings
- Tracking evacuations and closures across county lines and working with Information section
- Heavy amount of smoke masked actual movement of fires
- Lack of appropriate resources
- Cooperator challenges in Situation Unit, became unmanageable workload
- Contractor supply protocols, how to issue, need to follow contract language and be consistent
- Payments not made in timely fashion (specifically Type 3 caterer on Sprague)
- Agency social media policies
- Lack of standard for report percent objectives completed

Successes

- 150+ trainees over 4 assignments
- Adapted cooperator meeting to meet cooperator needs
- Modified team schedule associated with fatigue at PL5
- Using multiple social medial platforms
- Population protection plans went smooth because of pre-season meetings
- Evacuation group on Rice Ridge created by Goldman IMT was helpful
- Good leader's intent from all agencies
- AIS cleaning process for incoming water-handling equipment was straightforward
- Backing off indirect strategies and going direct when available was well-received upon explanation
- Live streaming of public meetings
- After Lolo Peak fatality (Brent Witham), IMT and personnel stepped up to raise \$4800 within 48 hours for Wildland Firefighter Foundation
- Remote Situation and Decision Support group were helpful
- Collector working well
- No HR issues

- All-Hazard team worked well for the most part
- Comp/Claims position that Lolo had was helpful
- Used of rotor-wing retardant, VLAT's and Scoopers
- Use of agency-developed prioritized values at risk
- Sleeper trailers for night shift
- Attitudes remained good
- Ability to roster a team for all 4 assignments

Hutton (Sampson)

71 days mobilized for 66 days on incident, spanning 4 fires.

Challenges (if not listed above already)

- Lack of resources
- Lost one major structure
- FLA for Sperry Chalet – offsite interviews at a later date while on another incident

Successes (if not listed above already)

- No major injuries/accidents
- Training opportunities; many C&G signed off plus multiple other positions
- Tracking of suppression repair within Collector passed from one team to another

Connell

1st team out to July fire, 4 incidents, 57 days total.

Challenges (if not listed above already)

- In-briefs that were lacking significantly (need to reference Red Book template and use)
- Rolling Agency Administrators (no consistency)
- Need process for delegation from one Agency Administrator to another and share with IC
- Rehabbing private lands (what is rehab/repair/restoration) and developing protocol
- Tech side of Collector on download side

Successes (if not listed above already)

- SWIMT worked as a branch on Sunrise/Burdette, but still functioned as a team, and were successful
- High percentage of IMT being present for all 4 assignments

Leach (Brabender)

Challenges (if not listed above already)

- Merging incident when downsizing (logistics issues, i.e. porta potties unaccounted for)
- Line officers transferring risk to the IMT
- Local sheriff had challenges with various team protocols (i.e. evacuations, why/when)
- Rental vehicles
- Relationship with IBA and inconsistency when ordering

Poncin (Goicoechea)

75 days out, 4 incidents.

Challenges (if not listed above already)

- Socio-political issues
- Last incident stretched team pretty thin (Rice Ridge and Liberty) and in-brief seemed to imply IMT would not be set up for success

Successes (if not listed above already)

- 5 days staging early in R3 allowed IMT to work together through scenarios and review processes prior to being assigned
- Established relationship with Southern Area, allowed for networking and receiving support
- Good working relationship with Missoula County Sheriff

Miscellaneous

- Would like to allow for flexibility on transition times; need to work with IC to determine what the situation warrants
- Utilize National Guard to provide logistical support to cache; include in operating procedure
- R3 used Area Command in a support and coordination role, not for moving resources; could be a different model to look at in the future

Wednesday, November 15, 2017 – Executive Session

IC Reports (Continued)

Turman

Assigned to 4 incidents.

Challenges (if not listed above already)

- Trying to keep enough middle management in the field to supervise heavy equipment
- No one waiting to take over IC position
- Did not go as smooth with 2nd Area Command group as 1st

Successes (if not listed above already)

- Able to get ahead (i.e. put fire on the ground instead of waiting for it to get to them)
- Team is in 2nd year of 3 year rotation, getting people qualified
- Did well with the shortage of resources
- Good interaction with 1st Area Command group

Remote Situation – Matt Gibson

BOD tasking to stand up remote situation unit out of NRTC – full report on website.

[2017 Remote Situation Unit Final Report](#)

NWCG Data Standard was not applied consistently – continuing education on WHAT that is, and how the IMT's want to use it.

NR does not have rep on Data Standards sub-committee; Mark Slayton has offered to be that rep, need NRCG BOD approval. Greg Dillon could be a backup/alternate. No opposition from BOD, recommend Mark Slayton/Greg Dillon to committee. (Takes place of TF option – Ken requests to have DOI representative to the group that has been identified/established).

Action Item -> Matt Gibson/Billy Phillips: white paper addressing data standard for NR, that would be compatible across ALL IMTs. Will communicate to Plans/Situation units at IMT meetings – information sharing, continuing education. Need to reach ALL levels (**Lonergan**). Intent is to help guide national standard.

Issue of need for good interagency communication tool; FireNet (Google application suite of tools adopted by NWCG) has been used, but DOI pulled out of it last year. Need a consolidated voice at the WFIT meeting, and briefing paper on why this is important to support (**Bidaburu**). **Action Item -> Matt Gibson:** letter from NRCG BOD in support of FireNet for CGAC meeting. NRCG Agency representatives were also asked to talk to their respective WFIT board representatives.

NRRS should be put under the Plans section.

Matt requested approval of verbage from NRCG for thank you letter to participants in Remote Situation Unit and to share final report (link above) from this summer. No objection to either.

Decision Support Center– Julie Shea

Julie handed out the Decision Support Final Report and Executive Summary.

Burden is going to be on the Forest Service side initially to set up, due to WFDSS, but need to have a discussion as a BOD when activity dictates ramping up across the agencies. Personnel were brought in on support code when it was determined to be necessary. The DS Center was made up of interagency personnel so there was a challenge sharing data. Relied heavily on outside GACCs to help bring in personnel. Important for other GACCs and NMAC to hear that DS is in place (**Bidaburu**).

NR Operations Specialist Position – Ken Schmid

Sent email out about selection process and selection made – Craig Goodell. Craig will be starting the week of January 7; Ken, Greg Archie, Tim Murphy, Greg Morris and Ralph Rau will all be present to brief to the position. Need to look at the Delegation of Authority. Operations Specialist will attend CGAC meetings in the future, representing NR.

Incident Commander Selections and 2018 IMT Direction - ALL

The group had a lengthy discussion regarding Incident Commander Selections and Team Direction for 2018. The discussion points were:

- Can the NR successfully field all 8 IMTs?
- Application process for ICs, C&G and Team Members
- Selection process

After the discussion, the following decisions were made:

- EVERYONE will need to re-apply for 2018 (ICs, Deputy ICs, Alternate ICs, Trainee ICs, C&G and Team Members).
- ICs, Deputy ICs, Alternate ICs and Trainee ICs will need to submit an application packet to Mike Granger by December 15, 2017; the packet includes the following:
 1. Cover letter
 2. Resume
 3. Supporting letter from supervisor
 4. Verifiable qualifications (IQS or IQCS Master Record)
 5. Reference form from current IC (optional)
- C&G and Team Member application period will be December 1 – January 15 in ICAP.
- Applicants will be applying for a Type 1, Type 2 or WFM Team, but will not be picking based on the IC.
- NRCG will be taking an active role in the selection process, while including the ICs in the process.
- NRCG and Incident Commanders will meet February 20-22, 2018 (location TBD) to go over IMT selections; Incident Commander selections will have been made at this point.
- A BOD member will be assigned to each IMT as a Team Liaison. Roles and Responsibilities of that individual will be outlined in the 2018 IMT SOG.
- NRCG spring meeting will be separate from the IMT meeting.

Judy Heintz and Mike Granger will work on getting the IC application process out so potential candidates have as much time as possible to get packets submitted.

Will be inviting Type 3 IMTs to IMT meetings to get them more integrated.

PIO Coverage for NRCC/NRCG

Need to bring someone in early and start networking to provide coverage for the entire summer. The Regional voice was definitely missing this summer; would be helpful to provide communication on some of the other functions we use during a fire season (DS Center, Air Resource Group) so we can educate. Joint Information Center (JIC) was talked about, but not approved. Structure this summer was an ad-hoc JIC, which worked well, but was put together too late. **Action Item -> Crystal Beckman/Chris Barth:** put together a list of PIOs who would be available to help provide coverage for both NRCC and NRCG during the season.

There is a monthly GACC/NIFC/PIO conference call, which has not had NR representation, so there is an opportunity to do so. Chris Barth will be willing to take this on, and consolidate a distribution list for IMT/Agency PIOs. **Action Item -> Chris Barth:** Draft letter from NRCG BOD officially approving Chris as NR representative, and send to Mike Granger for signature.

Area Command

Area Command is supposed to provide relief and value to the agencies; can be a benefit to Line Officers.

Is the current Area Command setup based on an old model? Is there some evolution in that structure that would make it more useful? The AA's set the tone on how the AC teams are going to be used; but there is flexibility. Need to understand how they can be used, and set expectations.

Line Officers under Area Command felt like it took a burden off. Needs to be discussion on how they are used, and education on WHAT area command does (*DeGrosky*).

Medical Program – Ralph Rau

Enrique Olivares is now in the detail, Alicia is out of the detail. Not going to fill until we know where we are going nationally. Trying to marry up with the NPS, moving along, but need to identify what the position will look like.

IMS – doctor in MT used to provide medical direction, but retired. Developed contract – costing 140-160K per year for the medical program. Started talking about cost split – really an EMS program, so split across the functions. When classes were set up, most of what were trained were IMS. Agency cannot sustain the program and train the numbers that are out there. Through this year, going to morph into having IMS program under contract. If contractors know the work is going to be there, they can provide the personnel. Moving into ID this year as well. Paying a large part of IMS program, and unable to focus on the internal EMS program.

Need to test for the upcoming season, so will still have some IMS classes this spring but will be scaling back. Not practical to make a complete switch given the timeframe.

There is a need to develop a medical supply contract (IDIQ) to purchase medical supplies to provide for some control.

WHAT do we need in the field? Important question to be answered.

As part of new agency policy, forests are responsible for writing Emergency Response Plan, and identify how many EMS personnel are needed on the unit (including supplies, etc.) – will help to set a reasonable standard on what is actually needed.

Medical Coverage - Anna Stull

Operations Committee meeting had discussion on how to get back to a manageable level of medical personnel (handout).

IMS offers Occupational Health component that traditional EMTs do not get. With IMS sunsetting, need to figure out how to educate. Who are we asking to do what? Need to have someone looking at the contract that knows what to look for so perhaps we do not lose that OH component (**Rau**).

There may be an opportunity to utilize Area Command in assisting in setting something up, i.e. a centralized urgent care center for non-life-threatening injuries. Need to look at things creatively.

Need to recruit MEDL Priority Trainees; recognize that these individual may not have to have in the field experience, but who could manage people and events. Recognized prior learning should also be considered. Also need to recognize that there are numerous resources out on incidents that are not being considered in emergency situations as being valuable, and empower those individuals in those situations. **Action Item -> ALL**: outreach and coordination to resources that are already on incidents.

Key questions:

- What is the acceptable level of staffing? What affects that?
- Where does MEDL go in ICS? (Officially under Logistics still, in NR under Safety)
- What does medical care look like on NR incidents?
- What should standard of care look like on incidents?

Action Item -> Mike Granger: GA report out at CGAC meeting; what is each GA doing about this issue?

Action Item -> NWCG Risk Management Committee: What does standard of care look like on incidents?

Cost Share Agreements – Tracey Nimlos

Tracey handed out 5 Cost Share Agreements for signature. They were as follows:

- 2017 NR GMAC Support
- NR IMT Staging
- Medical Assistance Team
- NR Eastern Montana Staging
- NR IR Support

*NG Training and Mobilization – would be done on agency split by usage – only the on the ground FF's – were only used on Lolo Peak so split between FS/DNRC. Will work with Mike/Ralph to finalize. Some were trained/outfitted but not used – so may need to include all agencies as it was a group decision.

VLAT base in Eastern Montana – MAC decision log shows extension approved for two weeks but no other documentation prior. Emphasized importance of MAC decision log when they have financial implications.

AFD Operating Plan – Ryan Patrick

Master Agreement will expire on December 31, 2017. Ryan can send an email out identifying what is already in there, get feedback on what needs to be added. Ryan will have a copy tomorrow for review (note: there was not an opportunity to review on 11/16).

Since each agency has to have their respective contracting personnel and Agency Administrator review and sign, it may not be feasible at this point in the year to have a new agreement signed by December 31.

Taskings (Also in Fall Action Items)

- Delegation of Authority for Operations Specialist and NRCC Manager – Ken Schmid
- Leader’s Intent – Mike Granger and Agency Administrator Lead
- Structure Protection Guidelines – Patrick Lonergan
- MAC Plan Changes – Mike Granger/DNRC Rep./Bob Habeck/Pam Jolly
- Mobilization Guide Updates – Kathy Pipkin
- Sage Grouse – Ken Schmid
- Out of Area IMT Letter – Jake Ganieany (will work with Anthony Krause)
- Private Resources Letter – Mike DeGrosky
- NRCG Operating Plan Revision – Done (IMT SOG)
- Transition Protocols – IC Committee
- Review of Strategic Plan – Kathy Pipkin/Ralph Rau

BIN Items

- BOD attendance at IMT closeouts – continue when available.
- Updated NRCG Contact List and Representatives
- Dispatch Teams White Paper – CGAC has also taken this on, need to know if this has been vetted through respective Fire Staff officers for approval. Kathy Pipkin will follow up with Mark DeCaria.
- Dispatch Stress Study Evaluation – Kathy received the results, and it was concluded that a true study is needed. Kathy will work on a proposal and also with MTDC to determine if there is funding for it.
- Team Feedback Form – will be based off of the Finance/Logistics evaluation, NRCG BOD member or representative will sit in on the evaluation, and copy will be provided to Judy/Team Coordinator to include in IMT package.
- Documentation/legacy record standards for IMTs – will be the focus of 2018 Leader’s Intent letter.
- Transition protocols – **Action Item -> IC Committee**: task other functions to create transition checklist/protocol (can reference Finance transition checklist currently used).

Approvals by NRCG BOD

- NRCC will be closed the day after Thanksgiving, and the week between Christmas and New Year's. NRCC will have someone on call.
- [2018 Solicitation Plan for Competitive Agreements](#)
- Cost for Heavy Equipment video with MLA will be put into Operating Plan as a shared cost (\$18,000).
- Mark Slayton will be NR representative to NWCG Data Standards Committee, Greg Dillon will be the alternate.
- MEDL will be put back under Logistics.

Thursday, November 16, 2017 – Executive Session

The group reviewed the 2018 IMT Standard Operating Guide, and made edits based on the decisions earlier in the week.